Master Thesis
in the frame of the
MA Program in Peace, Development, Security and International Conflict Transformation
at the
University of Innsbruck

Exportation of Norwegian War Material: *Transforming a Standstill Through Human Encounters*

Figur 1: The Mountain Model: Mountain Range (Widskjold 2019b)

In order to obtain the degree Master of Arts

Submitted by
Tuva Krogh Widskjold

Supervised by
Dr. Norbert Koppensteiner

Oslo, September 2019
Acknowledgements

*Tusen takk til…*

The research participants for your trust, for sharing your thoughts and co-exploring common grounds regarding the transformation of Norwegian export of war and defense material.

The wonderful human beings at the Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies for providing a space where I could explore sides of myself I did not know existed and for giving me the opportunity to follow my vocation.

Norbert Koppensteiner for your support, for sharing your wisdom and for pushing me into the beauty of unexplored waters throughout the past years.

The peace student community for manifold manifestations of both friendship and the beautiful imperfection of life. Let’s keep dancing!

Ellen Kim for your encouragement to trust my heart.

Changemaker for being my home for years, for your inspiration, support, and for letting me try, fail and become.

Pappa for all your support on the journey of writing this text. My deepest gratitude for your patience and for your willingness to engage in topics I care about.

Hilde, my aunt, for your endless language help and hours of reflections about the mysteries of life.

Mamma, Pappa, Erlend, Astrid og Øyunn for at dere alltid er der for meg, for rommet og kjærligheten dere har gitt meg til å bli den jeg er og til å være meg, og for at dere har vist meg at jeg er verdifull og kan bidra til noe som er større enn meg selv.

Vibeke for at du var deg.

Manuel, por seres como és, e por me ensinares a amar e ser amado.
Table of Contents

Abbreviations ........................................................................................................... V
List of Figures ........................................................................................................... VI

Introduction ............................................................................................................. 1

1. Author’s Perspective ............................................................................................ 2
2. Research Puzzle ................................................................................................... 7
   2.1 Overview of a Conflictive Puzzle ................................................................. 10
   2.3 Thesis Structure ............................................................................................. 11

3. Methods—Collect, Cocreate, and Analyze Information .................................... 13
   3.1 Cocreating Knowledge through Research Conversations .......................... 13
   3.2 Orient and Analyze the Conflict .................................................................. 19
      3.2.1 Collecting Information ......................................................................... 19
      3.2.2 Choosing Research Participants ......................................................... 20
      3.2.3 Mapping the Cardinal Theme .............................................................. 21

4. State of the Art .................................................................................................... 22
   4.1 Overall Approaches to Research Strategies ................................................ 22
      4.1.1 A Transrational Approach to Conflict Transformation ....................... 23
      4.1.2 Embodied Constructivism ................................................................... 26
      4.1.3 The Role of the Researcher and Action Research As a Research Strategy ....................................................................................... 28
   4.2 The Theme and Context of the Research ...................................................... 31
      4.2.1 Civil Society ......................................................................................... 31
      4.2.2 The Historical Context and the Consequences of Securitization ............. 32
   4.3 Some among Many Voices ........................................................................... 33

5. Theoretical Fundamentals .................................................................................... 34
   5.1 Culture ............................................................................................................ 34
   5.2 Institutionalization ......................................................................................... 37
   5.3 Conflict Transformation ............................................................................... 41
   5.4 Transrational Peace Philosophy .................................................................... 44
   5.5 Elicitive Conflict Mapping ............................................................................ 46
      5.5.1 The Elicitive Peace Worker ................................................................... 48
      5.5.2 Principles ............................................................................................... 52
      5.5.3 Themes ................................................................................................. 53
      5.5.4 Layers ................................................................................................... 54
      5.5.5 Levels .................................................................................................... 57
      5.5.6 ECM in Short ......................................................................................... 58
Table of Contents

5.6 The Mountain Model—A Fundament for Connection, Exploration, and Transformation 59

6. Norwegian Exportation of War Material—An Introduction .............. 68
  6.1 Securitization ......................................................... 69
  6.2 A Historical View on the Debate ........................................ 71
  6.3 Regulations Today ........................................................ 76
  6.4 Words and Concepts ..................................................... 78

7. Actors ............................................................................. 81
  7.1 Authorities .................................................................... 83
  7.2 Political Parties .......................................................... 84
  7.3 Industry ....................................................................... 84
  7.4 Labor Unions .............................................................. 85
  7.5 Civil Society ............................................................... 85
  7.6 Research Institutions .................................................... 86
  7.7 Media ......................................................................... 87

8. Preparing for Research Conversations ........................................ 87
  8.1 Mapping the Cardinal Theme ............................................. 88
  8.2 Preparing Myself ........................................................... 92
  8.3 Inviting Actors and Changing Strategy .................................. 94

9. Research Conversations ........................................................ 97
  9.1 Human Encounters ........................................................ 97
      9.1.1 Benjamin, Employee in a Company ................................ 98
      9.1.2 Allan, Employee in a Labor Union ............................... 106
      9.1.3 Daniel, Political Advisor in a Political Party Defending the Status Quo ........................................... 111
      9.1.4 Maria, Political Advisor in a Political Party Wanting Stricter Regulations ...................................... 117
      9.1.5 Sara, Employee in a Civil Society Organization .......................................................... 124
      9.1.6 Martin, Journalist .................................................... 129
  9.2 First- and Second-Person Partial Collaborative Action Research .......... 135
  9.3 Images of Peace ................................................................ 139
      9.3.1 Images of Peace and Underlying Assumptions .................. 140
      9.3.2 Emotions versus Rationality ......................................... 150
      9.3.3 Words and the Public Debate ........................................ 153

10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material .............. 156
  10.1 Resources for Transformation ......................................... 157
      10.1.1 Shared Understanding of a Need to Transform the Current Situation ........................................... 158
      10.1.2 Shared Value Fundament .......................................... 159
      10.1.3 Shared Needs ........................................................ 159
# Table of Contents

10.1.4 We Are All Humans........................................................................................................... 163
10.2 Possible Next Steps.................................................................................................................. 165
  10.2.1 From Regulations to Relations—Creating a Safe Space.................................................. 166
  10.2.2 From Doxa to Opinion—Reaching Toward the Epicenter............................................. 167
  10.2.3 Proximity and Connection............................................................................................... 169
  10.2.4 Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material ............................................ 171
10.3 Value Beyond the Topic in Question and Implications for Further Research.................. 172

11. Conclusions.......................................................................................................................... 173

References.................................................................................................................................... 176

Written Sources.......................................................................................................................... 176
Film and Audio............................................................................................................................ 185
Research Conversations and Personal Communication................................................................. 185
Figures......................................................................................................................................... 186

Appendix...................................................................................................................................... 188

Attachment 1: Letter of Consent................................................................................................. 188
Attachment 2: Guide for Research Conversations...................................................................... 190
Attachment 3: Mind Map, Preparing for Research Conversations ........................................... 192
Attachment 4: Mind Maps, after Research Conversations........................................................ 193
ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations

COPRI = Copenhagen Peace Research Institute
ECM = elicitive conflict mapping
EFTA = European Free Trade Association
EU = European Union
FFI = Forsvarets Forskningsinstitutt¹
FSi = Forsvars- og Sikkerhetsindustriens Forening²
LO = Landsorganisasjonen Norge³
MA program for Peace Studies = Master Program in Peace, Development, Security and International Conflict Transformation
MFA = ministry of foreign affairs
NATO = North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NHO = Næringslivets Hovedorganisasjon⁴
NOF = Norges Offisers- og Spesialistforbund⁵
NVC = nonviolent communication
PRIO = Peace Research Institute Oslo
SSB = Statistisk Sentralbyrå⁶
SIPRI = Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
UN = United Nations
VG = Verdens Gang

¹ Norwegian Defence Research Establishment.
² The Norwegian Defence and Security Industries Association.
³ Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions.
⁴ Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise.
⁵ The Norwegian Federation for Officers and Specialists (translated by the author).
⁶ Statistics Norway.
List of Figures

Figur 1: The Mountain Model: Mountain Range ................................................................. I
Figur 2: The Elicitive Conflict Mind Map........................................................................ 48
Figur 3: The Mountain Model.......................................................................................... 60
Figur 4: The Mountain Model: Mountain Range.............................................................. 61
Figur 5: The Mountain Model, Interconnectedness and Life Historical Dimensions........ 63
Figur 6: The Mountain Model, Unexplored Perspectives, Values, and Needs............... 65
Figur 7: The Mountain Model, Explored Perspectives, Values and Needs...................... 66
Figur 8: Mind Map: Actors ............................................................................................... 82
Figur 9: Mind Map: Themes ............................................................................................ 89
Figur 10: Mind Map: Images of Peace .............................................................................. 140
Figur 11: Mind Map Preparing for Research Conversations, January 10, 2019............. 192
Figur 12: Mind Map after Conversation with Benjamin, January 10, 2019.................... 193
Figur 13: Mind Map after Conversation with Allan, January 11, 2019......................... 194
Figur 14: Mind Map after Conversation with Daniel, January 15, 2019......................... 195
Figur 15: Mind Map after Conversation with Maria, January 18, 2019......................... 196
Figur 16: Mind Map after Conversation with Sara, January 21, 2019............................. 197
Figur 17: Mind Map after Conversation with Martin, January 28, 2019......................... 198
Introduction

I earn money on war material sold to some of the world’s most authoritarian regimes.

I can choose to ignore that insight or pretend I do not know. I can choose to not take responsibility for how I influence the context I am part of or pretend that I do not influence the context. I can choose to try to understand the dynamics that make me earn money on war material. I can choose to act accordingly.

For years, I have been addressing politicians by creating campaigns about Norwegian exportation of war material. While I have been convinced that politicians are humans, just like you and me, I have never actually followed this insight to the core. I have not processed that being human includes all our layers or that those I have tried to convince have the same feelings and needs as me. In the same way, I have not been open to changing my own convictions but expected those who disagree with me to be open to changing theirs.

Through this research, I have had the possibility to follow our shared humanness to the core. I have met and tried to see, hear, and resonate with the human beings behind the official roles of the actors with whom I strongly disagree and who share my perspectives on Norwegian exportation of war material. To start my research, I want to share a verse of Norwegian poetry that has a special place in my home country after the terror attack at Utøya in 2011. The verse reflects my quest into the dynamics that allow me to earn money on war material, how I influence my context, and how I can act accordingly.
1. Author’s Perspective

It is early morning in Lisbon. I am sitting next to the kitchen window, looking at the people hurrying to work and listening to the noises from the morning rush. The smell of coffee fills me with a feeling of home. Through the radio sounds Norwegian morning news; a description of the situation on the ground in Yemen echoes in the room. Knowing that Norway sells war material to the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and other countries participating in the collision that now are bombing Yemen, I feel a sudden need to do something.

Until listening to this radio message, I had chosen facilitation as the overall and unifying topic of my master thesis. An interesting topic—still, I perceived it to be a bit vague. I was unsure of how to contextualize it in my own life and experience; something felt wrong. At the same moment the radio message simultaneously reaches my mind and my feelings, I decide to change the topic of my thesis to the one I did not dare write about in my bachelor essay because it was so close to my heart that the objectivity my university professors talked about was unreachable.

I have worked with the topic of Norwegian exportation of war material for years, and I perceive a huge gap between what the responsible authorities say and what they do. Listening to the radio, I understood and felt that I am not finished with this subject. I do believe that an

7 “Perhaps you are fearful, out in the open and with no cover. What will you fight with, where are your weapons?” (Translated by Powell, 2011).
essential starting point for transformation of the Norwegian exportation of war material is people caring and asking questions. At the same time, I see the need for new lenses. To find these, I first need to look at which lenses I am already wearing.

I grew up in Ås, a small, calm university town outside Oslo, the capital of Norway. I remember a safe childhood where I had the possibility to try and fail. From an early age, my parents and aunts taught me that my opinion mattered, to be critical of the norms in society, and to fight for what I believed in. Political discussions were a daily ritual around the dinner table, and every morning we got a bunch of different newspapers in the mail. I watched the news on television and enjoyed listening to my older siblings’, parents’, and their friends’ talks and discussions. They awakened my curiosity, and as I grew older, I got more and more interested in what was happening in the society I was and am a part of.

Today, I see how my worldview is colored by my upbringing, the discussions around the dinner table, and the town where I grew up. As a child, I experienced a huge gap between how important decision makers in the society I was and am a part of acted and what I had learned about compassion, love, and how to treat human beings and nature. The authorities in the country that was supposed to defend me deprived other humans of their security by engaging in wars. Norwegian laws legalized and legalize imprisonment of refugees in reception centers just because they are refugees, and fossil energy resources financed and finance the welfare system I benefit from. I felt that something had to change—or, rather, that something had to be changed. It would not just happen; someone had to do it. As I saw and see myself being part of this world, and at the same time being an agent in my own life, I wanted to contribute to that change.

My older sister was at that point involved in Changemaker, and when I was old enough, I joined her. Changemaker is a youth organization using political advocacy to change
what the members\(^8\) perceive to be unjust structures causing global poverty and inequality. The organization became a channel for my desire to change the political structures that I perceived to reproduce injustice. The vibes in Changemaker nourished my belief that change is possible. The theory of change that the organization builds on focuses on the possibilities we have, as parts of global systems—the economic system, the environmental system, etc.—to make a change. Based in Norway, Changemaker emphasizes Norwegian policies and has a legitimate reason to keep the authorities accountable for their politics.

As I start the journey of this thesis, I have just left my position as the president of Changemaker. I joined the organization in 2004 and slowly became more active. Changemaker works within various political fields, including capital flight and international tax policies; international rules for patents on medicines, for the prohibition of nuclear weapons, and for ending Norwegian exploration for oil; and for stricter laws regulating the exportation of war material. Of all the topics Changemaker works with, one makes me more frustrated and makes my heart beat faster than the others: the Norwegian weapon industry and the discourse in Norwegian society around this industry. In 2013, I was part of a group in Changemaker developing a campaign addressing the export of war material to regimes that Norwegian authorities criticized for human rights abuses. Since then, I have followed the discussion around Norwegian exportation of war material through different roles in Changemaker. I have developed and participated in various campaigns, been to committee hearings in the parliament and public meetings, and attended debates.

Today, I am wondering if anything has changed for the human beings living in authoritarian regimes where the authorities buy war material from Norway. I wonder if anything has changed for the population of Yemen, who feel the consequences of the bombs the coalition led by Saudi Arabia has dropped on the country. The bombs have parts produced

\(^8\) Changemaker is a democratic youth organization, and all members have one vote at the annual assembly, where the organization’s political standpoints are decided (Changemaker n.d.a).
1. Author's Perspective

in Norway by companies partly owned by the Norwegian state. I perceive that different groups of actors—politicians, the industry that produces war material, and nongovernmental organizations, to mention some—have stepped into the trenches. As a result, history repeats year after year. Those who want stricter regulations argue morally, declaring that exporting war material to authoritarian regimes is ethically wrong, and add that more war material in some of the world’s most unstable regimes makes Norwegians less secure. On the other hand, those who advocate for the status quo or less strict regulations highlight the importance of predictable and fair regulations to get access to the market, which, in turn, they argue, is necessary to secure Norwegian industry and therefore will ensure that Norway possesses the best possible equipment, jobs, and technology transfer to other industries.

One late afternoon, I was listening to the news while researching my thesis. I heard that Saudi Arabian authorities had admitted to the murder of the journalist Jamal Khasoggi. I surfed the Internet and read that Germany was stopping its weapon exportation to the Saudi kingdom (Reuters 2018b, Noack 2018a) until it received more information on what actually happened with Khasoggi. Some weeks later, Norway did the same, and Denmark and Finland followed (Utenriksdepartementet 2018a, Noack 2018b). Change is possible. At the same time, I wonder if the change is sustainable.9 A few years ago, the Norwegian government stopped the export of products classified as the deadliest to the United Arab Emirates due to the latter’s engagement in Yemen. A year later, the government opened up for export again without distinct changes in the situation and without warning the Norwegian Parliament or civil society (Bakke Foss 2017).

I would have been lying to both the people I talk with and myself if I approached this topic without being open about my desire for transformation. I do dream about, and believe

---

9 Within an understanding of constant transformation, the concept of sustainability does not make much sense. Still, in the context of Norwegian exportation of war material, I understand sustainable change as a continuous transformation where the situation does not go back to how it was before the change, or with minuscule changes, when the focus from the media fades.
we can create, a world where human beings treat other human beings with respect and integrity, where people can explore their dimensions, where we play on a team with Planet Earth and all the beings we share our time here with. That does not mean a world where everyone is happy all the time but one where we actually can live without depriving other humans of their possibility to live fully. The results of increased exportation of war material and the industry’s constant search for new markets with both a demand for war material and buying power are very far from the society I want to be part of.

When I arrived in Innsbruck as a student of the master’s program in peace, development, security, and international conflict transformation (MA program for Peace Studies), I understood that my will to act and change the world and structures around me did not necessarily contribute to positive transformation. The same was true for my emphasis on justice and drive for improvement. Looking at history, I saw how lack of respect for differences and the need for change and improvement in so many situations created horror, wars, and suffering. I do believe that a desire to change, transform, and act can lead to violence. In the same way I believe that looking at others suffering, knowing that I am part of the system that led to that suffering without trying to transform it, can be violent—both toward myself and others. I feel resonance with Wolfgang Dietrich’s statement (2018, 43): “Those, however, who entirely rely on peace just happening do not shape what lies within their power.”

Still wanting to contribute to transformations in the society I am a part of, and with a wish to shape what lies within my power, I wonder if the ways Changemaker and other organizations and individuals working with the topic of Norwegian exportation of war material have approached the conflict can create long-lasting transformations or if it create polarities and perceptions of enemies. With years of experience in Changemaker and discussions around the dinner table in Ås in my backpack, the professors and fellow students
2. Research Puzzle

at the MA program for Peace Studies exposed me for new perspectives. While working on my thesis, I engaged in a topic that lightened a fire inside me, and I chose to follow it with my new lenses, aiming for a deeper understanding of Norwegian exportation of war material.

The next chapter scrutinizes the intersection among the different approaches to the topic in question. Through looking at the puzzle pieces that together form the conflict around Norwegian exportation of war material and my own role, I develop a research question and outline a procedure for answering it.

2. Research Puzzle

Norwegian exportation of war material is clearly a topic that catches my attention. When I read news about the war in Yemen, the situation of political opposition in Thailand, or statements from the industry in Norway, my body reacts with a bubbling feeling of anger and a want to act. The main Norwegian companies that produce war material are owned by the state (Forsvarsdepartementet 2015). As I carry a Norwegian passport, the Norwegian state finances my education, will soon pay my parents’ pension, and provides me with health services if I get sick. Hence, in economic terms, I benefit from the money the Norwegian state earns on the export of war material. I am somehow, without consent, tied to the export. In addition, as I have been part of Norwegian civil society working with the regulations of Norwegian exportation of war material, I have voluntarily chosen to enter the public debate on the topic. Consequently, I perceive myself to be one of many actors involved in the conflict around and about this issue.

While working with political advocacy in Changemaker, I was convinced that if we want a change in status quo, we must present a concrete solution and exactly what must be changed based on our vision of the desired end state. Hence, I have been searching for a prescription of how to end the exportation that my fellow activists and I perceive to be
2. Research Puzzle

destructive in order to reach what we, as parts of civil society, picture as the desired end state. At the MA program for Peace Studies, I encountered a holistic approach to human beings—how we transform—and to life. Looking at dimensions I had never before thought of, I realized that there might be possible entry points for transformation in the conflict regarding Norwegian exportation of war material.

I perceive the public discussion on the topic of war material to be polarized, almost at a standstill, with Norwegian civil society and a couple of political parties from the opposition on one side and silence on the other. That said, there have been sporadic changes and, consequently, windows opening for transformation; the war in Yemen, and the following media attention, is one example. Still, after some friction in the media, the exportation often continues as before, and a new standstill emerges without visible changes or with small, short-term ones like a temporally freeze in the approval of export licenses of weapons and ammunition to a nation state.

By bringing the topic of Norwegian war material to the concrete relationships between human beings, I was confronted with the importance of seeking beyond the conventional modern methods I had previously used while systematically working with political advocacy. Furthermore, I was pushed to look beyond my own preconceived morals of what was right and wrong and rather seek understanding and a human encounter. Away from an abstract issue formally discussed in the parliament or between nations states, I had to ask myself if my engagement contributed to a safe space for change when I depicted the industry and the political parties that disagreed with me as morally inferior. Did civil society create spaces for transformation when we used arguments of security? Seeing civil society as part of the picture, part of the conflictive system, and believing that we are all systemically linked,

---

10 I describe these dimensions further in chapter 5, Theoretical Fundamentals, especially in section 5.5, Elicitive Conflict Mapping.

11 The war in Yemen has too far-reaching consequences for human beings on the ground to call it a sporadic event. What I want to highlight is the changing climate in the Norwegian public debate that the situation in Yemen has created.
means that changes in how civil society approaches the conflict will consequently lead to changes in the relationships between the conflictive parts and, hence, in the conflict itself.

Behind the companies producing war material, there are human beings. Civil society, Norwegian authorities, and the people on the ground in Yemen are all human beings. Human beings construct and interpret the laws and framework guiding which nation states are allowed to buy Norwegian war material. Also, the nation states are constructed and reproduced by human beings. Nation states do not go to war; human beings do. In human relations, conflict is normal (Lederach 2003, 18; Dietrich 2013, 6). Thus, as humans produce war material, export war material, and decide the rules that regulate the exportation of war material, conflict is a natural part of the relationships between the actors. Consequently, the actors, their understanding of the world and the conflict, their experiences, their thoughts, and their web of relational patterns are important.

In my opinion, there exist various conflicts around Norwegian exportation of war material and different opinions between various actors in Norway; physical conflicts at the ground level, where the products are used, are evident episodes. Seeing myself as a party in the conflict, identifying with Norwegian civil society, I wonder if tools and knowledge that I have acquired through the MA program for Peace Studies can be used to explore new courses of action for Norwegian civil society in this conflict. That leads me to the question:

*What new courses of action are possible for Norwegian civil society to transform Norwegian exportation of war material?*

With that question, I direct the focus of this thesis on what new courses of action exist for transformation. Looking at the historical development of the Norwegian regulations, it is evident that history repeats itself. Already in 1935, when the Norwegian Parliament drew the first lines for which countries were allowed to buy Norwegian war material, *Forbund for
2. Research Puzzle

forståelse mellom folkene ved kirkene\textsuperscript{12} lobbied for stricter regulations (Stortingstidene 1935, 739). The member of parliament as a representative for the Norwegian Labor Party,\textsuperscript{13} Olav Vegheim, referred to the letter from the association in the debate in parliament. That letter from the Christian association reminds me of the way Changemaker and other civil society organizations lobby today. The text shows how nongovernmental organizations and church denominations have both been part of the public debate and lobbied the political parties on the topic of Norwegian exportation of war material for years and how the arguments were quite similar about eighty-five years ago.

Documents and minutes from debates in parliament provide information about some of the courses of action that Norwegian civil society has attempted to transform Norwegian exportation of war material. However, I am not familiar with all courses of action that different parts of civil society have explored. Hence, throughout the process of researching, I constantly had to be tentative about the fact that what I perceived to be new might be old wine in a new bottle. On the other hand, actions that were far from removing blockages in a former situation might be more fitting in today’s context. Consequently, a continuous recheck and mapping of the concrete context was necessary to look for new courses of action and entry points into the conflict. Yet, before I could start the journey of exploring possible new entry points for civil society, it was crucial to understand what conflict I was actually looking at.

2.1 Overview of a Conflictive Puzzle

I am not looking at one single peak of the conflict, not a single debate or a single export order. In terms that I introduce in the theoretical fundamentals, I am not researching a single episode. Rather, I am looking at the public debate that has evolved around the practice of

\textsuperscript{12} Association for understanding between the people of the churches (translated by the author).
\textsuperscript{13} I argue that history repeats itself, though it is important to say that different political parties have changed their opinions throughout history. The political parties’ views must be seen in relation to if the party has been in position or opposition at the time of the specific view. Today, I classify the Norwegian Labor Party, based on its voting in parliament the last years, as a party that wants to maintain the status quo.
2. Research Puzzle

exportation of war material in the local or national media, in parliament, in debates, between people, or on web pages.

To explain in which conflict I am looking for new courses of action, I look to the American professor John Paul Lederach’s (2003, 8) pictorial way of explaining the outsider’s view of a conflict. A conflict can be seen as a topographic map, where the peaks are major challenges. The latest challenge, the peak in front of us, is often interpreted as the “content of the conflict” (Lederach 2003, 8). Failures in solving the conflict are symbolized by valleys. Standing in front of one peak, we find it hard to see and understand the overall picture of the mountain range—the relational patterns. Lederach uses the metaphor to draw attention to how we often miss the bigger picture for the problem we have in front of us and the tendency to view conflicts as a “series of challenges and failures—peaks and valleys—without a real sense of the underlying courses and forces in the conflict” (Lederach 2003, 8). In search of what is under and behind the peaks and valleys, I aim to look behind and beyond what at first sight can be seen as a clear overview of the many puzzle pieces that form the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material. To facilitate this exploration and help the reader take part in this journey, I use the next section to outline my process of answering the research question.

2.3 Thesis Structure

With the aim of guiding the reader through this research, I outline the structure of the thesis in this section. Based on the research question that evolved from the author’s perspective, I look at methods that can help me see the conflict from different angles and provide new perspectives in chapter 3. In chapter 4, I place my chosen methods—elicitive conflict mapping (ECM)\(^\text{14}\) and a combination of first- and second-person partial collaborative action research—and theoretical fundamentals in relation to existing theoretical traditions and each

\(^{14}\) I explore ECM in section 5.5 Elicitive Conflict Mapping.
2. Research Puzzle

other. The theoretical foundations I explore in chapter 5 create a framework for how I analyze the material obtained through my chosen methods. Chapter 6 functions as an introduction to both the historical conflict lines and today’s situations regarding the Norwegian exportation of war material. With both the theoretical fundamentals and historical roots of this topic scrutinized, I use chapter 7 to analyze which actors can help me answer the research question. In chapter 8 I use ECM to determine which narratives I have found in the public debate around the topic in question. Furthermore, I explore the importance of preparing myself, especially as I see myself as part of the conflict, for human encounters. After presenting the findings from the conducted conversations with different actors, I analyze these findings in the framework of transrational peace philosophy, and looks for underlying assumptions concealed behind the narratives in chapter 9. Throughout chapter 10 I explore the resources for transformation found within and between the conflictive parties, answers the research question by outlining possible courses of action, and point toward possible further steps. In chapter 11 I conclude and summarize the research.

After years of working in civil society, trying to change the practice of and the laws regulating the exportation of war material in a modern context in Norway, I was introduced, through the MA program for Peace Studies, to another way of understanding human beings and processes of change. From an abstract concept of agreements and deals negotiated between nation states, I was invited to look at the conflictive system as a whole and pushed to see my own role in the system of human relations and encounters. In such a systemic view, a change in one part leads to changes in other parts. Building on that understanding, I look into which new courses of action are possible for Norwegian civil society to transform Norwegian exportation of war material.
3. Methods—Collect, Cocreate, and Analyze Information

In this chapter I take a closer look at the methods I used to discover new possible courses of action for Norwegian civil society to transform the exportation of war material. With the aim of deepening understanding of the different actors and as transformative processes in themselves, I initially present both the collection and cocreation of knowledge. Furthermore, I outline the use of ECM as a working tool to analyze conflict. Wolfgang Dietrich developed the tool within the framework of transrational peace philosophy, a context where conflict is understood differently than what I am familiar with. While I use ECM as a method to map the conflict, it also builds on theoretical foundations that deserve a thorough exploration and are explored in depth in sections 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5.

In this chapter I also clarify my use of ECM in the research process to analyze collected and cocreated information. The initially planned process must constantly be evaluated, readjusted, and changed as the process unfolds. Throughout the chapter, I address limitations of the methods and possible sources of errors.

Before detailing the methods, I want to underline how assumptions about conflict and how to handle conflicts are embedded in all of them, including those developed at the UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies in Innsbruck. Hence, what I find depends on what methods I am using.

3.1 Cocreating Knowledge through Research Conversations

To look for new courses of action and to map the conflict, it is essential to know how the different actors understand the conflict. What are their narratives, and what do they tell about the topic in question? I am especially interested in the narratives that differ from the one I am familiar with through civil society. To get a deeper understanding of the narratives, including how they are perceived and talked about outside the formal context, research conversations

---

15 I explore transrational peace philosophy further in section 5.4 Transrational Peace Philosophy.
are a suitable method. Norwegian psychology professor Steinar Kvale (Brinkmann 2008, 79) underlines that “interviews are particularly suited for studying people’s understanding of the meanings in their lived world, describing their experiences and self-understanding, and clarifying and elaborating their own perspectives on their lived world” (Kvale 2007, 46).

As a researcher, I chose a topic that I have personal interest in and a conflict that I consider myself to be part of. Consequently, I leave the traditional positivistic approach based on ideals for research from natural science, which aim for objectivity and try to eliminate the influence by the researcher (Koppensteiner 2018, 59). In a modern positivistic approach to research, the researcher is seen as an objective outsider who collects and analyzes measurable data (Krogh 2010, 1). Based on, among other principles, the mathematic thoughts of Galileo Galilei and, later, René Descarte’s distinction between natural matter and the human spirit (Dietrich 2012, 152–156), the positivist approach to research views the world, our interactions, and transformation as products of mechanical laws. I oppose this reduction of the world and engage in the cocreation of knowledge in my search for understanding the topic of interest through ECM and a combination of first- and second-person partial collaborative action research (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 1–10).

In line with an elicitive approach, first-person action research supports researchers to look into their own lives, actions, values, convictions, and worldviews and to search for awareness of how researchers and, consequently, the research are influenced by and influence the people and world around them (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 6). Second-person action research begins with interpersonal dialogue and addresses the researcher’s ability to “inquire face-to-face with others into issues of mutual concern” (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 6). “Action research is rooted in participation” (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 8), and the participatory approach opens communicative spaces (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 8).

---

16 While Steinar Kvale uses the term interview, I prefer to use the term research conversations as I aim for cocreating knowledge in a dialogue.
17 I explore the concept of elicitive in section 5.3 Conflict Transformation.
Andrew Townsend (2014, 116) argues that collaborative research builds on both pragmatic and principled fundamentals—pragmatic as a want to achieve some kind of transformation where collaboration is seen as an efficient way to reach this transformation and principled as beliefs of how people are empowered through collaboration and transformation is created in social settings. The underlying assumption is that “relationship are changed and developed through the sustained act of working together” (Townsend 2014, 116). The collaborative approach is primarily valuable when the design and process include people with different perspectives on the topic in question and the context of the research (Townsend 2014, 17).

Action research is often described as a “spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact-finding about the result of the action” (Lewin 1946/1948, 206, in Reason and Bradbury 2008, 235). In other words, action research can be characterized by “cycles of action and reflection” (Reason and Heron 2008, 367). Hilary Bradbury and Peter Reason see action research as a family of practices of living inquiry that in different ways “link practice and ideas in the service of human flourishing” (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 1). They further underline how action research “does not start from a desire of changing others ‘out there’ […] , rather it starts from an orientation of change with others” (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 1). While Reason and Bradbury outline broad characteristics for what they consider to be action research, they conclude that it “is a complex living process which cannot be tied to definitions” (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 698) and point out that the “quality in inquiry comes from awareness of and transparency about the choices open to you and that you make at each stage of the inquiry” (Bradbury 2007 and Reason 2006, in Reason and Bradbury 2008, 698).

To understand the ontology behind action research and the thoughts it is built on, I look to Martin Heidegger. Heidegger’s twist of hermeneutics builds on a phenomenological
ontology (Polt 1999, 38–41). Humans are like a spider in the web, and we cannot liberate ourselves from it. We are situated in the world, thrown in from the past and projecting into the present (Polt 1999, 65–67). Heidegger opposes the possibility of objectively understanding the world as our own existence is “entangled in this [our] context and bound up with the things that confront him [us] here” (Polt 1999, 46). The perspective of human beings being integral to the world, and therefore humans as interpreting beings involved in what is interpreted, led Heidegger’s student Hans-Georg Gadamer to develop his hermeneutic perspective on prejudices (Nixon 2017, 18–20). To make research reliable and valid, Gadamer underscores the need for awareness about our own fore-meanings and prejudices (Nixon 2017, 18–20). In terms of research, Gadamer’s perspective does not imply seeking external neutrality but making all stages of the research and one’s own value position transparent to the reader (Nixon 2017, 18–20, 44–46). Furthermore, Gadamer promotes “respect for the autonomy of the research subject” (Nixon 2017, 46) and thus opens a space for, and points to the value of, inviting the dialogue partner and other participants in as co-players in the development of knowledge (Nixon 2017, 34, 47). Based on this, I argue that action research ethically draws on insights from the twist of hermeneutics.

Regarding the role of the researcher, I further follow the thoughts of Norbert Koppensteiner, who, in line with a postmodern approach, seeks to problematize the role of the researcher and “assume that any research conducted in the field of Peace Studies cannot be separated from the researcher’s particular perspective that frames and shapes the research process” (Koppensteiner 2018, 59). In accordance with the understanding of the peace worker in ECM, the researcher is, in action research, seen as an inherent part of what he or she is researching (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 1–10). Consequently, and in line with a postmodern understanding, the data I collect is not only collected and interpreted through my lenses as a

---

18 I explore the peace worker’s role within ECM in section 5.5.1 The Elicitive Peace Worker.
3. Methods—Collect, Cocrate, and Analyze Information

researcher but is also created through the interaction and in a constant feedback loop between the conversation partner and me. These epistemological assumptions have consequences for the research design, how I prepare for the human encounter, and how I understand the knowledge I get through the research conversations. Inevitably, I am simultaneously doing research and involving myself in the situation and conflict. Hence, I perceive my role to be a researching peace worker.

The setting for a research conversation, where the researcher invite actors to participate, inherently leads to contact and, hence, relations between the participant and the researcher. Although the relations are intended and desired, these relations necessarily also include power relations that cannot be overseen. A participant will seldom talk as openly as in a personal conversation. The information I, as a researcher, receive will to a certain extent mirror my preconceptions and assumptions. These mechanisms create challenges for the validity of the research, and it is important that I am both aware of my own preconceptions and assumptions and work toward creating a safe space for the conversation. In the specific encounters for this research, I shared past experiences with some of the conversation participants. Previous experiences will always influence the present, and hence another layer of complexity is added to the commonly created knowledge through the research conversations.

Moral challenges arise in the moment that I, as a researcher, reject the reciprocity and connection in the setting and act as an observer. Then the participants are reduced to an object for the research, and I can get blinded by my own influence (Krogh 2010, 1–2). By being aware, I can reduce the existing power dynamics through different measures. First, I can delegate part of the power by increasing the influence on the research conversations to the people I talk with. That implies that I clearly communicate the purpose of the conversation in advance and that the participants and I, in retrospect, discuss how we both perceived the
3. Methods—Collect, Cocrate, and Analyze Information

conversation. To create a dialogue and the safe space I aim for, I must communicate with selective authenticity and clearly state to the participants that they can also ask me questions.

A research process requires that ethical concerns are thought through and considered from the planning to possible consequences after the final draft is handed in, including effects that might come to the surface a long time after the actual research (Kvale 2007, 24). To meet the ethical challenges, I had to honestly and authentically make my own biases and background visible, in addition to trying to understand how the different research conversations influence my interpretation of the both previous and future conversations and presented narratives. To participate, the participants signed a letter of consent ensuring informed consent and that the participants accept that I use the knowledge that they and I cocreated in the research conversation. The limited number of people being vocal in the public debate on Norwegian exportation of war material complicated the anonymization process. Thus, I decided to give the participants aliases and further talked with them about what information can be presented to ensure their anonymity.

The method, both ECM and my view on the researcher as inherently being part of what is researched (and the consequences this stance has for the research conversation), might be alien to the participants. Thus, it was important to present the project and how I wanted to conduct the research in a way that was understandable to the participant and honest about the process and method. By clearly demonstrating how I would use the conversation in the research, I gave those who took part the possibility to accept the use of material from our conversation and the way the cocreated knowledge is presented (Krogh 2010, 4). Furthermore, in line with Lederach (1995, 38), the methods I chose to use have implications

19 See attachment 1 in the appendix. The attached letter of consent is the second one. I had to change the letter as I had first promised the participants that I would delete the material after the completion of the research. Later, I was informed that I needed to store the material for a longer time. All the participants agreed to the material being stored and signed the new letter of consent in connection with approving the quotations used. To avoid further misunderstandings, and as it was in the terms of the first letter of consent the participants signed to take part in this research, I made as few changes as possible in the second letter of consent.
3. Methods—Collect, Cocreate, and Analyze Information

for how I approach the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material. It would not be sufficient to ask what cultural nuances in the Norwegian society I need to account for; I also had to ask what the cultural assumptions of the methods I used were.

I believe that to talk and connect with people is a suitable method to deepen my understanding of how the actors understand their lived world. Furthermore, as the researcher cannot be objectively separated from what is being researched, I, as a researcher and the persons participating in the research conversations, cocreate knowledge. With the aim of both cocreating knowledge that can be used to further map the conflict in my search for new courses of action and starting the process of transformation in the encounter, I needed to consider with whom I should talk and what topics and questions I should bring to the table.

3.2 Orient and Analyze the Conflict

As ECM is a tool that could precisely help me to orient the conflict, I used the mapping to guide me from the very beginning. To figure out to whom I should talk and what topics to include in the conversations, I needed a broader overview and more perspectives than my own. Thus, I used aspects from ECM to help me choose both.

3.2.1 Collecting Information

To get an overview of the different narratives, I looked into open-source information available on web pages from organizations, political parties, companies, interest groups, unions, and newspapers. I asked around for sources, attended open seminars20 where topics related to defense are discussed, and paid special attention to sources that I was not familiar with or that presented different views from the ones I have been working to promote. In the process of collecting information, I was searching for insights on how the different actors want

---

20 I attended two seminars in Oslo in January 2019, one with the title Sikkerhetspolitisk seminar (Security Political Seminar, translated by the author) on January 8, held by the organization Folk og Forsvar (People and Defence [Folk og Forsvar. n.d.]), and another with the title Sikkerhetskonferansen 2019: Fremtidens krigføring (The Security Conference 2019: The Future Warfare, translated by the author) on January 12, organized by Oslo Forsvarsforening (Oslo Defense Association, translated by the author).
3. Methods—Collect, Cocrate, and Analyze Information

Norwegian exportation of war material to be talked about and perceived and also on what understandings of the world the different actors had built their arguments upon. My further mapping, both regarding with whom to talk, which I address in the next section, and also what topics to put forward in the research conversations, were based on this collected information.

3.2.2 Choosing Research Participants

Based on the collected information, I used mind mapping to get an overview of the different groups of actors\(^\text{21}\) that I perceived to have a role in the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material. I wanted to meet people who live the conflict in Norway; by that, I mean human beings who somehow have an opinion on, knowledge about, and experiences of the topic in a Norwegian context. As I have worked with the topic for some years, I began close to me and reached out to people I had been in contact with through my work in Changemaker. Since I am especially interested in the narratives that differ from my own, I wanted first to talk to people who represent groups of actors that I knew hold a different view. After the initial mapping, I chose whom to contact by the criteria of getting perspectives from different genders, backgrounds, and positions. As I aimed for research conversations with people who either partly or only work with Norwegian war material in some way, the participants are experts on the topic within their areas.

I used semi-structured, open research conversations with a predefined sequence of themes and some questions but with the flexibility to change the sequence and follow topics or questions that the participants brought up (Kvale 2007, 65). Rather than many research conversations and asking many predefined questions, I searched for a deeper conversation with the participants I talked to. I used my resources to get to know the participants, learning from their knowledge and creating a safe space for the conversations. To create a space for as

\(^{21}\) See chapter 7. Actors.
3. Methods—Collect, Cocreate, and Analyze Information

much cocreated knowledge as possible, I built the guide for the research conversations on initial mapping of the cardinal theme based on the collected information.

3.2.3 Mapping the Cardinal Theme

To guide me in my preparations for the research conversations, I looked to ECM and the themes. To avoid overemphasis, one of the first tasks, according to Dietrich (2018, 54–56), is to identify a cardinal theme. Cardinal themes are commonly mentioned in the narrative (Dietrich 2018, 54–56), and in the narratives of different conflict parties, different cardinal themes can exist. I mapped the cardinal theme based on the collected information. Sensitive to how I would influence the research situation and consequently what was said and which narratives were being told, I used the research conversations to investigate if my assumptions regarding cardinal themes gave a meaningful picture of the situation and, hence, if my assumptions would help orient me in my search for new possible courses of action.

Carl Rogers’s technique of active listening (Rogers and Farson 1987) and Marshall Rosenberg’s process-oriented nonviolent communication (NVC) (2003; 2005a; 2005B; 2012) were useful tools in my quest for the central theme (Dietrich 2018, 54). By listening for the total meaning, not only the expressed words but also the underlying messages (Rogers and Farson 1987, 3), I could get a clearer picture of how the involved actors understood the conflict. NVC helped me to search for the needs behind the actors’ communication and actions. In addition to supporting my analysis of the context, NVC has the power to facilitate the actors in discovering their “entanglement in their own imagined realities” (Dietrich 2013, 83) and consequently helped the involved actors, myself included, to see the topic in question from different angles.

---

22 See section 8.1 Mapping the Cardinal Theme.
23 As I see myself as part of the conflict, NVC also helped me to discover what imagined realities I am entangled in.
4. State of the Art

As I see the researcher as an inherent part of what is researched, my capacity to honestly and transparently show my biases and influence on the design, process, and conclusion was crucial. Furthermore, this understanding has epistemological consequences: the knowledge derived from the research conversations cannot be seen as objective but rather as situated and cocreated by the research participants and the researcher. However, before exploring the theoretical fundamentals of my research and the approach I have chosen, an overview of the state of the art can be useful.

4. State of the Art

In this chapter, I position my chosen approach in relation to existing research and theoretical traditions. Hence, I approach my quest for transformation within the field of Norwegian exportation of war material, building on foundations constructed on insights and perspectives from multiple wise human beings. As this chapter explores the academic work, I want to underline that wisdom, in my perception, is much more than intellectual knowledge. Wisdom is embodied and has to do with our way of dealing with what meet us on our path of life. “We are wiser than our intellects,” states psychologist and therapist Carl R. Rogers (1995, 83, 106), who elaborates “that our organisms as a whole have a wisdom and purposiveness which goes well beyond our conscious thought” (Rogers 1995, 106).

4.1 Overall Approaches to Research Strategies

I chose to approach the topic in question through transrational lenses. With a holistic view on human beings, a transrational approach presents perspectives on conflict transformation that could guide me, both as a researcher and an actor, in a conflict that exists within a world of cultural values and socially constructed worldviews. Secondly, as I am interested in which values are fundamental to our constructed reality, and I further see human beings as more than a product of this social construction but rather with agency and possibility to create and
change, I chose an expanded social constructivist approach. I understand this as a social constructivist approach that includes dimensions elaborated on within humanistic psychology, such as values, emotions, and needs, but also actions and embodied knowledge and skills. This led me to choose collaborative action research as a research strategy. Within this strategy, researchers and participants can explore a topic in society to not only reconstruct reality but, through deeper processes and connection, also become aware of and, if desired, transform our understanding of reality.

4.1.1 A Transrational Approach to Conflict Transformation

I considered at the research question using transrational peace philosophy, developed by the Austrian historian and chair holder of UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies at the University of Innsbruck, Wolfgang Dietrich (2012). Dietrich integrates perspectives from humanistic and transpersonal psychology, system theory, and tantric philosophy (Echavarria Alvarez and Koppensteiner 2018, 6). Through his trilogy, Many Peaces Series (Dietrich 2012; 2013; 2018), he explores and explains the philosophy and how it can be operationalized in the field of applied conflict transformation.

Within the frame of transrational peace philosophy, I further drew on work done by the Colombian senior lecturer Josefina Echavarria Alvarez (Echavarria Alvarez, Ingruber, and Koppensteiner 2018, xvi) and the Austrian peace researcher Norbert Koppensteiner (Echavarria Alvarez, Ingruber, and Koppensteiner 2018, xvii). They are Dietrich’s colleagues at the Unit for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University in Innsbruck, where they together have developed and put the transrational peace philosophy into practice through the MA program for Peace Studies (Dietrich 2018, 306, 330). As transrational peace philosophy draws on a vast range of traditions, it is outside the scope of this study to outline all these and the theories that have influenced it. Rather, I concentrate on the aspects that I see as most important for my exploration of the topic in question and chosen research strategy.
4. State of the Art

In the next sections, I look more closely into how conflict is understood within transrational peace philosophy, the roots that this understanding of human relations has in humanistic psychology, and the concrete foundations of the ECM method.

4.1.1.1 Understandings of Conflict

To understand Dietrich’s perspective on conflict, I looked to American professor John Paul Lederach’s\textsuperscript{24} view of conflict as an inherent part of human relations, an opportunity for growth, and a vehicle for change (Lederach 2003, 18). Lederach stands on the shoulders of British professor and peace worker Adam Curle\textsuperscript{25} (Echavarría Alvarez and Koppensteiner 2018, 6) and Johan Galtung’s earlier work. In 1994, Curle emphasized how transformative energy comes from the parties in the conflict themselves (Curle 1994, 96). Following Curle, conflict transformation has drawn on the knowledge and recourses that exist with and between the conflictive parties. The use of this inherent knowledge is what Lederach built on when he developed his elicitive approach to conflict transformation (Lederach 1995, 55–62). Within transrational peace philosophy, conflict transformation is seen as elicitive\textsuperscript{26} by nature, in distinction to prescriptive approaches, which Dietrich categorizes as conflict resolution (Dietrich 2013, 10).

To understand the perspective on conflict that elicitive approaches build on, I argue that it is important to look to the Norwegian Johan Galtung’s\textsuperscript{27} (1996, VIII, 9) differentiation between conflict and violence. He understands violence as hurting someone’s body, mind, and spirit (Galtung 1996, 2, 31), while conflict, in his view, does not imply that anyone gets hurt (Galtung 1996, 9). Conflict as a natural part of human relations and experience is fundamental to transrational peace philosophy.

\textsuperscript{24} Lederach holds a PhD in sociology from the University of Colorado, is a professor of International Peacebuilding at the John B. Kroc Institute of International Peace Studies, and has written numerous books in the field of peace and conflict transformation (University of Notre Dame n.d.).

\textsuperscript{25} Adam Curle became the first professor of Peace Studies at Bradford University in 1973 (University of Bradford n.d.).

\textsuperscript{26} I explore the concept of elicitive in section 5.3 Conflict Transformation.

\textsuperscript{27} Galtung was important in establishing peace studies as academic field (Peace Research Institute Oslo n.d.).
4. State of the Art

4.1.1.2 Roots in Humanistic Psychology

In line with Curl, Lederach, and Dietrich’s theories of conflict and change, I understand transformative energy to be inherent in the conflict itself. From the gestalt approach and humanistic psychology, Dietrich includes the principle of contact boundary at work into his transrational peace philosophy (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014j). According to Dietrich (2013, 33), “the contact boundary marks the place where tensions between self-preservations and self-transformation enter consciousness and are processed with the aim of redressing the balance.” Hence, “the contact boundary is the place where peace and conflict transformation can be perceived” (Dietrich 2013, 33). Furthermore, Dietrich (2018, 39–46) defines the principle of resonance as one of three basic principles of ECM. The principle of resonance points at the echoes that pass through all our intrapersonal and interpersonal layers in all our encounters (Dietrich 2018, 46). Hence, our relations and encounters become of utter importance for transformation. In accordance with transrational peace philosophy, I see the human encounters in the research conversations as going beyond the cocreation of information and including possibilities for being transformative in themselves.

To explore this transformative power in human encounters, I look to the psychologist and therapist Carl Rogers\(^{28}\) and his active listening (Rogers and Farson 1987). Furthermore, I draw on the thoughts of Marshall Rosenberg\(^{29}\) and his NVC, which play an important role in my understanding of human encounters and my search for needs behind our actions. Similar to Rosenberg, the work of family therapist Virginia Satir (1976, back cover) also influences my understanding of the human encounter. Satir emphasizes how our “internalised images and ideas of others” (Dietrich 2013, 44) hamper congruent communication.

---

\(^{28}\) Rogers developed client-centerd therapy and was important in the founding of humanistic psychology (Dietrich 2013, 38–39).

\(^{29}\) Rosenberg was Rogers’ student in Wisconsin and earned a PhD in psychology from the University of Wisconsin (2005b, back cover). Later, he created NVC (Rosenberg 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2012)
4. State of the Art

To orient the conflict and experiences from the research conversations, I used ECM, methodically rooted in mind mapping. Mind mapping helps the drawer to visualize what is happening inside (Buzan and Buzan 2010, 31) and, hence, both supports memory and orientation (Dietrich 2018, 82) and, through our capacity to associate, makes sense of thoughts. Tony Buzan, who introduced the term, builds on gestalt philosophy and humanistic psychology (Dietrich 2018, 11–12, 20). Together with his brother Barry Buzan, he developed a mind map project (Dietrich 2018, 11). While I draw on this work in relation to mind mapping, I also use Barry Buzan and his colleagues’ work on security theory. In my opinion, as the transrational approach questions the current paradigms, it also nurtures curiosity and asks for an exploration of my own and other’s understandings of the world. To further explore these concepts, I utilized an expanded social constructivist approach.

4.1.2 Embodied Constructivism

To approach transrational perspectives on conflict transformation and scrutinize how cultural and social context influences the topic in question, the human encounters in the concrete research conversations and how we as individuals make sense of the world we are part of, I turned to sociological theories and embodied constructivism. More specifically, in my search for an understanding of what is discussed and what is taken for granted regarding Norwegian exportation of war material, I used the sociologist and conflict theorist Pierre Bourdieu’s concepts of doxa (Bourdieu 1977, 159–171) and opinion. While Bourdieu essentially approaches society with structural lenses, he sees objective social structures as existing only through being lived and reproduced by the actors (Aakvaag 2008, 163).

---

30 Barry Buzan outlined the regional security complex theory and, hence, is an important voice in the Copenhagen School. He was the director of the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI) from 1988 to 2002 (Dietrich 2018, 11).

31 See sections 4.2.2 The Historical Context and the Consequences of Securitization and 6.1 Securitization.
4. State of the Art

Furthermore, I drew on insights from the two sociologists Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1967) and their book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966). In one of the key writings about constructivism, Berger and Luckmann present a thorough perspective on institutionalization and the legitimizing of these institutions (Berger and Luckmann 1967). In addition, to understand the institutionalization in relation to the research topic, I looked to the American sociologist Ronald Jepperson, who approaches institutionalization through organizational analysis. While I do not explain the theories of the English sociologist Anthony Giddens, I still believe that a notion of the discussion around structure and agency, and the influence this discussion has had on sociological theory and social constructivism, can be useful.

While Bourdieu’s theories are oriented toward structures (Aakvaag 2008, 166–168), Berger and Luckmann emphasize agency (Aakvaag 2008, 139), seeing humans as beings that externalize themselves in, and change, both the physical and social worlds (Aakvaag 2008, 90). Through externalization, objectivation, and internalization, Berger and Luckmann argue that social structures are established and reproduced (Aakvaag 2008, 87). In his theory of structuration, Giddens aims to overcome the separation between structure and agency (Aakvaag 2008, 128–130), seeing social structures as both a medium for, and result of, action; thus, agency and structure are mutually dependent (Aakvaag 2008, 139).

To further study the cultural influence on how we make sense of the world, I reviewed the work of the Norwegian social anthropologist Marianne Gullestad and her understanding of culture. Gullestad’s (1989, 32–35) cultural concept includes patterns for understanding as well as patterns for behavior and social values. She argues that from one perspective, culture and social action cannot be separated (Gullestad 1989, 36). This embodied perspective on culture is in line with Bourdieu’s concept of embodied dispositions that he calls habitus.

---

4. State of the Art

(Aakvaag 2008, 160). In addition, I looked to the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) perspective on how human beings internalize and embody culture. To develop a research strategy that values the embodied constructivist position and the consequences this perspective has for the role of the researcher, I turned to action research.

4.1.3 The Role of the Researcher and Action Research As a Research Strategy

I argue that a transrational approach combined with expanded social constructivism virtually requests action research as a research strategy to explore conflict transformation. Subjective and intersubjective social knowledge is seen as focal in constructivist approaches in how we create and understand knowledge (Hershberg 2014, 182–186). In action research, the researcher is encouraged to explicitly explore her or his relationships to the participants and how these relationships influence the knowledge created (Hershberg 2014, 185). To fully understand this influence, I argue that the complete human, with all our layers and how these resonate in human encounters (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014b), must be accounted for. As outlined in section 3.1 Cocreating Knowledge through Research Conversations, I use German philosopher Martin Heidegger’s work to understand the thoughts that action research draws on. I believe an understanding of his twist of hermeneutics, which builds on a phenomenological ontology (Polt 1999, 38–41), is important in understanding the historical fundamentals of action research. Furthermore, Heidegger’s student Hans-Georg Gadamer, and his hermeneutic perspective on prejudices (Nixon 2017, 18–20), is in keeping with Dietrich’s focus of the impossibility of being a neutral peace worker; at best, the peace worker can be all-partisan (Dietrich 2014, 53). The researcher, in Gadamer’s perspective, does not strive for neutrality but rather to make her or his own value position transparent to the reader (Nixon 2017, 18–20, 44–46).

33 Heidegger’s statements have been criticized, and I do not agree with many of the views he put forward, for example, regarding authoritarian governance and Nazism (Polt 1999, 155).
4. State of the Art

Furthermore, and in line with the previous outlined impossibility of separating the researcher and what is researched, I drew on Norbert Koppensteiner’s thoughts about the role of the researcher (Koppensteiner 2018, 59). His work within a transrational framework has similarities with that of Norwegian professor of psychology Steinar Kvale, whose thoughts I followed in the process of taking sufficient ethical precautions in the research situation.

In the process of using action research to cocreate knowledge, I drew on insights from Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury34 and their first- and second-person partial collaborative action research (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 1–10). In addition, I drew on the work of Erling Krogh, a Norwegian professor in the Faculty of Science and Technology at the Norwegian University of Life Science, within the field of participatory action research (Norwegian University of Life Science n.d.). Krogh follows and reflects upon some of the aspects of action research by starting with analyzing a situation that the participants have experienced, including the participants’ experienced challenge(s) (Gjøtterud and Krogh 2017, 8). Krogh further strives to clarify own understanding both for him and the participants and shares these interpretations with the participants (Gjøtterud and Krogh 2017, 8–9), thus including them in discussions of measures to transform the challenge and further work to implement these measures. The desire to transform a challenging situation became the core of many studies where action research is used as a research strategy (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 11). Furthermore, to braid together the different theoretical fundamentals and the concrete human encounters, I relied on thoughts from the Danish psychologist Jette Fog35, using her camel model for the human encounter between researcher and the participant (1994, 33).

34 Bradbury, director of Sustainable Business Research at the USC Center for Sustainable Cities (Reason and Bradbury 2008, xvi), and Reason, earlier director of the Centre for Action Research in Professional Practice in the School of Management at the University of Bath and professor of Action Research (Reason and Bradbury 2008, xxviii), have together edited the first and second versions of The SAGE Handbook of Action Research.
35 I explore Fog’s camel model further in chapter 5.6, The Mountain Model—A Fundament for Connection, Exploration, and Transformation. Together with Steinar Kvale and Bo Sommerlund, Fog founded the Centre of Qualitative Research at the Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences at Aarhus University (Psykologisk Institut. n.d.).
4. State of the Art

Moreover, I looked to the associate professor in educational leadership at the University of Nottingham, Andrew Townsend, who works with participatory approaches to research (University of Nottingham n.d.). Townsend points at the values of a collaborative approach when people with different perspectives on the topic in question and the context of the research come together (Townsend 2014, 17). By bringing together researchers and/or participants with different perspectives, action research can be conducted with the intention to find a common understanding of the situation through a process of mapping different perspectives and listening to different voices and then finding measures for transformation that build on this common understanding of the situation.

I argue that action research can be used as a research strategy within a transrational approach. The connections between transrational approaches and tools used within action research are striking; one example is the tools the researcher in action research or the elicitive peace worker can use to orient him- or herself. Within action research, visual representations of thoughts, associations, and ideas to navigate in the world to interpret information and to recognize patterns are called cognitive mapping (Graham-Cagney 2014, 112–116). Senior lecturer at the Waterford Institute of Technology (n.d.), Anne Graham-Cagney separates three different ways of using cognitive mapping in action research: causal, semantic, and conceptual mapping (Graham-Cagney 2014, 112–116). I argue that through ECM, the peace worker uses aspects from all of these cognitive mapping techniques. Casual mapping supports the peace worker in understanding the context and “in gaining new insights into their own and others’ reasoning and behaviour” (Graham-Cagney 2014, 115). Through semantic mapping, the peace worker can visualize, share, and discuss what is “known and currently understood about a topic” (Graham-Cagney 2014, 115). Conceptual mapping builds on human beings’ use of prior knowledge to understand and gain new perspectives and can help in the integration of new knowledge (Graham-Cagney 2014, 115).
4. State of the Art

Above I have related my choice of research strategy to the understanding of conflict within transrational peace philosophy and perspectives from relevant scholars. To further understand the influence of humanistic psychology, I applied embodied social constructivism to explore why we as human beings understand the world as we do. Thereafter, to build on how I understand the role of the researcher in both a transrational and constructivist approach, I drew on knowledge from scholars who use action research as a research strategy.

4.2 The Theme and Context of the Research

To look at Norwegian exportation of war material and possible courses of action for civil society, an understanding of what the concepts of civil society and the Norwegian exportation of war material comprise is essential. This section outlines the main sources I drew on to paint as correct a picture as possible of the situation around Norwegian exportation of war material, the consequences securitization have on this situation, and what I understand as civil society in this study.

4.2.1 Civil Society

To define what the much-discussed concept of civil society signifies, I reviewed the work done by Lester M. Salamon, professor at the Johns Hopkins University, and Wojciech Sokolowski, senior research associate at the same university (Third Sector Impact. n.d.b). Through the Third Sector Impact Project, a European Union-funded (EU) research project that aims to produce knowledge about how the third sector, a term often used on civil society, can increase its contribution to the socioeconomic development in Europe (Third Sector Impact n.d.a), they have endeavored to create a definition of the third sector. I further looked to an associate professor at the University of South-Eastern Norway (n.d.), Dag Einar Thorsen, to contextualize their understanding of civil society in a Norwegian context.
4. State of the Art

4.2.2 The Historical Context and the Consequences of Securitization

I argue that perspectives on institutionalization and the legitimizing of these institutions can contribute with fruitful insights regarding procedures for export control and the actors' positions in the debate around Norwegian exportation of war material. In my search for a deeper understanding of why the debate unfolds as it does within these institutionalized processes, I looked to theories of securitization. Through lenses of international relations, Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde\textsuperscript{36} (1998) use a constructivist approach to understand the concept of securitization.

To explore in what context dynamics of securitization have evolved and how these dynamics have influenced their context, I took a historical view of the debate around Norwegian exportation of war material. In this regard, I drew on the work of Norwegian historian Olav Wicken (1996). During his time at the Institute of Defence Studies in Oslo, Wicken systematized public available sources of both the regulations and political debate around Norwegian exportation of war material from the end of the nineteenth century to 1992 in his work *Moralens vokter eller våpenkremmer?*\textsuperscript{37} (Wicken 1992).

Additionally, to elaborate on the historical background, to draw a picture of today’s situation, and to get comparable numbers over the years, I researched minutes from parliamentary debates (Stortingstidene 1935) and white papers (Forsvarsdepartementet 1935; 2007; 2015; 2017; Utenriksdepartementet 2012; 2014; 2015; 2017; 2018a; 2018b; 2018c). Based on what companies have reported,\textsuperscript{38} the government annually publishes a white paper with numbers of exported war materials from the previous year. In addition to these yearly published white papers, Statistics Norway (SSB) publishes monthly overviews of products.

\textsuperscript{36} The three professors within the field of international relations have all worked at COPRI (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde 1998, 339; University of Groningen 2017).

\textsuperscript{37} *A Guard of Morals or a Weapon Dealer?* (translated by the author).

\textsuperscript{38} In this research, I use the term “war material” but adopt the categorization used by MFA and the European Union. Consequently, I draw on numbers published by MFA and specify if I use numbers from other sources.
exported out of Norway.\textsuperscript{39} The Norwegian Defense Research Establishment (FFI) also publishes yearly reports of Norwegian exportation of war material.\textsuperscript{40} To get an overview of the different narratives, I drew upon open-source information from organizations, political parties, companies, interest groups, unions and all these actors’ statements at the yearly committee hearing in parliament (Stortingets videoarkiv 2018a; 2018b) and in media, as well as newspaper articles about the topic. To keep informed on development in the industry, I found information on the companies’ web pages, FSI’s website, international magazines, and online platforms that focus on defense. As a backdrop to the research, I followed the development of military expenditure. In this regard, I sought information from academic institutions such as Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO).

4.3 Some among Many Voices

I built my approach on a foundation constructed by wise humans. However, the limitations in the voices I am listening to, and have listened to, deserve to be addressed. The majority are men with cultural backgrounds that, despite the differences, share many similar aspects with my own, either having grown up in Europe or the United States and with degrees from universities in the same countries. Consequently, there might be important perspectives that I do not see. I believe the lack of diversity is a result of both my own conditioning and, thus, bias toward voices that I can resonate with and understand within my own cultural universe and also the fact that these voices have historically been listened to. Nevertheless, being aware that there are multiple perspectives that I have not managed to include, I argue that the insights that I do build on still provide a fruitful fundament.

\textsuperscript{39} SSB’s numbers do not correspond to those published in MFA’s white paper. SSB uses different categories of products and bases the statistics on custom declarations (Sivertstol 2018).

\textsuperscript{40} FFI bases its statistics on MFA’s numbers but includes a category for defense-related products customized for and exported to military end-users that do not demand a license for exportation because the product in itself is not assumed to have a strategic relevance (Pedersen 2017, 14).
In my search for which new courses of action are possible for Norwegian civil society to transform Norwegian exportation of war material, I combined constructivist and transrational approaches using first- and second-person partial collaborative action research as a research strategy. In the human encounters, I further drew upon transrational peace philosophy’s roots in humanistic psychology. To get an understanding of the historical context and today’s situation regarding Norwegian exportation of war material, I utilized theories of securitization and on open-source information from different actors within the field of Norwegian exportation of war material. Grounded in the abovementioned research traditions and lines of work, I could dive deeper into the exploration of theoretical fundamentals.

5. Theoretical Fundamentals

To explore the research topic and new possible actions through the new perspectives I acquired in Innsbruck, a theoretical framework is needed. First, I look into how my cultural background shapes my perspective on how to approach and enter conflict. In that light, I examine how the sphere of doxa, that which is beyond question, influences what is discussed and possibly transformed. Further, I look at theories of institutionalization and how the process of institutionalization has formed the discussion around Norwegian exportation of war material. An exploration of concepts of conflict and how understanding of conflicts forms ways to approach and intervene in conflicts, is followed by a short introduction to transrational peace philosophy and the method of ECM. In the end, I braid the different theoretical fundamentals together in a model for dialogue.

5.1 Culture

To work with conflict transformation, both an understanding of my own cultural assumptions and insights into the cultural context I am working within are necessary. As a Norwegian, I
am familiar with parts of Norwegian culture; however, it is all the more important not to be blinded by what is ‘Norwegian’ and rather get a sense of the subcultures within and between the groups of actors involved in the conflict.

Marianne Gullestad (1989, 39–40) defines culture as an analytical dimension of our behavior. From a societal perspective, Gullestad (32) divides this cultural dimension into three different categories: a sector in society (cultural life), patterns of behavior (for example, fisherman culture), and patterns for behavior (ideas, values, patterns of thoughts, etc.). In her analysis, Gullestad (1989) chooses to focus on patterns for behavior. In my opinion, some important cultural aspects are lost in the definition that Gullestad provides. For instance, it does not include the active aspects. More concretely, I believe what I do (my patterns of behavior) influences what I think, my worldview, and my ideas (my patterns for behavior). I think it is difficult to extract and abstract the culture manifested in action, and expressed in motions, into patterns for behavior. Culture is, in my view, not limited to patterns for behavior, shared values, or tendencies to choose specific actions. Human action and interaction form both the patterns of and for behavior. This is in accordance with James’s and Dewey’s philosophical pragmatism that focuses on the practical usefulness and skills-in-the-world as the necessary activation of knowledge as well as patterns of understanding (Säljö 2016, 85). From my perspective, and in accordance with Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s (1962) phenomenology of the body, as well as Berger’s and Luckmann’s (1967) theories of habitualization and socialization, I think I have internalized and embodied culture through sensual perceptions, development of bodily skills, and social interaction through primary, secondary, and tertiary socialization. Hence, culture is connecting shared values and patterns of and for behavior.

Gullestad (1989, 44–45) further points to Pierre Bourdieu and his distinction between doxa and opinion. Bourdieu (1977, 159–171) puts in focus how those who have power in a
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

society, either explicit or implicit, are those who define doxa. Doxa is “that which is beyond question and which each agent tacitly accords by the mere fact of acting in accord with social convention” (Bourdieu 1977, 169). Thus, doxa is interpreted and understood as natural facts that do not need to be justified but are taken for granted and not up for discussion. Opinion is that which is subject to open discussion. Looking at Norwegian exportation of war material, I believe it is important that I, as a researcher, am aware that I am conditioned through the way I have internalized and embodied culture. Hence, what I see as opinion, and therefore discussable, is limited by my sensual perceptions, development of bodily skills, and social interaction through primary, secondary, and tertiary socialization. As human beings are not constant but always transforming, the sphere of opinion can be transformed and extended. An attentive mind and heart are important, both to emphatically see what is opinion within different subcultures and to look behind the mist of doxa in my own cultural universe.

At the MA program for Peace Studies in Innsbruck, I encountered new dimensions of what it is to be human. Dimensions, conceptualizations, and knowledge that previously were not part of my reality, not part of my habitus, have today become part of what I discuss and the lenses that I use to understand society. Knowing that while these dimensions and concepts are part of the methods I want to apply, they are alienating for many of those who belong to the different groups working with Norwegian exportation of war material. Hence, as that which is part of doxa and that which is part of opinion have implications for what is discussed in Norway, what is part of the different spheres has consequences for how I can approach the conflict in a way that creates mutual trust and understanding.

Doxa is that which is beyond question and what we as part of society, as individuals and groups, tacitly, and I argue often unconsciously, accept and reproduce as truths through our shared values and patterns of and for behavior. Furthermore, Bourdieu points at how we, as actors, embody dispositions that influence our interpretation and our way of being in the
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

According to Bourdieu, this system of integrated dispositions, called habitus, is not something we as actors think about. As the dispositions are embodied, we react quite similarly in different situations and often without reflecting on why we react as we do (Aakvaag 2008, 160).

Bourdieu claims that our habitus can hardly be changed, at least not solely through reflection (Aakvaag 2008, 160). I agree that human beings change through more than bare reflection, but through experiences and by being aware, I argue that change is possible. As I see us as embodied beings, our body, mind, and so much more are part of any process of change. In line with Bourdieu, I believe that human beings integrate the social conditions we grow up in (Aakvaag 2008, 161), but I understand humans to be much more than our habitus. I believe our embodied dispositions are constantly expanding as we encounter different situations that demand that we react in new ways and by meeting people who behave differently than what we are used to. This is in line with Nick Crossley’s interpretation of Merleau-Ponty, with his concept of situated freedom, as a liberator of Bourdieu's imprisonment (Crossley 2001, 120–139). Furthermore, I argue that our habitus, what helps us to handle our daily life, also sheds a veil over doxa and, hence, makes what we unconsciously accept and reproduce as truths harder to discover. As I aim for a deeper insight of what is actually discussed when Norwegian exportation of war material is addressed, and in my endeavor to lift the veil of my own habitus and try to find entry points to discover the field of doxa, I believe an understanding of the process of institutionalization is useful.

5.2 Institutionalization

Norwegian exportation of war material can be looked at through a huge variety of different lenses and academic disciplines. To understand what is discussed—and even more importantly, what is not—I believe that theories of institutionalization can help. I search for
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

the consequences of opinion when the way a topic—here, exportation of war material—is addressed and dealt with is institutionalized.

The American sociologist Ronald Jepperson (University of Tulsa, n.d.) differentiates between three main approaches to the term ‘institution’ in today society: In sociology, the term is related to organized and established ways to act, and these actions are seen as the rules that apply to the specific society. In political science, institution is mainly used to describe big or important public or state organizations or associations. In the anthropologic tradition, institutions are seen as cultural or historical effects of a social order (Eriksson-Zetterquist et al. 2014, 246). In my search to understand processes that make something become part of doxa and other things not, I chose to explore the sociological perspectives of institutionalization.

In their book *The Social Construction of Reality*, sociologist Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann argue that “all human activity is subject to habitualization” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 53). Through habitualization, we narrow down the number of choices we have to make (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 53–54). The process of institutionalization, then, is what “occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 54). While Berger and Luckmann’s concept of habitualization differs from Bourdiou’s habitus, I claim that there are interesting similarities in light of institutionalized doxa. According to Berger and Luckmann, our perception of reality is created through socialization (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 129–131). I claim that also Bourdiou, as he argues that our habitus impacts our perception of the world (Aakvaag 2008, 160), puts importance on how our reality is created through socialization or through our internalized embodied dispositions (Aakvaag 2008, 160–162). Hence, habitus is habitualized.

Through his concept of habitus, Bourdiou deals with how habits are embedded, often on a subconscious level, through socialization (Aakvaag 2008, 160–162). As habitus is not
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

only a personal matter but deeply anchored in the process of socialization into the society we are part of, and hence our culturally shared patterns, habitus can be associated with doxa. Doxa can be seen as an institutionalized common ground of action.

Aakvaag (2008, 168, 170) points at how Bourdieu, while he wants to disclose how structural power relations limit our perceived possibilities, gives the individual little potential to self-break out of these limitations. Berger and Luckmann (1967) present, in my view, a more positive understanding of the individual human being’s possibility to create and, hence, go beyond the perceived limitations. Still, as Aakvaag (2008, 91–92) points out, Berger and Luckmann tend to regard structure and agency to be in a continuous contradiction. Even though they consider social structures a result of human agency, Anthony Giddens to a larger degree emphasizes, in his theory of structuration, the interdependence between agency and structure to overcome this contradiction (Aakvaag 2008, 128–130). The structuration theory deals with social structures as both a medium for and result of action. Thus, agency and structure are mutually dependent (Aakvaag 2008, 139). In my experience, the social structures I am within and part of are exactly that: a medium for and result of action. While I use Bourdiou’s concept of doxa, I argue that we as humans, by becoming aware of both our own habitus and how habitualized patterns of and for behavior maintain doxa, can choose to act and create differently. Hence, we can challenge doxa and widen the sphere of opinion.

Jepperson (1991, 143–163) follows up on Berger and Luckmann’s perspective on the repeating nature of habitualized actions. He approaches institutionalization through organizational analysis and defines that “institution represents a social order or pattern that has attained a certain state or property; institutionalization denotes the process of such attainment” (Jepperson 1991, 145). Pattern or order is here understood as “standardized interaction sequences” (Jepperson 1991, 145). The production of, license process for, political discussion of, and civil society’s engagement in the processes around Norwegian exportation
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

of war material are all part of standardized interaction sequences. In light of Jepperson’s (1991) discussion on institutionalization, it can be argued that the aforementioned processes have been institutionalized.

That a process has become a ‘standardized interaction sequence’ does not inherently signify that the process has become part of doxa or that institutionalization sheds a veil over other possible understandings of a process. Berger and Luckmann scrutinize mechanisms that make human beings experience the institutionalized world as an objective reality. “It has a history that antedates the individual’s birth and is not accessible to his biographical recollection. It was there before he was born, and it will be there after his death” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 60). They underline that “the institutions, as historical and objective facticities, confront the individual as undeniable facts” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 60). Their point is visible in the Norwegian public debate, where many aspects, such as the nation state and the nation state’s need to defend itself, are taken for granted. Undeniable facts are reinforced by the institutions “coercive power over him [the human being], both in themselves, by the sheer force of their facticity, and through the control mechanisms that are usually attached to the most important of them” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 60). This point can also be contextualized in relation to Norwegian exportation of war material. The institutions are justified through law, custom, and by being seen as undeniable facts.

The cultural aspects that I have internalized have consequences for how I understand, interpret, and relate to both the topic of exportation of Norwegian war material and how to engage in conflicts. Furthermore, what is culturally accepted to be part of the sphere of opinion varies within different culturally shared values and patterns of and for behavior. I argue that the topic of Norwegian war material has been institutionalized through standardized interaction sequences and, further, that the mechanisms that justify the institutions as undeniable facts have limited the field of opinion. Consequently, to find new
courses of action that can contribute to transformation, I believe it is essential to look behind the structures and institutions and meet the human beings living the conflict. Moreover, a deeper understanding of how conflicts can evolve, develop, and transform is useful.

5.3 Conflict Transformation

As I want to look at Norwegian exportation of war material using methods that, when I was introduced to them at the MA Program for Peace Studies, opened my eyes to dimensions I had never thought about before, an introduction to the thoughts behind these methods is necessary. To transform conflict, an understanding of what to transform, or what conflict is, is essential. As outlined in section 4.1.1 A Transrational Approach to Conflict Transformation, I follow the understanding of conflict as natural, an opportunity for growth, and a vehicle for change (Lederach 2003, 18). Hence, conflict is not to be avoided but to be seen as a possibility for transformation and engagement in the broader web of relationship patterns and, accordingly, what nourishes the visible conflict (Lederach 2003, 15–22). Conflicts are constructed in the sense that they depend on the meaning we as human beings attach to events and issues (Lederach 1995, 40–46). This meaning is often influenced by the values and patterns of and for behaviors that we share with different groups we are part of. We have all experienced conflict and hence bring with us social knowledge about how conflicts operate and how to handle them. We use this knowledge to interpret conflicts, to give conflicts meaning, and to choose how to relate to them (Lederach 1995, 40–46). Thus, a conflict is just a conflict if someone understands it as such.

Following Adam Curle, the transformative energy, or the resources needed to transform the conflict, exist within the conflictive parties themselves. “Since Conflict Resolution by outside bodies and individuals has so far proved ineffective it is essential to consider the peacemaking potential of the conflicting communities themselves” (Curle 1994, 96). Therefore, to transform the conflict, a peace worker can elicit the transformative process
through building on the social knowledge that already exists within the conflictive system to remove blockages. Building on insights from the four peace researchers Curle, Galtung, Lederach, and Dietrich, I believe conflicts create opportunities to adapt to the context we are in and to address that which does not fit anymore. The conflict episode opens the possibility to address the epicenter by exploring previous experiences, underlying layers, and relational patterns (Lederach 2003, 32).

Lederach defines the conflict episode as “the visible expression of conflict rising within the relationship or system, usually within a distinct time frame” (Lederach 2003, 31). In that way, “it generates attention and energy around a particular set of issues that need response” (Lederach 2003, 31). The epicenter of a conflict is “the web of relational patterns, often providing a history of lived episodes, from which new episodes and issues emerge” (Lederach 2003, 31). Thus, “if the episode releases conflict energy in the relationship, the epicenter is where the energy is produced” (Lederach 2003, 31). As conflict in itself is not a bad thing that needs to be solved; the idea is to utilize the opportunity for change by creatively using the energy that constitutes the conflict (Galtung 1996, 9; Lederach 2003, 18; Dietrich 2013, 9).

In *Preparing for Peace. Conflict Transformation Across Cultures* (1995), Lederach introduces the term *elicitive* and distinguishes between an elicitive and prescriptive approach to training in the field of conflict resolution and mediation. While, in the prescriptive approach, the trainer is seen as an expert that transfers knowledge to the participants, the participants themselves are the main resource in the elicitive approach (Lederach 1995, 40–46). Hence, the role of the trainer in the elicitive approach is to elicit the knowledge and be a facilitator of transformation (Lederach 1995, 55–62). This distinction between prescriptive and elicitive can be transferred to peace work and conflict transformation.
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

Following Lederach, the participants in the research conversations are, in this study, the main resource of knowledge both about the topic at stake and for transformation. I believe the participants and I, as actors in the conflict, can, by becoming aware of our own understandings and roles in the situation, use this knowledge as a resource when handling the conflict. As a researcher who sees myself as part of the conflict, I maintain that the conversations can both clarify my own understanding and role and also other actors’ understanding of and roles in the situation. This can help me to relate to their ways of approaching and handling the situation. If I manage to empathically put myself in the research participants’ shoes, seeking to feel how it is to have the research participants’ positions in the conflict, I can utilize these insights both in my relation to the actors and in my aim to create spaces for transformation.

With the term *transformation*, I aspire to leave the more prescriptive *resolution* (Dietrich 2013, 10). Rather than focusing on a desired end state, I search for new entry points that can contribute to a change in status quo. Lederach describes conflict transformation as both a response and the capacity to imagine something different:

Conflict transformation is to envision and respond to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships. (Lederach 2003, 14)

According to Lederach, conflict transformation includes three change processes. I argue that these processes move the focus from the past and future to the here and now. First is the *reduction of violence*, which is important to create secure spaces where humans can unfold and experience peace in the present moment. Secondly, the process of *increased justice in the direct interaction and social structures* moves the focus from previous actions that one or more of the actors might have perceived as unjust to the relations between human beings in the here and now. Lederach also underlines the need for increased justice in social structures. I resonate with his emphasis, which I see as related to the past, present, and future. As social
structures influence our lives and our experienced challenges and possibilities, it is essential to increase justice in these structures. Thirdly, with his emphasis on the change processes to respond to real-life problems in human relationship, Lederach again leaves abstraction and looks to human beings’ concrete lived and experienced problems.

As in Marshall Rosenberg’s NVC, Lederach moves the focus away from our own judgments of situations to real-life problems in relationships and, hence, to what human beings feel and need. Furthermore, I understand transformation as a process that goes beyond superficial changes of the conflict episodes and aims for deeper transformation reaching toward the epicenter of the conflict (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014c) and argue that to reach such change processes, we must put human relations in the center. Conflict is seen as a natural phenomenon in human relations that opens a window for transformation. Elicitive approaches to transformation build on the social knowledge within and between the conflictive parties. In addition, elicitive approaches creatively use the energy in the conflict to transform the situation. In line with this understanding of conflict and transformation, Dietrich developed a transrational peace philosophy.

5.4 Transrational Peace Philosophy

In 1997, Dietrich called for many peaces (Dietrich and Sützl 2006, 282–302). In accordance with the postmodern thoughts of that time, Dietrich purposed that there exist as many understandings of peace as people thinking and experiencing peace (Dietrich in UdeAInternacional 2016). Later on, he developed an anthropology of peaces. Through scrutinizing how peace has been understood and interpreted in history and culture, Dietrich (2012) identifies and distinguishes between four different main families of peaces: energetic, moral, modern, and postmodern. In each of these peace families, Dietrich identifies a main theme and then calls for a fifth peace family: transrational peaces. Transrational peaces
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

integrate the other families and see peaces as the balance between all four\textsuperscript{41} (Dietrich 2012, 265–269).

Transrational peace philosophy values and applies modern science to quantitative research methods. However, recognizing the limitations a material understanding of the world has for the possibilities of transformation, the transrational approach calls for a holistic understanding of humans. That implies that the complete human, with all our layers, is always involved in the conflict (Dietrich 2012, 274; UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014a) and is therefore important in the process of transformation. To talk about and write down the implications of such a perspective, systematization is needed. For systematization of the inner human aspects, Dietrich (2013, 201) builds on the chakra map from the philosophy of Yoga. Furthermore, he uses terms from systemic and transpersonal psychology to describe the layers located outside the persona (Dietrich 2013, 203). Following the tantric principle “as above, so below; as within, so without,” the intrapersonal and interpersonal layers\textsuperscript{42} exist in a reciprocal relation (Dietrich 2013, 203; Echavarría Alvarez and Koppensteiner 2018, 10). From humanistic psychology and the gestalt approach, Dietrich brings the principle of contact boundary at work and points at how the persona, or the “episodic surface of a conflict” (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014j), is the contact boundary between the inner and outer layers (Dietrich 2013, 203).

Dietrich calls for a pluralistic approach to peace developing what he calls a transrational peace philosophy. He includes perspectives from humanistic and transpersonal psychology, system theory, and tantric philosophy. Transrational peace philosophy comprises more than what can be explored through an intellectual exercise. Building on humanistic psychology, transrational peace philosophy focuses holistically on a combination of sensation, emotion, thought, and bodiliness, the body as an acting subject. Furthermore,

\textsuperscript{41} I explore the four themes further in section 5.5.3 Themes.

\textsuperscript{42} I explore the different layers, both intrapersonal and interpersonal, in section 5.5.4 Layers.
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

transrational peace philosophy includes aspects of transpersonal psychology, Yoga and tantric philosophy through human connection, spirituality and “dimensions of human existence that lies beyond individual self awareness” (Dietrich 2018, 72). From system theory, Dietrich draws on insights of how open systems are interrelated and reproduce themselves. He sees the possibilities to exceed and further create new equilibriums, falling out of and creating new balances.

From the world of thoughts, Dietrich brings his philosophy to the concrete lived experience and provides a guiding tool for those who want to work with conflict in an elicitive manner. Leaving the vision of an idealized end state, the elicitive peace worker can use ECM in search of the possible next step that can guide the energy in the conflict toward balance of the system (Echavarría Alvarez 2014). Here, the manifold tool of ECM deserves a more thorough exploration.

5.5 Elicitive Conflict Mapping

Elicitive Conflict Mapping is a mapping method; it is not the conflict in itself. The method is not used to map a territory but is instead a tool the user draws on to orient the conflict. Mapping is a common exercise in crises management, though ECM uses the tool of mind mapping. According to Tony Buzan (who coined the term) and Barry Buzan, a mind map is “a graphic representation of radiant thinking” (Buzan and Buzan 2010, 31). Based on human beings’ capacity to associate and free thinking, mind mapping helps the drawer to realize thoughts (Dietrich 2018, 82) and create “an external mirror of what is going on inside” (Buzan and Buzan 2010, 31). Hence, mind mapping supports memory and orientation (Dietrich 2018, 82). A mind map is, as the word describes, a visual mentalization of what is going on inside. To utilize a broader specter of our human capacities, mind mapping can be combined with other methods like dance, which again can nurture new maps. In a research
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

conversation, colors, size, and patterns can be used to visualize feelings, changes in tone, or rhythm in the voices of the conversations partners, body language, and so on.

Leaving the vision of an idealized end state, through ECM, the elicitive peace worker orients him- or herself to seek the possible next step that can guide the energy within, and in the relations between, those who are part of the conflict toward balance of the system (Echavarria Alvarez 2014). In the UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies online guide to ECM, three ways of using ECM as a working method are put forward (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014f). Firstly, ECM can be used as an individual orientation guide where the peace worker mind maps layers and themes in the conflict parties’ narratives of the episode (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014g). Secondly, through ECM, a team can create a common visualization of the conflict. In that way, ECM becomes a tool for communication and orientation for the team (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014h). Thirdly, ECM can be used as a transformative tool in itself, where the parties draw their own mind maps that can widen their perspectives of and create an understanding of the other parties (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014i). I primarily use ECM as an individual orientation guide to analyze the conflict.

Following Dietrich’s presentation of the different parts of ECM in his third book in the Many Peaces Series, *Elicitive Conflict Mapping* (2018), I explore the principles and then look into the themes, layers, and, finally, levels. First, I dive into the center of the map, where the elicitive peace worker is situated.
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

5.5.1 The Elicitive Peace Worker

The elicitive peace worker is in the center of the elicitive conflict mind map. Elicitive conflict transformation demands sensitive and attentive peace workers who are prepared and present (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014e). Elicitive peace work calls for the peace worker’s ability to perceive the transformative energy in a conflict and consequently offer a fitting framework for transformation (Dietrich 2014, 53). By entering a conflict or changing the way she or he relates to it, the peace worker affects the conflictive system. Hence, the “peace
worker can never be neutral or non-partisan, but in the best of all cases all-partisan” (Dietrich 2014, 53). Based on humanistic psychology, Dietrich (2014, 53) summarizes an ABC for elicitive peace workers: “Awareness of their own physical, emotional, mental and spiritual limits; Balance between compassion and self-protection; and Congruent communication” (Dietrich 2014, 53). In addition, I argue that it is important that the peace worker wants to explore and bring to awareness one’s own habitus as the peace worker’s embodied dispositions influences her or his interpretation and way of being in the social and physical world. Furthermore, an understanding of the habitualization of habitus is useful to bring to awareness that own values and patterns of and for behavior are just some of many that are possible.

As I aim both part of and researching the conflict around Norwegian exportation of war material, and at the same time want transformation, I see the peace workers’ ABC as a useful guidance. To meet the actors and listen without judging based on my own conviction and worldview, I explore two tools that can support concurrent communication and enrich the lives of human beings who meet in an encounter: Carl Rogers’s active listening and Marshall Rosenberg’s NVC.

5.5.1.1 Active Listening and Nonviolent Communication

Active listening and NVC build on the shared methodical assumption in both humanistic psychology and transrational peace philosophy that human beings are relational, and, hence, perception is relational (Dietrich 2013, 38). As perception is relational, it can be changed in the encounter. Carl Rogers puts importance on human beings’ relationships and capacity—hence, possibility—in “altering their self-concepts, basic attitudes, and self-directed behaviour” (Rogers 1995, 115). Congruence, acceptance, and emphatic understanding in the encounter create room for such transformation (Rogers 1995, 115–117). To empathically
understand the human beings I encounter, sensitive listening is an important tool. Listening is here understood as much more than hearing words.

In 1987, Carl Rogers and Richard Farson wrote about the concept of active listening. This type of listening goes beyond hearing the words; the listener emphatically pays attention to all forms of communication: facial expression, tone of voice, body posture, breathing, and all other parts of a message (Rogers and Farson 1987, 4). When actively listening, the listener gives all of his or her presence in the moment and hears the meaning “below the conscious intent of the speaker” (Rogers 1995, 8). According to Rogers and Farson, active listening “requires that we get inside the speaker, that we grasp, from his point of view” (Rogers and Farson 1987, 3). They (1987, 3) point out how the messages we convey often has two components: the content and the feeling behind the content. To actively listen and show a person that we are interested in what he or she says and feels (Rogers and Farson 1987, 4), we as the listeners must respond to feelings and stay sensitive to the total meaning of the message conveyed, including nonverbal communication (Rogers and Farson 1987, 3–4).

Active listening is a simple yet complex tool and practice that can be placed within a transrational framework:

Active listening carries a strong element of personal risk. If we manage to accomplish what we are describing here—to sense deeply the feeling of another person, to understand the meaning his experiences have for him, to see the world as he sees it—we risk being changed ourselves… (Rogers and Farson 1987, 5)

Consequently, active listening is crucial for the peace worker to empathically connect (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014k) and is fundamental to communicating nonviolently.

Marshall Rosenberg, who developed and systematized NVC, was a student of Carl Rogers. Rogers’s concept of active listening is a notable basis of Rosenberg’s empathic communication (Rosenberg 2003, 4). Rosenberg was born in 1934 in a Russian-Jewish immigrant family in Ohio (Dietrich 2013, 76). They moved to Detroit, where he grew up in a
turbulent area and experienced racially motivated discrimination (Rosenberg 2003, 1–2). With a desire to understand what lies behind such violent behavior, Rosenberg (2003, back cover) developed NVC. He claims that it is human nature to contribute to others’ well-being (Rosenberg 2005b, 13) but that we as human beings have been educated for thousands of years in a way that disconnects us from our “compassionate nature” (Rosenberg 2005b, 18). Thus, he searched for a way of communication based on “mutual giving from the heart” (Rosenberg 2003, 4) that nourishes compassion and outlined a four-step NVC process. The first step is, for the person communicating, to observe, without judgment, what is happening in a situation. Secondly, is to describe the feeling that the person experiences when observing the situation. Thirdly, to identify and express what needs of her or him that connect with these feelings. The fourth step is to express a request, based on her or his needs, that, if answered, will enrich our lives (Rosenberg 2003, 6–7). Rosenberg (2003, 79–85) emphasizes the difference between demand and request and how requests can be experienced as demands when the listener thinks she or he will be punished if she or he does not act in accordance to what has been requested.

Rosenberg (2003, 15–18) also underlines how moralistic judgments, pointing at the wrongness of people “who don’t act in harmony with our values” (Dietrich 2003, 15), lead to life-alienating communication. According to him, it is these “ways of communication that alienate us from our natural state of compassion” (Rosenberg 2003, 15). Dietrich (2013, 76–85) points at Rosenberg’s criticism of a binary rationality, a moral concept of peace and his spiritual conception of life, and places NVC within a transrational framework.

Rosenberg (2012, 143–144) does not make a point of mentioning that he sees NVC as a spiritual practice. Rather, in spite of practicing NVC as a mechanical technique, people experience a connection that they have not experienced before:

The spiritual basis for me is that I’m trying to connect with the Divine Energy in others and connect them with the Divine in me, because I believe that when we
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

are really connected with that divinity within one another and ourselves, we can enjoy contributing to one another’s well-being more than anything else. (Rosenberg 2012, 149)

As fundamental to such a connection and to communicate nonviolently, Rosenberg (2003, 7) highlights honest expressing and empathic receiving. To empathically connect, we must be present in the moment and connect with what is alive in the other person (Rosenberg 2005b, 79–81). In this way, active listening and NVC are grounded in one of the principles in ECM, the principle of resonance.

5.5.2 Principles

ECM builds on three principles: correspondence, resonance, and homeostasis. Correspondence indicates how, while the conflict happened in the human encounter and along human contact borders, the episode is influenced and formed by “intrapersonal and interpersonal layers of the respective context” (Dietrich 2018, 39). The principle of resonance points at how every encounter of human contact boundaries is shaped by echoes that pass through all intrapersonal and interpersonal layers (Dietrich 2018, 46). Homeostasis is based on system theory and emphasizes how systems, individuals, or groups naturally seek balance and harmony. Homeostasis is a Greek concept describing the balance of open, energetic systems and is characterized by “complexity, balance, feedback and self-organisation” (Dietrich 2018, 48).

Dysfunctional systems exist when the flow of energy toward balance is blocked. An elicitive approach to conflict transformation embarks on the challenge of being a temporarily external flow of energy into the dysfunctional system, with the aim of supporting the removal of blockages that hamper the dynamic equilibrium (Dietrich 2018, 47–53, 82). Dynamic equilibrium is “the harmonization of intra- and interpersonal tensions and conflicts” (Dietrich 2018, 53). Dietrich (2018, 48) points at how ethical regulations and social conventions can be
interpreted as homeostatic organizations in society and, furthermore, how laws can be homeostatic tools.

With the principles as a fundament, one of the first questions that arise when approaching a conflict is where to start. Dietrich (2018, 53–56) begins with the importance of recognizing the cardinal theme in the conflict episode.

5.5.3 Themes

Dietrich (2012; 2018, 53–56) identifies four cardinal themes that correspond to the peace families’ views of peace. In the energetic understanding, peace out of harmony is empathized; in moral images of peace, the aspect of justice is stressed; modern images of peace highlight the importance of security; in postmodern images of peace, questions of truths are central (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014a). Transrational peace comprises all these aspects and recognizes the need for “personal harmony, relational security, structural justice and cultural truth” (Echavarría Alvarez 2014, 64). Through a thematic shift, a transrational understanding of peace “appreciates and applies the rationality of modern science while it transgresses its limits and embraces holistically all aspects of human nature for its interpretation of peace” (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014a). The thematic emphasis can often be found in the conflicting parties’ unmet needs put forward in the episode (Echavarría Alvarez 2014, 64). For example, the need for safety, in what is portrayed as a more unstable and dangerous world, leads to a thematic emphasis on security, or the unmet need for information can expresses itself in a thematic emphasis on justice (Echavarría Alvarez 2014, 64).

Using ECM as a tool to orient oneself in the conflict, it is important that the peace worker is aware of the implications of how the tool itself creates the framework for how the peace worker sees the conflict. For example, by mapping the themes, the peace worker’s attention is drawn to the themes and consequently away from something else. What the peace
Theoretical Fundamentals

5. Theoretical Fundamentals

worker identifies as the cardinal theme is not only essential for what perspective the peace worker enters the conflict from but also influences how she or he will be perceived by the conflictive parties (Dietrich 2018, 54, 56). Furthermore, the peace worker must consider his or her own background and relation to the conflict parties. As Dietrich states:

The decision for an access point depends upon the personal, substantive and institutional profile of the conflict worker, of the means at the team’s disposal and its mandate, of its relationship to the involved conflict parties and then, only as a secondary consideration, upon narrated or superficially perceived facts. (Dietrich 2018, 56)

The cardinal theme can guide the elicitive peace worker. Furthermore, an elective approach to peace work demands the peace worker to look at the layers behind the episode (Echavarría Alvarez 2014, 65).

5.5.4 Layers

In ECM, the chakra philosophy of Yoga is used to identify layers existing beyond the material and personal surface and name the intrapersonal layers: sexual, socioemotional, mental, and spiritual (Dietrich 2013, 201). What we see as a conflict on the material and personal surface is what Lederach calls an episode.43 Using terms from systemic and transpersonal psychology and in line with the principle of correspondence, Dietrich (2013, 203) identifies four interpersonal layers outside the material and personal surface of the persona: family, community, society, and policity. In addition, he recognizes the global layer, where the intra- and interpersonal merge (Dietrich 2013, 203).

In the material and personal surface, we find the episode; this is where the direct encounter between the different parties occurs (Dietrich 2013, 209–213, Echavarría Alvarez 2014, 65). Underneath the episode, we find the sexual layer, corresponding to the outer family layer. Dietrich (2013, 209–213) problematizes how the sexual-familiar layers have been suppressed in moral and modern peace work and underlines the difficulties in removing

43 See section 5.3 Conflict Transformation for Lederach’s definition of episode.
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

blockages if we do not accept human beings with all our layers. Accepting and understanding our layers and how they are affected in the encounter are essential to the peace worker’s capacity to communicate authentically and selectively in the encounter with the conflictive parties, which is necessary to discover blockages (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014d). Our family, either biological or not, influences our personalities as human beings and, hence, the way we communicate.

Furthermore, we find the socioemotional and communal layers, which illustrate the resonance between the intra- and interpersonal layers. As human beings, we need social belonging; we want to be seen and respected. When we experience encounters at our human contact boundary, echoes that shape this intrapersonal aspect of our being pass through both intrapersonal and interpersonal layers (Dietrich 2018, 64–66). Hence, deprivation of social interaction and recognition leads to emotional harm (Dietrich 2018, 64). Dietrich (2018, 65) uses a Javanese proverb to illustrate how correspondence of the intrapersonal and interpersonal layers plays out between the socioemotional and communal layers. “Look for your place and act accordingly” (Dietrich 2012, 1–2; 2018, 65), describes how “when a community is in dynamic equilibrium, each member can search for her and his place and act accordingly” (Dietrich 2018, 65). If each person does this, the intra- and interpersonal tensions and conflicts harmonize and consequently create communal dynamic equilibrium. Dietrich (2018, 67–68) underlines the importance of a peace worker’s ability to be aware of and heal his or her own wounds in the intrapersonal need for belonging before entering a conflict. To support removal of blockages that both hamper dynamic equilibrium and get in the way of connecting with what is alive in the human beings he or she meets, the elicitive peace worker must know what is alive in her- or himself.

The next layers are the mental and societal. In line with the chakra philosophy of Yoga, this is where we find the heart and mind. The potential to reason, abstraction, and
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

Consciousness are situated in the intrapersonal mental layer and give us as human beings the capacity to become conscious of the sexual and familiar, as well as socioemotional and communal, layers (Dietrich 2013, 215–216; 2018, 68–72). Furthermore, mental awareness “balances the sexual, familial and communal energies in an episode” (Dietrich 2013, 216). While our ability for abstraction is important to give meaning to what we feel, see, and experience, it can also be used to justify destructive patterns of thoughts and actions—ideological, religious, or material (Dietrich 2018, 71). Dietrich points out how “a conflict whose episodes are primarily driven by the notions of the involved parties turns into a battle of arguments as soon as Third Sides feed even more reason into the system” (Dietrich 2018, 71) and further advocates for a reorientation toward other layers.

The intrapersonal spiritual layer and interpersonal polictitary layer are beyond rationality. Here, we find the perspective of the internal observer—merely presence, conscious of own existence without acting (Dietrich 2013, 220–221)—and the interpersonal counterpart, the external observer attempting to observes without judgment or comparisons.

At the global layer, the human contact boundaries dissolve, and intrapersonal and interpersonal layers merge. As the contact boundaries dissolve, actor-oriented peace work no longer makes sense, and consequently, situated far away from the conflictive layers, the global layer is not put into use in applied conflict work. Being in itself, as a sense of our oneness and interrelated existence, is what makes it possible to experience peace. Hence the global layer provides important impules for peace work (Dietrich 2013, 223-224).

Dietrich refers to Lederach44 and defines epicenter as “the nothing, the void behind Being” (Dietrich 2013, 224). Here, the void is not understood as nothingness or something lacking but, quite the opposite, the fertile ground of existence, that which fuels the episodes. Hence, the epicenter cannot be located in time and space as one single event or action but

---

44 See section 5.3 Conflict Transformation for Lederach’s definition of epicenter.
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

exists rather as an untouchable net of energies, relations, and experiences that together create an underlying field of life-giving energy. Through working on blockages to facilitate the free flow of energies in different layers, the conflicting parties themselves and the elicitive peace worker can transform the conflictive energy. “Elicitive peace work may be deeply rooted in the epicenter, but it manifests in the dance of the persona, in the episode, and in the roles through which peace work is revealed in specific systems” (Dietrich 2013, 224). Thus, building on the principle of resonance, the peace worker can both become aware of underlying energies through the echoes that manifest in the persona and create echoes that resonate to the epicenter, for example, in the encounter of human contact boundaries.

The principle of correspondence is essential in the similarities between the intrapersonal and interpersonal layers, from the global layer to the epicenter, echoes resonate. The community influences the individual encounters and context, while the context and community are influenced by the individual encounters. Hence, transformation can occur at many levels in a society. Lederach (1997) provides a model that accounts for these different levels.

5.5.5 Levels

Dietrich builds on Lederach’s (1997) vertical categories of top leadership, middle-range leadership, and grassroots leadership, visualized as a triangle. Lederach (1997, 39) understands top leadership as the key political, military, and religious leaders, and Dietrich (2018, 77) adds big, important business management. Lederach presents different approaches to middle-range leadership and characterizes the actors in this group by the fact that they have access to both the top level and the grassroots (Lederach 1997, 41–42). The grassroots symbolize the masses of the society. Hence, the grassroots leadership consists of the actors in the triangle who understand the fear and suffering at the ground level and are familiar with local policies and leaders (Lederach 1997, 42–43).
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

Lederach (2005, 79) further develops his model and underlines how the actors at all levels influence each other through feedback loops. Dietrich (2018, 79–81) uses the Sri-Yantra symbol to acknowledge how the qualities of one level exist within the other levels. Based on two triangles pointing in opposite directions, and with triangles within triangles making part of bigger triangles, the Sri-Yantra both illustrates the complexity of the interactions and relations between and within the actors and how different levels exist within different levels.

Looking at both the levels and layers with a cultural lens, adding shared values and patterns of and for behavior, it is necessary for the elicitive peace worker to acquire both contextual and cultural knowledge before entering a conflict. The relational web between different actors can often be complexity of connections, behaviors, thoughts, prejudices, norms, and feelings. Being aware of the complexity, a short review of the aspects of ECM is useful.

5.5.6 ECM in Short

Through mapping themes, layers, and levels, guided by the three principles of resonance, correspondence, and homeostasis, ECM is a tool for the peace worker to guide her- or himself in the conflict. Building on a systemic perspective, where the peace worker by definition influences the conflict as she or he enters, the peace worker must begin with her- or himself. Through working on her or his own layers, guided by the principles, openness, curiosity, and love, the peace worker can prepare and limit the possibilities of blindly using her or his own cultural biases and preconceptions. By mapping the conflict, the peace worker can find fruitful entry points to remove the blockages in the conflictive system. In addition, knowledge of the parties’ own understanding of what is going on, is useful information to understand what exists within and between the conflictive parties.
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

5.6 The Mountain Model—A Fundament for Connection, Exploration, and Transformation

I started out wondering if the ways Changemaker, other parts of civil society, and individuals have approached the topic of Norwegian exportation of war material have contributed to long-lasting transformations or, on the contrary, created polarities and enemy pictures. Do our ways of engaging with the topic—the different views and interests—create resistance or spaces for dialogue? Have we, the involved actors, together created a debate climate where the social and political risk for publicly engaging in the topic has become too high?

With a transrational understanding of human relations, conflict, and conflict transformation as a basis, I looked at the topic in question with an expanded constructivist approach. To see the underlying understandings and shared values, patterns of and for behavior, that influence how the involved actors see the topic in question, I drew on social constructivism. I explored both Bourdieu’s (1977, 159–171) theory of doxa and opinion and Berger and Luckmann’s views on the process of (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 60). With the aim of going inside and beyond the structures and institutions, I looked to Lederach (2003) and his thoughts on human beings and our capacity to transform conflicts, which is in line with a transrational understanding. Furthermore, through Dietrich’s (2012; 2013; 2018) transrational peace philosophy and the roots in humanistic psychology, I searched for a deeper understanding of human beings, all our layers, and how these layers influence the human encounter and, consequently, the conflictive system.

Based on the aforementioned theoretical fundaments, I realized that I needed to look at the conflict differently than what I have done before. Thus, I aimed to acquire a broader understanding of how different actors understand both the topic in question and what underlying assumptions exist behind the actors’ perspectives and understanding of their own role in the conflict around Norwegian exportation of war material. I place the transformative
nature of the research in itself in focus and visualize these theoretical fundamentals in a mountain model.

The human encounters in the research setting where I met the participants can be visualized as two mountaintops (See Figure 2). The tops share parts of their fundament, which picture their shared mountainness. These mountaintops can be a metaphor for two human beings,\(^{45}\) where the very bottom fundament is their shared humanness.

![Figur 3: The Mountain Model (Widskjold 2019a)](image)

According to Rosenberg, one aspect of our shared humanness is how “everything we do is in service of our needs” (Rosenberg 2005b, 11). Without creating an exhaustive list, some of the human needs we all share are our need for interdependence, physical nurturance, autonomy, celebration, integrity, and play (Rosenberg 2005a, 66). Through being aware of and connecting to our shared needs, I believe we can increase both our want and ability to understand other human beings. As humans, we share the ability to experience and feel. Furthermore, the shared mountain base visualizes how we are all connected. This connectedness is in line with the principle of correspondence, which reminds the elicitive peace worker that our differentiated experiences feed back to the common foundation. In a conflict, there are seldom solely two mountaintops but rather a community of mountains, a

\(^{45}\) The mountain model does not portray the dynamic nature of human beings.
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

mountain range, where different mountains share both same and different fundaments in complex relational webs (See Figure 3).

In line with the collaborative focus in action research, Lederach underlines the transformative power of dialogue: “Conflict transformation suggests that a fundamental way to promote constructive change on all these levels [interpersonal, intergroup, and social structural] is dialogue” (Lederach 2003, 21). The principle of resonance underlines the transformative power of encounters by reminding the elicitive peace worker how echoes pass through all intrapersonal and interpersonal layers form every encounter of human contact boundaries (Dietrich 2018, 46). Consequently, the process of research in itself is not only part of objective mapping. By gathering and cocreating knowledge through research conversations, I am already entering the conflict in another way than what I have previously done. Hence, I already influence the conflictive system differently than I did before. If I as a researcher take this understanding of research, conflict, and transformation seriously, the human encounters are of utmost importance, and the process of conducting the research is in itself a new course of action to transform Norwegian exportation of war material.
Dialogue with the participants about how the cocreated information is used is important to contribute to relations where long-lasting transformation is possible. The participants need to feel safe, understood, and heard. To continue the communicate also after the research conversations can secure that the participants do not feel misunderstood or that the information is misused and thus ensure further space for transformation. The focus on relations is crucial not only because of the relations between the participants and me, but as “multiple individual wounds and trauma feed back into the community” (Dietrich 2018, 66), the encounter in itself is an experience that both the participants and I feed back to our communities and, hence, that influence further possibilities for transformation. Aware of that I am also aware that my possible entry points into a conflict depend on my “relationship to the involved conflict parties” (Dietrich 2018, 56).

For the purpose of explaining the model and visualizes the concrete encounter between two human beings—in this research, the participants and me—I simplify the mountain model by looking at two concrete mountaintops (Figures 2, 4, 5, and 6). Cultural aspects are placed on the mountain where it stretches from the shared fundament and upward toward the top (See Figure 4). The bigger the fundament and smaller the gaps between the tops, the easier it is to understand each other, communicate, and create a dialogue. For example, it is easier to communicate if two people speak the same language, have similar associations to a concept, or interpret body language, such as shaking the head, in the same way. That does not mean that it is not possible to communicate across huge gaps, but then communication often demands a bigger will to understand, more tolerance, and patience. Still, as many of us have experienced, it can be easier to communicate with someone coming from the other side of the world than members of own family. I believe this, on one hand, is connected to the history of episodes and, thus, more complex webs of relations we share with family members and other human beings in our close surroundings. On the other hand, I
believe that a narrow gap creates a greater likelihood of *hjemmeblindhet*. That is when people take similarities and differences as given and implied. Thus, *hjemmeblindhet* can both disguise disagreements and give preconceived interpretations of statements and events.

I have drawn the mountain model from Jette Fog’s (1994, 33) camel model. Fog uses the model to visualize how we are interrelated and existing in a natural, cultural, and social context. According to Fog (1994, 33-34), the individual develops through life a historical dimension that only can be drawn out of the interrelated context. In line with an elicitive approach, Fog underlines the consequences of the inevitable interconnectedness between researcher and what she or he is researching or researcher and conversation partner. In an encounter or conversation, two people are interconnected in their active relation to each other. Their interpretation of each other builds on both their own life history dimension and how the active encounter defines them as individuals for the other (Fog 1994, 34). I include these aspects in the mountain model (See Figure 4).

---

46 Home blindness (translated by the author).
47 Jette Fog borrows the model from Jens Mammen, a professor in the department of psychology at the same university where Fog works, the University of Aarhus (Aarhus Universitet. n.d.).
5. Theoretical Fundamentals

To picture the difficulties with actually understanding the underlying assumptions that influence how human beings understand and, thus, exist and act in the world, I visualize that the mountains are partly covered by water: a lake between the mountaintops; rivers; and waterfalls that flow down the mountainsides, and a sea covering some of the base of the mountain (See Figure 5). The lake, rivers, waterfalls, and sea cover both parts that the mountaintops share and parts that belong to different mountaintops. The water symbolizes perspectives, values, and needs that we have not explored, which can be both unconscious and subconscious. When the water between the peaks is explored on the basis of exploratory talks (See Figure 6), where actors listen to each other and are honest about their own values, perspectives, needs, and justifications for these values, perspectives, and needs, the relations can change in different ways. I point at four possible relational changes:

1. **Shared value foundation**: As we dive into the unknown water, that which we thought were different foundations might not be. It can become visible that even though we have different views on a concrete topic, like Norwegian exportation of war material, our value foundations are similar, and we try to fulfill the same needs.

2. **Common views based on the different values**: When we explore what lies beneath the water, it might turn out that we have different values or value foundations but that it is possible to find common views based in the different values.

3. **Stretch values that initially could not be unified**: We can, through conversation, gain other perspectives on values and discover what needs lie behind both our own and other human beings’ actions and perspectives. Through this discovery, we might stretch our values, which initially could not be unified, and thus connect through shared needs and understanding.
4. *Value foundations cannot be reconciled:* It may turn out that we see ourselves and the other human beings more clearly and become surer that our different views and value foundations cannot be reconciled. Still, I argue that if we connect and manage to see the other’s perspectives from her or his viewpoint, the new relation most probably will be characterized by increased respect and understanding.

Figure 6: Parts of the mountain that are shared between the two mountaintops and parts that belong to the individual mountaintop are covered by water, or unexplored perspectives, values, and needs.

*Figur 6: The Mountain Model, Unexplored Perspectives, Values, and Needs (Widskjold 2019)*
Figure 7: The water does not disappear when we dive into it, but the diver can become aware of the perspectives, values, and needs lying beneath. When aware, we can transform our relations and come to understand if our underlying assumptions actually fit our understanding of the world and if our chosen strategies help us to meet our needs. As the water runs down the mountainsides from the lake that lies between the mountaintops—visualizing an encounter between two human beings—the encounter is a useful place to start. That said, exploration of the water that only covers parts of the individual mountaintop also contributes to more clarity and can contribute to transformation.

To explore what lies beneath the water—under the lake between the mountaintops, beneath the rivers and waterfalls that flow down the mountainsides, and below the water that covers some of the fundament of the mountain—entails increased cultural knowledge and increased knowledge of the subconscious and the psychological as a basis for the actors to understand themselves and the other actors better. Consequently, the actors, in their interaction in the encounter, enlarge their possibilities to change values and perspectives and, hence, to transform a situation or relation perceived as immovable. I argue that to really connect with our shared humanness and understand why we see the world as we do, we need the courage to dive into the water. It is outside the scope of this thesis to look into shadows,
unconsciousness, and all aspects of the complexity of life. What I argue is that through exploring aspects of what is there and not addressed—our needs, values, and perspectives that lie behind our different argumentation and views on Norwegian exportation of war material, concealed by institutionalized processes and our social habitus—we can come to understand both if our underlying assumptions actually fit our understanding of the world and if our chosen strategies help us to meet our needs.

I used ECM to guide me in the search for the underlying values, needs, and perspectives. The peace families helped me to identify what assumptions are hidden in the narratives, the layers helped me see what needs are expressed through the narratives, and the principles guided me in understanding the conflictive system. Through the mountain model, I visualized how the theoretical fundaments manifest in the concrete moment of the research conversation and the possibilities for transformation in this encounter. At the same time, the mountain model visualizes how we are building our understanding of the world, and the human beings we meet, on underlying perspectives, values, and needs that we are not aware of. I argue that by exploring these underlying assumptions and by wanting to understand each other, we take transformative steps. Being aware of the possibilities for the research in itself to be transformative, in addition to my aim to uncover new possible actions that can lead to transformation, I could prepare for the human encounters the research conversations consist of. Awareness of one’s own ABC, a will to understand the other human being, and courage to be transformed in the process are all essential aspects to dive into the water.

Before explaining whom I chose to talk with, and to understand the context of these research conversations, I first explore the topic of Norwegian exportation of war material, both from a contemporary and historical perspective.

48 I explore the ABC for peace workers further in section 5.5.1 The Elicitive Peace Worker.
6. Norwegian Exportation of War Material—An Introduction

Before diving deeper into the analysis of the conflict, I believe a clarification of my personal perspective on the situation in Norway today regarding exportation of war material is useful. To clarify, I explore the conceptualization of securitization and its consequences, glimpse into the historical background, and elaborate on the discussions around the words used in the debate today. As outlined in section 2.1 Overview Of a Conflictive Puzzle, I am looking at the public debate and narratives around Norwegian exportation practice. The narratives vary with the narrator and what channels the narrator uses. Hence, the conflict is expressed differently, influenced by who is in power to set the rules for how the public discussion is played out.

In my perspective, the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material in Norway is normally smoldering. Then, when a news article points at the possible use of Norwegian war material in an armed conflict in which a country that has been allowed to buy Norwegian war material participates, the conflict catches fire. Actors express their views and provoke a reaction before the conflict smolders again until the next thrust. Except for the committee hearings in parliament, there are seldom many actors present. At the committee hearings, various actors are present, but the hearings are regulated to an extent that limits the actors’ possibility to express their views, and specific talking spots for specific actors make dialogue impossible. Consequently, an overview of a range of different peaks is needed to get a sense of the underlying relational web. Nevertheless, the peaks are opportunities to address the epicenter of the conflict (Lederach 2003, 32).

While diving into the historical development of Norwegian exportation of war material, I realized a striking similarity in how the topic was debated in the 1930s and the debate today. In spite of some minor differences, the main arguments are the same now as they were about eighty to ninety years ago. After years and years of discussions, the debate today builds on “the web of relational patterns” (Lederach 2003, 30) that provide “a history of
lived episodes, from which new episodes and issues emerge” (Lederach 2003, 31). Thus, a historical overview can give me a broader understanding of the situation today. Before going into the historical roots of the public debate and previous changes in the guidelines regulating the exportation of Norwegian war material, I believe a conceptualization of securitization and consequences of securitization for the topic in question is fruitful.

6.1 Securitization

To enter the field of security, I want to start with a glance at Dietrich’s (2012, 130–131) criticism of how peace, humans, and relations are understood in international relations, where the research interest is the relationship between nation states. Dietrich points at how the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes and the realist school of international relations feed a war culture driven by fear and desire for security (Dietrich 2012, 124–134). Bringing Dietrich’s reflections to the Norwegian context, I notice how the humans beings who made the decisions at a high level in the Norwegian state chose to establish a weapon factory as soon as the country entered into union with Sweden in 1814, after being subject to Danish rule. The reasons were both to create weapons for Norwegian soldiers and our allies and to create jobs within our own borders (Arkivverket 2018; Statsarkivet i Kongsberg 2018).

The three professors in international relations, Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver, and Jaap de Wilde (1998, 23–24), use a constructivist approach, where “security issues are made security issues by the acts of securitization” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 204). An issue is securitized if the issue is presented as an existential threat, and as a consequence, the response and actions justified can be outside what is normal political procedure (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 21, 23–24). Hence, securitization can be interpreted as a further intensification of what is politicized, understood as issues that are part of public policy through decision-making processes in government or other local governance institutions. On the other hand, it can be seen as the opposite of politicization by claiming that for security reasons, the issue
Norwegian Exportation of War Material—An Introduction

should not be openly discussed and instead handled by top leaders in secrecy (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 27–29). Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde point at how, through security rhetoric, the securitization of issues that touch upon national defense is often institutionalized. Furthermore, they underline how the securitization gets visible in the rationale for decisions, if inquiring. “Behind the first layers of ordinary bureaucratic arguments, one will ultimately find a—probably irritated—repetition of security” (Buzan, Wæver, and de Wilde 1998, 28). Their observation is in accordance with my experience when I, as part of civil society working with Norwegian exportation of war material, tried to get access to information about the exportation.

While the Norwegian historian Olav Wicken (1996, 28) worked at the Institute of Defence Studies in Oslo, he pointed at how Norwegian membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) led to the security arguments included in the defense not only of Norway but all of NATO. Consequently, the topic was further securitized and decisions made on a level that lies even further away from the Norwegian population. In spite of the well-known fact that the United States exports to countries that are not allowed to buy war material directly from Norway, the Norwegian exportation of war material to the United States and other countries in NATO, such as Turkey, is rarely discussed in the public sphere. However, export to countries that are not part of NATO and have a state system that civil society in Norway describes as authoritarian—for example, Saudi Arabia but also Qatar, Thailand, and others—has been discussed and criticized for years. I believe one of the reasons for this exportation to be openly discussed is that it is less securitized. In addition to international institutions such as NATO, the former sector is further securitized on a level far from the public sphere through the interconnection between companies and states in different

49 I mention Turkey as the arguments for not exporting to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Thailand also apply for Turkey. Turkey was, in 2018, described as “not free” by Freedom House in its annual report assessing conditions for civil liberties and political rights (Freedom House 2018).
6. Norwegian Exportation of War Material—An Introduction

countries. Thus, the questions are either not discussed openly, or withholding of information is seen as legitimate.

Remembering Dietrich’s critique of international relations, the concept of securitization, described as going beyond politicization, builds on our system of nation states. The arguments build on, and reproduce, an understanding of security within this system of nation states. As Norwegian production of war material and the rules for exportation are voiced as part of national defense, I argue that the decision-making processes are securitized. Within this system, I often see nation states, institutions, and procedures. Consequently, I forget that we, human beings, have created and recreate these structures. Picking up on Dietrich’s perspective on the nation state, I believe there is a need to look behind the structures and see the human beings. With a conceptualization of securitization and thoughts about how the process of securitization has influenced the public debate around and about Norwegian exportation of war material, I look to history to get a broader understanding of the topic in question.

6.2 A Historical View on the Debate

The laws regulating the industry that produces war material can be traced back to the end of the nineteenth century, but it is during the interwar period, after several initiatives through the League of Nations, that the guidelines began to take the form we can recognize today (Wicken 1992, 10–26). Then, as today, the legislation did not say anything about which specific criteria should be used to approve a license for export of weapons and ammunition from Norway to a specific country but rather what should lead to a rejection of a license application. The boundaries for who should not be allowed to buy Norwegian war material are drawn by the parliament, and it is up to the responsible ministry to interpret and operationalize.
6. Norwegian Exportation of War Material—An Introduction

In 1935, Norwegian Parliament decided the first criteria for which countries should not be allowed to buy weapons and ammunition from Norway (Wicken 1992, 25–26). The reason for the debate was the sale of ammunition from Raufoss Ammunition factory to Bolivia, in 1934–1935, which at that time was at war with Paraguay. Norwegian authorities had approved export despite the fact that Norway had supported an arms embargo in the League of Nations (Wicken 1992, 10–25). The main arguments for sales that were posed in the debate in parliament in 1935 were similar to those that characterize the public debate today: the need to maintain the industry in peacetime in order to equip Norway’s capacity to defend itself in wartime; financial sustainability for the companies; that if Norway stopped exporting, someone else would take its place in the market; and, perhaps most importantly, jobs (Breiland 2018, 00:25:12; Eriksrud 2015; Stortingstidene 1935, 734–750; Wicken 1992, 10–25).

The resolution put forward by parliament in 1935 were nevertheless more critical to the exportation of war material and the global consequences of the Norwegian industry that produces war material than what we see in today’s public debate. The Ministry of Defense pointed out how the ammunition and arms industry, with its employment around the world, is a major obstacle to peace work (Forsvarsdepartementet 1935, 2364). In particular, the last recommendation from the committee dealing with foreign affairs at that time mirrored the skepticism that existed in the population and between politicians regarding Norway’s role in strengthening other countries’ military capacity. The committee recommended:

Det henstilles til regjeringen å la utrede spørsmålet om og eventuelt fremkomme med forslag til omlegging til civil produksjon ved de militære verksteder i så stor utstrekning at fremstillingen av våben og ammunisjon begrenses til nasjonale forsvarets behov. Omlegningen må skje med det formål for øie å sikre de arbeidere og funksjonærer som er knyttet til denne industri fast arbeide.51 (Den forsterkede utenriks- og konstitusjonskomite 1935, 181)

50 Today, Nammo AS.
51 The government is recommended to assess the question of, and possibly present proposals for, transition to civilian production at the military factories to such an extent that the production of weapons and ammunition is
At the same time, the decision shows that the need to secure jobs was given the highest priority. Although the employment argument in Norway today is usually raised in relation to the industry’s contribution to technological development, I argue that the labor unions still have much informal power in the decision-making process regarding the regulation of the exportation of Norwegian war material.

The guidelines that regulate the Norwegian export today refer to decisions from 1959 (Utenriksdepartementet 2014, paragraph 2.2). In that year, the guidelines were changed because of sales of war material to Latin America. The Norwegian government had, after several rounds of assessments, accepted to export to the Baptista regime in Cuba. The employment situation in Raufoss was the main reason for the license being granted (Wicken 1992, 35–38). Before the war material arrived in Cuba, Fidel Castro had taken the power. Thus, Norway had exported war material to Castro. It became clear that neither the government nor the bureaucrats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) had been aware of the resolutions from 1935 and that exports should not have been permitted if the decision from the interwar period had been followed (Wicken 1992, 38–40). As a result, parliament adopted new criteria for which countries should not be allowed to buy Norwegian war material. Despite the fact that it was claimed that the decision from 1959 built upon what was decided in 1935 (Wicken 1992, 43–44), important differences have become important for which countries are allowed to buy Norwegian war material today. I want to highlight the change from only approving licenses to export to “land som ikke befinner seg i borgerkrig eller krig med mindre denne av Folkeforbundets kompetente organer er erklært for legal forsvarlig”52 (Stortingstidene 1935, 750) to not approving licenses to export to “areas where there is a war or the threat of war or to countries where there is a civil war”

limited to the needs of national defense. The restructuring must take place with the purpose of ensuring permanent work for the workers and officials associated with this industry (translated by the author).

52 “Countries which are neither at civil war or in war, unless this war is declared legally justifiable by the competent bodies of the League of Nations” (translated by the author).
6. Norwegian Exportation of War Material—An Introduction

(Utenriksdepartementet 2014, paragraph 2.2). The changes from 1935 to 1959 opened for export to countries that participated in war outside their own geographical areas.

In the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, Norwegian exportation of war material increased. While the government’s statement and parliament’s decision from 1959 remained as a fundament, the guidelines were changed several times. Norwegian industry became more oriented toward export and the production, to a greater extent, of collaborative projects (Wicken 1992, 45–88). In addition, it became more difficult to separate civil and military goods (Wicken 1992, 71–88). From being mainly two state-owned companies that exported, Raufoss ammunition factory and Kongeberg Våpenfabrikk, several private companies appeared on the market (Wicken 1992, 108).

In light of today’s debate, two changes are especially worth mentioning. In 1974, the MFA made a distinction between different military products (Wicken 1992, 60–66). The consequence of the distinction can be that countries that initially were not allowed to buy Norwegian war material at all could buy products in the categories that are classified as less dangerous. On the other hand, the distinction at its time of introduction recognized that war material is far more than weapons and ammunition (Wicken 2092, 63).

In 1977, parliament decided that if Norway were to participate in international cooperation projects, the products had to comply with Norwegian regulations (Wicken 1992, 67–69). After protest from the industry, this was changed in a cooperation agreement with the Swedes on November 9, 1983, when Sweden’s rules were used as the basis for further export. In 1990, MFA confirmed the change in practice (Wicken 1992, 75–78). Consequently, components or parts of more complex weapon systems or products produced in Norway, but put together in another country as part of a cooperation agreement, do not follow the
Norwegian regulations to the final destination. The MFA guidelines state that end-user\textsuperscript{53} certification may be dispensed given that “Norwegian parts, subsystems or components are integrated with parts from other sources, and the finished product is not designated as Norwegian” (Utenriksdepartementet 2014, paragraph 6.2). Hence, as long as the final product does not appear to be Norwegian, the Norwegian regulation does not come into practice. Thus, even though Norwegian legislation did not accept export of products in category A\textsuperscript{54} to Saudi Arabia, there was no violation of Norwegian law when the investigative journalist Amund Bakke Foss (2018) published pictures of Norwegian missiles (which classify as category A) on Saudi Arabian fighters. The missiles had been exported to Germany and placed on the fighters there. The finished fighters did not appear to be Norwegian, and therefore German law came into practice.

Since 1992, the guidelines that the MFA uses when processing the applications for export have been publicly available (Utenriksdepartementet 2018b, 15), and since 1996, the government has presented an annual report on which countries bought Norwegian war material the previous year (Utenriksdepartementet 2018b, 7). In 1997, there were a number of debates on Norwegian export control in parliament. As a result, parliament collectively stated that before granting a license for exportation, an assessment that includes “consideration of a number of political issues, including issues relating to democratic rights and respect for fundamental human rights” (Utenriksdepartementet 2014, paragraph 2.2) had to be carried out.

Despite specifying that human rights and democracy are important parts of the assessment, we have in recent years seen an increase in exports to regimes where the democratic rights are limited. In particular, record contracts with Oman in 2015 (Kongsberg

\textsuperscript{53} “End-User Certificates, a document used in international transfers to certify that the buyer is the final recipient of the materials, and to which a number of re-export or control clauses can be added” (de Taisne and Abilova, n.d., 19).

\textsuperscript{54} I describe the different categories in section 6.4 Words and Concepts.
Norwegian Exportation of War Material—An Introduction

Gruppen 2014) and Qatar in 2018 (Kongsberg Gruppen 2018) have led and will continue to lead to the conclusion that a larger proportion of the Norwegian exportation of war material goes to governments in countries with highly authoritarian regimes.

History shows that changes in the regulations are often a result of either pressure from the industry or episodes that the public perceive to be export scandals. This became evident during fall 2018, when Norway stopped issuing export licenses for export of war material to Saudi Arabia after the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.\footnote{In the situation with Khasoggi (see chapter 1, Author’s Perspective), I argue that external factors, more precisely, that other countries stopping their exports, affected the government’s decision to stop the Norwegian exportation to Saudi Arabia.} After being formed by history since the end of the nineteenth century, what do the regulations look like today?

6.3 Regulations Today

To map the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material, a brief overview of how the decision-making process works today is useful. This outline of the process starts from the point of where information is publicly available. The procurement and selling process, especially the initial parts, are characterized by high levels of secrecy, and I have only been able to access a limited amount of reliable information. What is certain is that the processes are closely related, often tied together by industrial cooperation agreements regulated by the Ministry of Defense (Forsvarsdepartementet 2007; 2017). A web of representatives from companies and authorities initiates the processes (Johnsen 2010; Prestegård 2014). The industry and Norwegian license authority in the MFA keep in close contact to ensure that deals are inside what can be approved within the Norwegian legislation and MFA’s guidelines. The companies apply for export licenses from the Norwegian license authority in the MFA. A normal export license is usually valid for six to twelve months, but there are exceptions that ensure longer validity (Utenriksdepartementet 2015;
Utenriksdepartementet 2018c). The exporting companies are responsible for reporting exported products to the MFA (Utenriksdepartementet 2018b, 8).

The numbers the companies have reported are published in an annual white paper. After the publishing, the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense invites all interested to an open committee hearing about the content in the white paper. Thereafter, the committee presents its comments and concrete recommendations that, in the end, are debated in the parliament. Changes require majority in parliament after this debate. This institutionalized process contributes to our elected representatives annually discussing Norwegian exportation of war material and how the export is regulated. The white paper includes the MFA’s guidelines, which contain criteria from the EU, the government’s statement of 1959, parliament’s decision from the same year, parliament’s clarification from 1997, and parts of international agreements. The guidelines are based on the government’s statement of 1959, parliament’s decision from 1959, and a clarification of these unanimously endorsed by parliament in 1997 (Utenriksdepartementet 2014, paragraph 2.2). The interpretation of the guidelines (Utenriksdepartementet 2014) and legislation (Export Control Act 1987; Forskrift om eksport av forsvarsmateriell mv. 2013) is the core of the discussion in Norway, and these documents create a framework for what is discussed politically and by civil society.

I perceive the decision-making process to be institutionalized through “standardized interaction sequences” (Jepperson 1991, 145) both between the industry and the authorities, and civil society and the authorities. Furthermore, security is used as an argument to keep information away from the public discussion. Consequently, interactions between actors with different views outside the institutionalized, standardized interaction sequences are rather uncommon. While the concrete regulations and processes are important, I must dive deeper to actually understand the public discussion. Hence, by looking into words and concepts used by
different actors, I try to become aware of the values these different words and concepts bring with them.

6.4 Words and Concepts

Words have a meaning. Words awake feelings and different associations. We interpret words differently depending on our own mood, own experiences, and who is the sender of the words. I claim that what words used on the items produced in Norway and exported out of the country do have an impact on how I, as a Norwegian, relate to the export. Consequently, the words we use influence if, and how, we hold our politicians accountable. I choose to use the term war material for any product listed at any given time in List I and List II by the MFA. Those are products where the producers need to apply for a license from the MFA to legally export the products out of Norway.

The MFA refers to products on List I as forsvarsrelaterte varer and to products on List II as flerbruksvarer. It uses strategiske varer as a common term for both forsvarsrelaterte og flerbruksvarer. During the process of licensing, the MFA divides products on List I into category A and category B. According to the MFA, category A comprises weapons, ammunition, and some types of military equipment. Other products with “strategic capacity to influence the military balance of power beyond the immediate vicinity” are also included in category A. All products on List I that do not have properties or uses as defined

56 Krigsmateriell in Norwegian (translated by the author).
59 Defense-related products (translated by the author).
60 Dual-use products (translated by the author).
61 Strategic goods (translated by the author).
for products in category A are placed in category B. *Flerbruksvarer*,\(^{62}\) or products on List II, are products and technology developed for civil use but that are identified to have an important military application (Utenriksdepartementet 2018b, 5). The MFA uses terms that equal the terms used in EU legislation (Commission Directive [EU] 2017/2054, Commission Delegated Regulation [EU] 2017/2268). The Swedish MFA (Utrikesdepartementet 2018), on the other hand, calls products on List I krigsmateriel.\(^{63}\) For products on List II, the Swedish MFA uses the term *dubbla användingdområden*,\(^{64}\) which is a similar term to the one used by Norway and the EU. Before 1991, Norwegian authorities used annet krigsutstyr,\(^{65}\) a term that in 1991 was changed for military equipment, subsequently defined as “*utstyr spesielt konstruert eller modifisert for militært formål*”\(^{66}\) (Wicken 1992, 101) and later replaced with the terms used today.

I chose the term *war material* because I do believe that it creates more correct associations than the terms *defense material* and *strategic goods*, those the government and MFA often use when referring to any product on List I and List II. Secondly, I find *war material* to be a sufficiently comprehensive term. I do not want to contribute to a language that gets lost in technicalities, which I perceive is what happens in the public debate in Norway. Few people know the actual signification of the terms *A-material, B-material*, and *dual-use products* because the terms do not say anything about how the products are used. *Weapon export* is often used in media, but it is a term that, from a technical perspective, is very limiting and only refers to those parts of war material that can classify as fully working weapons.

\(^{62}\) *Flerbruksvarer* are divided into ten categories: nuclear materials, facilities and equipment, special materials and related equipment, materials processing, electronics, computers, telecommunications and “information security,” sensors and lasers, navigation and avionics, marine, and aerospace and propulsion (Commission Delegated Regulation [EU] 2017/2268).

\(^{63}\) *War material* (translated by the author).

\(^{64}\) *Dual-use products* (translated by the author).

\(^{65}\) Other war equipment (translated by the author).

\(^{66}\) “Equipment designed or modified specifically for military purposes” (translated by the author).
6. Norwegian Exportation of War Material—An Introduction

I know, however, that by choosing the term war material, I will be classified as belonging to one of the groups of actors. Forbund for forståelse mellom folkene ved kirkene used the term war material when they lobbied for stricter regulations already in 1935 (Stortingstidene 1935, 739). I could have chosen the terms used by the Norwegian authorities and the industry. That would, in my opinion, imply that I legitimize their wording and that I regard it as the most neutral. In addition, one Google search on my name and my opinions on Norwegian exportation of war material are revealed. Being honest about where I come from and my view on Norwegian weapon export is the only way I can be perceived as liable and communicate coherently and authentically on this topic.

Plenty of loopholes and gray zones exist in the Norwegian regulation of exportation of war material, and it is outside the scope of this research to look into all the challenges. Nevertheless, to contextualize the reader and provide a picture of what kind of materials are not covered by the definition and words I have chosen, I want to mention two of the challenges that often are raised by Norwegian civil society. Firstly, as mentioned in section 6.2 A Historical View on the Debate, parts produced in Norway and put together in another country as part of a cooperation agreement do not follow the Norwegian regulations to the final destination. Secondly, even though I use other words, I follow the categories used by the MFA. Consequently, I consider products that need an approved license for legally being exported out of Norway as war material. In the Norwegian regulation, this definition does not include products produced by Norwegian companies outside Norway. Products produced by companies owned by Norwegians, or even partly by the Norwegian state but produced in daughter companies localized outside Norway, follow the rules for exportation in the country where the daughter companies are localized (Svensgård 2018, 00:17:33).

67 In my search for creating space for transformation and for a deeper understanding, when communicating with the participants and in the research conversations, I used and problematized the use of and associations with different terms.
7. Actors

Aware of the loopholes and the limitations of the different definitions, I wanted to avoid the research conversations and the research in itself becoming a battlefield of technical definitions of what kind of war material should be included and what words to use. Even so, the words are important for how I understand the world around me and for my perspective on what we are actually discussing when we discuss Norwegian exportation of war material. Which words I use are important in the human encounter with the different actors and in my attempt to widen the sphere of opinion. To both communicate authentically and create a space where the participants and I feel safe, I addressed the words and concepts as one of the topics in the research conversations.68

The historical development of the regulations, the decision-making process, and what words are used to describe what is going on are all puzzle pieces in the complex picture of Norwegian exportation of war material. With these aspects in mind, I seek new pieces to the research puzzle. To fill in more of the blank spaces in the puzzle, I study the actors’ own perspectives on, and meaning in, their lived world. To find whom to talk to, I looked to transrational peace philosophy and the practical tool of mind mapping.

7. Actors

Based on the collected information in committee hearings in the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense and research done both for the past months and for campaigns I have developed in Changemaker, I mapped the main actors in the conflict around and about exportation of Norwegian war material. I further divided these actors into broader groups and described how I understand the different groups in relation to the topic in question.

68 In the research conversations I used the term defense material when I perceived it as necessary to create a safe space and needed connection to to research participant.
69 See section 3.2.1 Collecting Information.
I circled (with purple) four of the groups of actors I had identified on my mind map: labor unions, industry, political parties that want status quo or less strict regulation, and bureaucrats. These are groups that in my experience look at Norwegian export of war material in a way that differs from the view I am familiar with through civil society. Therefore, I believe conversations with representatives from these groups can broaden my understanding of the situation, and I can acquire new insights on how the actors themselves understand the situation.

In the context of Norwegian exportation of war material, I place the actors in these groups mainly into what Lederach (1997, 41) calls middle-range leaders, except for the main decisions makers within the group of authorities and industry, who, according to Lederach (1997, 38–40) and Dietrich (2018, 77), can be placed in the category of top-level leaders. Nevertheless, in my search for participants for the research conversations, I sought actors who do not normally defend their views in the media. I rather sought the ones who have the front figures’ backs, the ones who really know the topic and are providing the front figures with their information and knowledge. Hence, also within the umbrella groups authorities and industry, I sought what I categorize as middle-range leaders.
7. Actors

The yellow arrows represent foreign actors. Norway is not an isolated island but rather, the contrary, highly influenced by the world around it. Thus, to give as comprehensive a picture as possible, a more thorough investigation into foreign actors’ influence would be needed. Even bigger is the need for the voices of human beings who feel and have felt the consequences of the utilization of Norwegian war material. However, such an investigation is out of the scope of this research. I perceive the following group of actors to be important in the search for new courses of actions: authorities, political parties, industry, labor unions, civil society, research institutions, and media. A brief introduction to the different actors is useful here.

7.1 Authorities

While all the political parties represented in parliament can be called authorities regarding the topic in question because the topic is up for discussion yearly, and the majority in parliament decides if the regulations or the implantation of these regulations should change, I want to put focus on the government. The government has the main responsibility for how the regulations are practiced, and in situations where controversial exports are allowed, the specific case is formally to be handled by the government. The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries is the ministry that owns the two biggest producers of Norwegian war material: Kongsberg Gruppen and Nammo AS. The Ministry of Defense is strategically important both regarding industrial cooperation with foreign companies and the strategic role of the industry that produces war material in the defense of Norway (Forsvarsdepartementet 2007, 5, 21–24, 28–33; Forsvarsdepartementet 2015, 5–6). The MFA houses the section for export control, where license applications are processed. Consequently, the MFA is the ministry responsible for interpreting and, through the processing of license applications, applying the guidelines. Hence, as part of the authorities, I have placed bureaucrats. The bureaucrats do not have the power to change the law or regulations, and thus cannot be held accountable in the way
7. Actors

politicians can be. Nevertheless, the bureaucrats in the section for export control are the ones who interpret the guidelines and approve or deny applications for export licenses. Thus, the bureaucrats in the MFA have a central role in the institutionalized and securitized decision-making process of Norwegian exportation of war material.

7.2 Political Parties

The political parties represented in parliament are those who historically have drawn the lines for those not allowed to buy Norwegian war material (Wicken 1992, 7, 10, 36). Since the export is discussed in the parliament every year, the representatives annually have the possibility to state if they disagree with how the government and MFA apply the guidelines. Even so, export regulations are seen as foreign policies, and for the bigger political parties, there exists a high threshold for interfering or giving instructions to the government on its foreign policy.

In Norway, all the political parties have youth parties. While the actual power to affect the politics of their mother parties vary, they all get quite a significant amount of attention in the media, especially if their opinion differs from that of their mother party. An overall trend is that the youth parties are more in favor of stricter regulations than their mother parties. Hence, the youth parties contribute to giving the topic public attention.

7.3 Industry

In Norway, there are two big, partly state-owned companies that produce war material: Kongsberg Gruppen and Nammo AS. In addition, there are various smaller companies that produce products that fall into that definition of what is regulated and needs an approved license to legally be exported out of Norway. According to the MFA (Utenriksdepartementet 2017), 1,337 export licenses were approved, and 91 different companies reported that they had exported war material from Norway in 2017. In addition to the companies themselves, the
7. Actors

industries’ own organization, the Norwegian Defence and Security Industries Association (FSi), and the Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO) voice the interests of the industry.

7.4 Labor Unions

Various unions exist that organize different workers within the industry. At the committee hearing in the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense on November 8, 2018, Fellesforbundet and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) were represented. In addition to their advisor, LO was represented by the leader for the member union Norges offisers- og spesialistforbund (NOF) (Stortinget n.d). LO consists of 26 unions, and together they organize more than 900,000 workers (Landsorganisasjonen Norge n.d.). Both historically and with the numbers LO organizes today, LO is an important voice in the public debate in Norway. Grounded in historical ties, and, today, both economically and in votes, the view raised by LO is especially important for the Norwegian Labor Party.

7.5 Civil Society

Several understandings exist of the term *civil society* and the role and function it has in a society. The United Nations (UN) calls civil society the third sector, next to government and business (United Nations 2014). The Third Sector Impact Project conceptualizes the third sector as follows:

The third sector consists of private associations and foundations; non-commercial cooperatives, mutuals, and social enterprises; and individual activities undertaken without pay or compulsion primarily to benefit society or persons outside of one’s household or next of kin. (Salamon and Sokolowski 2015, 2)

Norway represents Scandinavia in the project. In Scandinavia, the traditional third sector, more than providing services, works as vehicles for civic and voluntary engagement and advocacy (Third Sector Impact, n.d.). While I perceive the conceptualization of the third
7. Actors

sector in the Third Sector Impact Project to be broader than what I understand with the term ‘civil society’, the understanding provided for the Scandinavian context is closer to what I perceive to be civil society’s role in Norway. In the Norwegian encyclopedia, Thorsen (2016) defines civil society as an umbrella term for those parts of society that comprise voluntary organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and groups and individuals that come together to promote a political cause or on voluntary basis resolve a task together. This corresponds with my understanding of the term. When I use the term ‘civil society’ in this research, I refer to nongovernmental organizations working mainly with political advocacy and the advocacy department of humanitarian aid organizations that have a Norwegian office.

Nonetheless, it is important to mention that in some countries, the understandings of the third sector include labor unions (Salamon and Sokolowski 2014, 16, 28). I chose not to include labor unions in the way I use the term ‘civil society’ but rather include them as separate group of actors. In the debate about Norwegian exportation of war material, the labor unions have a very specific role. As mentioned in section 6.2 A Historical View of the Debate, discussions around employment have characterized the debate since the beginning. Labor unions and the industry that produces war material have many similar interests. Consequently, the labor unions have traditionally taken a very different stance regarding Norwegian exportation of war material than the organizations I have defined to be civil society in the scope of this research.

7.6 Research Institutions

Academic and research institutions are important resources for all the other actors. Some of the main institutions are PRIO, FFI, and SIPRI. SIPRI is an independent institute that researches topics related to conflict, arms control, and disarmament (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2018). Its recommendations have been important as part of the Norwegian debate on export of war material. To secure more ethical exportation of war
material, a checklist developed in cooperation between Norwegian authorities and SIPRI was implemented in the MFA guidelines (Utenriksdepartementet 2012, 10, 20–21). I do not delve deeper into the narratives told by academia, but I build on their contributions to understand the development within the field of production, exportation, and regulation of war material.

7.7 Media

Media act out different roles in relation to Norwegian exportation of war material. Thus, I focus on media as a voice in the debate. A big part of the public accessible information is published through media after work done by investigative journalists. In the last years, big Norwegian newspapers have regularly published both editorial and investigative articles that touch upon the topic of Norwegian exportation of war material. The publicity has included revaluations, but more than disclosure, media has directed focus and framed the public debate. Journalists both in Verdens Gang (VG) and Dagbladet have been important voices. Journalists also comprise one of the groups that Dietrich (2018, 78) adds to Lederach’s (1997, 41) generic list of middle-range leaders.

Based on the information I possess, and by using my capacity to radiate thinking through mind mapping, I outlined seven generic groups of actors that I perceive to hold a role in the conflict around Norwegian exportation of war material. This is my personal categorization, and I am sure there are multiple ways of creating such a division. The groups are not exhaustive, and there might be people who fit into various categories. In spite of the shortcomings, I used this categorization as my point of departure in my search for research participants who could help me get a deeper understanding of the conflict.

8. Preparing for Research Conversations

To use the opportunity for transformation that is inherent in every human encounter, the preparing and planning of the research conversation are important for research that involves
Preparing for Research Conversations

conversations and human encounters. In this chapter, I look into challenges with reaching the actors I want to talk to and strategies to overcome these challenges. Through scrutinizing the different actors’ own narratives and understanding of the series of different episodes, I search for the cardinal theme(s). Based on the cardinal theme(s) and my mapping of the different actors, I invited representatives from the different generic groups that I believe could help me to understand the conflict. Simultaneously, I am aware that by conducting research conversations, I am not only part of the conflict, but I physically enter the conflict. Hence, in the human encounter, both the research participants and I change. Therefore, in correspondence with the research question, I aimed to conduct the conversations in a way that creates a further space for transformation and understanding.

8.1 Mapping the Cardinal Theme

To create a guide that could help me in the research conversations, I searched for the cardinal theme(s) in the collected information. While some actors in the material talk about industrial adventures and technology so complex that the world has never seen anything similar, others talk about bombed schools in Yemen and violations of international humanitarian law. In my perception, the actors do not talk with each other, not even to each other, but rather to different audiences. I identify two main narratives with an endless number of nuances. While one focuses on employment, modern equipment, Norwegian defense, and a more unsecure world, the other focuses on Norway’s moral responsibility and human suffering outside of Norwegian borders. Using mind mapping, I find that the majority of the arguments from those actors who want stricter regulations of exportation of Norwegian war material can be related to the cardinal theme justice. On the other hand, I perceive most of the arguments put forward by the actors who want the status quo or less strict regulations to share the cardinal theme security.
Dietrich (2012) describes in detail in the first book of his trilogy how peace out of security derives from a modern understanding of peace, and peace out of justice is rooted in a moral understanding of peace. Both modern and moral understanding of peace builds on the belief that there exists one final truth (Dietrich 2012, 266). Consequently, there is an ongoing battle on who possesses the truth. This is visible in the discussion around words and concepts. Rather than accepting multiple interpretations and understandings of the situation, as in postmodern approaches, the actors express this battle in the discussion around what words are used.

“A moral image of peace is given whenever a norm legitimizes itself through its sheer existence and social power also constitute the ultimate explanation of this peace” (Dietrich 2012, 112). In a moral understanding of peace, norms are given by an absolute external truth giver, like a God and the God’s intermediaries (Dietrich 2012, 104). Dietrich (2012, 65–115) relates the moral peace to the monotheistic religions where the God outside provides the one truth. In that perspective, it is interesting to notice how organizations related to the church have been in the forefront and important premise providers in the critical approaches to Norwegian exportation of war material.

The past and the future are in focus within moral images of peace, and peace is not experienced in the moment (Dietrich 2012, 113). Building on dualism between right and
8. Preparing for Research Conversations

Wrong, or good and evil (Dietrich 2012, 76-84, 113), moral images of peace seek justice for the wrongdoing, injustice, or insecurity in the past. Thus, peace is obtained in the future (Dietrich 2012, 74, 113) but never sensed in the present. Hence, without a topic, moral peace cannot exist. Therefore, moral images of peace are often narrated together with concepts as justice, security, and truth.

In the episode of a conflict that has thematic emphasis on peace out of justice, unmet needs can be what we often call basic needs, such as food, housing, and water, but also information (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014l). In my perspective, the need for information is visible in the narratives of Norwegian exportation of war material. Based on a view that there exists one truth, the need for information is further intensified through a battle of having this one truth and for having the information to prove that that truth is the absolute truth.

Structurally modern images of peace have many aspects in common with moral images, with one single truth, but the external norm-giver God is replaced with reason and experts who determine what is, and hence what is not, reasonable (Dietrich 2012, 273). This understanding is in line with Berger and Luckmann, who state that “legitimation ‘explains’ the institutional order by ascribing cognitive validity to its objectivated meanings” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 93). According to the two sociologists, human beings, through our ongoing externalization, cognitively construct a symbolic universe where we projects our “own meanings into reality” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 104). Religion and science are here looked at as two conceptual machineries, both mediated by intermediaries seeing as experts (theologians and scientists) between the world of humans and the world of gods or the “universe-maintaining knowledge,” or the conceptual machinery (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 111-112).
8. Preparing for Research Conversations

A mechanistic worldview, which characterizes modern images of peace, focuses on what can be counted and measured (Dietrich 2012, 153). Natural law is seen as preexisting and above the state (Dietrich 2012, 126). Hence, natural law is superordinate to the law organized in norms (Dietrich 2012, 126) that guide interactions between humans, which in themselves are seen as based on calculable principles (Dietrich 2012, 156). Influenced by Hobbes and his war culture driven by fear—where human nature is seen as competitive, fighting for limited recourses, and driven by the fear of losing the access to these resources—the need for an absolute state power to provide security rises within modern images of peace (Dietrich 2012, 132–133). Thus, modern images of peace often have a thematic emphasis on security (Dietrich 2012, 149–150, 274, UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014m).

Based on the theoretical fundaments, the cardinal themes, and my want to create a dialogue, I outlined five areas\textsuperscript{70} I wanted to address throughout the research conversations:

\begin{itemize}
  \item To get a broader understanding of where the actors come from and how and why they thinks as they do, I am curious about the participant’s own view on, own relation to, and experiences with the topic of Norwegian war material.
  \item To get a picture of the actors’ narratives and thoughts around and about Norwegian exportation of war material and on how the topic is addressed in the public debate, I touch upon the public debate and the words and concepts that different actors use.
  \item In my attempt to grasp the actors’ worldviews and how their worldviews influence their images of peace, I wonder why, in their opinion, Norway produces war material and how the actors see their own possibility as an individual and Norway as a community to contribute to more peaceful societies.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{70} See attachment 2 in the appendix for a more detailed guide for the research conversations.
8. Preparing for Research Conversations

- To get insights into how the actors understand the situation today, I ask about their personal opinion about the regulations and today’s practice regarding the export of war material.
- As I wonder what Norwegian civil society can do to transform the status quo, I use this opportunity to ask experts in the field what they think civil society can do.

With the thematic emphasis mapped and a sketch of what topics I want to address, I prepared myself for the human encounters.

8.2 Preparing Myself

With my own relation to the topic in question, I need to constantly work with own judgments, values, feelings, and patterns to limit the possibility for my own unprocessed feelings and cultural patterns blocking free conversation and connection. Using the mountain model to facilitate a space where we in the research conversation together can discover what lies under the lake between the mountaintops and below the water that covers some of the fundament of the mountain, I need to dive into the water to get conscious of what is beneath the rivers and waterfalls that flow down my mountainsides. In the same way, I need to try to put me in the shoes of my conversation partner and emphatically look at how my words and communication can be interpreted (Krogh 2010, 3–5). Therefore, as part of my preparation, I changed my profile picture on Facebook, limited my engagement related to the topic on Twitter and Facebook, and tried to keep updated on the industries’ own platforms.

A question I have asked myself many times during the preparation is what I actually want to achieve. I wonder if I can honestly manage to leave my desire for change and want for justice. I wonder if I am open to change my view and myself. Dietrich (2013, 197) points at Virginia Satir and how she meant that a want for justice implies the want of others, but not yourself, to change. Consequently, detachment from my own ideas of justice is a prerequisite for transformation. Satir portrayed the world as a “family of nations” (Satir 1988, 368),
8. Preparing for Research Conversations

which, like other families, is led by human beings. In line with the principle of correspondence, the human beings in the global family meet similar challenges as the human beings in the individual families (Satir 1988, 368). Satir’s point is, in my opinion, visible in many violent international conflicts, where the parties are fighting over what they perceive to be just and where one part’s justice is the other part’s injustice. When I leave my own ideas of justice, it is possible to look for my needs that are lying beneath my want of others to change. Following Satir’s understanding and a systemic viewpoint, it is important that I, coming from civil society, where the narrative that I have argued is based on an understanding of peace out of justice, manage to detach from my own ideas of justice.

How I enter the conflict—and in this concrete situation, the human encounter—is crucial both for being able to contribute in a transformative way and to get a broader understanding of the different perspectives. ECM could guide me in my first dives in the water. With my background and relations to the topic and the actors involved in the conflict, the principle of resonance demands that I am aware of how my own layers and I resonate. In the encounters with the industry people and politicians whom I earlier have met as opponents, awareness of my own capacity to resonate with authenticity and consistency is essential. Hence, I strive to understand how my own layers receive, transmit, and transform vibrations in the conflictive system (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014b). By paying attention and being tentative to the actors’ values and patterns of and for behavior, I can get hints for how the echoes vibrate through this conflictive system and how I can work with social knowledge in the concrete context.

Furthermore, following the principle of correspondence, I need to be aware of the correspondence between my mental orientation and my societal embeddedness (Dietrich 2018, 37). Building on the layers of ECM, the sexual-familial layers help me in being sensitive to which patterns I bring with me. If I am aware of what has formed my
8. Preparing for Research Conversations

interpretation of the human beings I meet, it is easier for me to understand that they also bring with them their patterns, which again influence their interpretation. In the frame of Rosenberg’s NVC, if I am aware of my own judgments, I can focus on observing without evaluating, and thus see behind my own judgments, listen actively, and look for the feelings and underlying needs. Being aware, I aimed to create a safe space where the participants experience that they are heard and seen and can tell their stories. In such a space, I as a researcher can create opportunities where both the participants and I can acquaint with implicit understandings in our relationship to each other and in our understanding of arms exports. If both the participant and I open up to understand our habitus as part of a social doxa, the dialogue can be developed beyond the implicit understandings and the gaps that initially existed between our understandings. The peace workers’ ABC and the practices of active listening and NVC, which represent an attitude based on a want to understand and be present with my entire being in the moment, can help me to situate myself, emphatically engage in the encounter, and create a safe space. Slowly getting prepared, I started to reach out to actors who in different ways are involved in Norwegian exportation of war material.

8.3 Inviting Actors and Changing Strategy

Looking for perspectives from actors with different views than my own, I searched for those who represented the groups that I have identified and circled on the mind map (See Figure 7). I wanted to talk to people who could express themselves more freely than what a frontline politician or minister could. Hence, I searched for advisors and other actors who often know a great amount about the topic but do not front their party’s opinions in the media.

I started by inviting a representative for the labor unions by e-mail. The response was quick and negative, and I was scared that this would be the standard answer from all the actors I aimed to talk with. Therefore, I changed my strategy and begun to call, explaining how I was interested in a dialogue to get a broader understanding of the different viewpoints
Preparing for Research Conversations

and then follow up with an e-mail. To authentically explain the research in a way that I thought would make sense for the person I contacted, I prepared myself for the phone calls by making mind maps.\textsuperscript{71} Vocal dialogue worked better than e-mail, and I got appointments with representatives from the industry, from a labor union and political advisors. Getting an appointment with bureaucrats turned out to be a challenge. Even though I got positive response, the representative I had contacted asked me to get an authorization from his leader. After several conversations over phone, the leader of the section for export control did not let any of the bureaucrats who work in her section participate in my research. I got this explanation for the decision not to participate:

Vi har etter grundige vurderinger kommet frem til at det ikke er naturlig for embetsverket å medvirke til en slik oppgave. Regjeringens syn på eksportkontroll og regulering av denne er kjent fra media og i den offentlige debatten, og ikke minst gjennom stortingsmeldingen.\textsuperscript{72} (Section for Export Control, e-mail, January 14, 2019)

I think it is notable that bureaucrats in a democracy were denied to talk to a master student. In my opinion, I had clearly stated that the participant could refrain from answering questions that she or he thought went beyond what she or he was comfortable answering in her or his role or at any time withdraw from the research. Personally, I understand that the human beings who actually have the power to change the interpretation of, or the regulations, think it is hard to justify which countries we export to today. That said, my understanding comes from my judgment of the way the regulations are interpreted, which I perceive to be too flexible, and that what Norway is doing is causing suffering. If, on the other side, the leaders of the section for export control honestly believe that it is justifiable to export to the countries we export to, it is hard for me to understand why they did not let the people working in the section talk to me.

\textsuperscript{71} As the mind maps contain names, phone numbers, and other personal information, I have chosen not to include them.

\textsuperscript{72} “We have, after thorough assessments, decided that it is not natural for civil servants to contribute to such a research. The view of the government on export control and the regulation of this control are known from the media and the public debate and not least through the yearly white paper” (translated by the author).
8. Preparing for Research Conversations

As the research conversations went on, and the participants referred to the public debate and other groups of actors that I had mapped, I felt that I missed voices that differed from my own but that still want a stricter regulation. Consequently, to create a more complete picture, I included more voices and invited a political advisor who is positive to stricter regulations, a political advisor in a civil society organization, and a journalist.

Throughout the process of inviting participants to research conversations, I experienced that my background helped me to get in touch with the actors I wanted to talk with but also how I needed mercy from actors who earlier had been my opponents in the public debate to start a dialogue. Difficulties in creating a space for connection through written communication made me realize that I had to change strategy. I looked to the theoretical foundations and the need for dialogue. To my joy, I experienced that the majority of actors wanted exactly that: dialogue.

With Dietrich’s (2013) peace families as a framework for contextualizing and understanding the narratives, I identified an emphasis on moral and modern images of peace in the main narratives around Norwegian exportation of war material. From that, I outlined five topics I wanted to address in the research conversations to get a deeper understanding of the participants’ view and cocreate knowledge for further research and my inquiry for new courses of action. I underlined the importance of preparing myself for every encounter, especially given my previous relationship to the topic in question. The challenges in the process of inviting research participants made me refer to the outlined theoretical foundations and hence reminded me of the importance of creating space for connection. Prepared and nervous, I was ready to embark on the transformative journey of human encounters.
9. Research Conversations

Building on the outlined theoretical fundaments, and hence my opinion on which theories are useful for both understanding the conflict and for creating possibilities for transformation of the same conflict—still being open to what is there—I embarked on the beautiful journey of human encounters. First, I present the different human encounters before I reflect upon my use of first and secondary partial collaborative action research. I use the peace families as a framework to explore the images of peace expressed in the research conversations and the underlying assumptions these perspectives reveal. Seeking possible actions for transformation, I analyze the research conversations in light of the outlined theoretical foundations for conflict transformation.

9.1 Human Encounters

In this section, I introduce the human beings I talked to and the different conversations we had. By presenting the context and atmosphere and letting the participant speak,73 I aimed to make space for the reader to draw his or her own conclusions. I talked to six people who each worked within one of the identified groups in chapter 7. Actors: one from the group industry, one from the group labor unions, two from the group political parties but representing different views, one from civil society, and one from media. I did not talk with anyone working in research institutions. Neither did I talk to the authorities. My attempt to talk to someone working within the system where the license applications are processed did not work out, and I did not do any further attempts to contact anyone in the government.

As I have been changed throughout the process of this research, I introduce the different research conversations in chronologic order. By trying to be as transparent as

---

73 I aimed to keep the quotations exactly as the participants expressed the words, with half sentences, breaks in the middle of words, laughter, “mmm’s,” stuttering, and so on. Nevertheless, to make the quotations understandable isolated from the context of the whole transcribed conversation, I removed stuttering and breaks where I saw that as necessary to get the participant’s point through and where this removal, in my opinion, neither changed the meaning nor nuances of what was expressed.
9. Research Conversations

possible regarding the different action research spirals and, to the extent I am aware, putting my own biases forward, I aim to give the reader the possibility to draw her or his own conclusions both regarding the research per se and how my biases influence my conclusions.

To anonymize the participants, I have given them aliases.⁷⁴ Furthermore, I have omitted parts of the conversations as what the participants have experienced, said, or referred to in some situations clearly reveal who they are. Despite the fact that I leave out parts of some of the puzzle pieces in this many-dimensional and complex conflict picture, I still argue that the conclusions of the research are valid. I neither aim for nor think it is possible to create a complete or objective map of the conflict. All the conversations were conducted in Norwegian. The quotations are translated in the running text and the original Norwegian versions placed in footnotes.

I dove into theories, mapped actors and themes, prepared myself, and made agreements for where and when to meet. It is one thing to write nice words on a paper on how to be open, be ready to be transformed, and to really listen with my whole being, and it is another to live the experiences I have tried to describe with these words. It was time to embark on the beautiful journey of human encounters, to be in the here and now, see the human, and listen.

9.1.1 Benjamin⁷⁵ Employee in a Company

I call the participant who I invited as a representative from the group of actors in industry Benjamin. Benjamin and I have met in different situations through my job in Changemaker. While he more than once has sent me a message when I have written anything publicly that in his opinion conveyed an incorrect picture of the reality, I have always felt that he respects my view. The day of the research conversation, we had planned to meet at a quiet room at a café

---

⁷⁴ All research conversations were conducted in confidentiality, and the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.

⁷⁵ All further references to Benjamin are from a research conversation conducted in Oslo on January 10, 2019.
9. Research Conversations

in Oslo between Benjamin’s different meetings. I was nervous, but the background music from the café’s stereo was calming, until I realized that it might destroy my recordings. I put myself together and sat down at a table in the corner with coffee and my mind map. Benjamin came straight from a meeting with a friend who worked in parliament. I told him a bit more about what I aimed to look into and checked if it the recorder managed to record our voices clearly despite the background music.

Benjamin told me about his job and how he got interested in the topic. Various times, later in the conversation, he referred back to his studies abroad or his past in the Ministry of Defense. When I asked why he had taken a more active part in the public debate than what I perceive anyone working in the industry has done, at least while I have been following the topic, he answered that “the reason I started with communication in the first place was that I thought it [communication] was done poorly” and continued, “I did not think they [the industry] prioritized the public conversation (…). It was almost as they thought that there is no point because people will not agree with us anyway.” Benjamin’s voice was engaged and clear. In his opinion, lack of understanding was part of the reason for the criticism the industry gets:

If we bother to spend time on it [participation in the public debate], then people can understand what we try to achieve. And then I think the debate gets better and maybe some of the resistance toward us gets smaller because then they [the critics] realize, “Okay, we target the wrong issues.”

I prepared different mind maps for each research conversation, which I used to guide my associations as the conversations unfolded and to help me remember what topics I wanted to touch upon and the principles of active listening and NVC. As the mind maps contain names, phone numbers, and other personal information, I have chosen not to include all of them, but I have included one without personal information, as attachment 3 in the appendix. The mind map is in Norwegian.

76 I prepared different mind maps for each research conversation, which I used to guide my associations as the conversations unfolded and to help me remember what topics I wanted to touch upon and the principles of active listening and NVC. As the mind maps contain names, phone numbers, and other personal information, I have chosen not to include all of them, but I have included one without personal information, as attachment 3 in the appendix. The mind map is in Norwegian.

77 “Grunnen til at jeg kom inn på kommunikasjon i utgangspunktet var at jeg synes det [kommunikasjon] var gjort for dårlig” (translated by the author).

78 “Assa, jeg synes ikke de [industrien] prioriterte den offentlige samtalen (…). Det var nesten sann at en tenkte at det er ikke verdt det for folk blir ikke enige med oss likevel” (translated by the author).

79 “Hvis vi gidder å bruke tid på det [å delta i debatten] så kan folk skjønne mer hva vi prøver å få til. Og da tror jeg og debatten blir bedre og kanskje en del av motstanden vi har blir mindre, for da innser de [kritikerne]: ‘Okay, vi skyter på feil ting’ ” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

I asked how he thought the debate around this topic should be and what we should be discussing. “Part of the challenge is that only the extremes involve themselves,” Benjamin said and added:

They argue in completely different ways. You have the activist side that argues very emotionally. Mmm… very broadly, like “this is crazy,” “this is absolutely hopeless,” and formulating extremely pointed. And then you have the other side that is very occupied with the technical aspects. Mmm… very concerned with facts and processes and laws and rules. And [they] speak in two completely different ways.\(^8\)

Before he finished his line of reasoning, Benjamin stated, “That is what I feel. We are standing on different tops shouting, and in completely different ways, we could have used different languages.”\(^9\) Without me having mentioned the mountain model, Benjamin used the picture of tops, and hence the valley between these tops, to explain the lack of actual communication between actors with different views on Norwegian exports of war material.

I asked what he thought both the industry and civil society can do to change the way the actors communicate with each other. Benjamin emphasized what he perceived to be a need for less confrontation and less campaign-focused communication. To change the dynamics in the public debate, Benjamin meant that different actors need to communicate more regularly. Later in the conversation, Benjamin pointed at what, in his opinion, was lack of willingness to make compromises from those who criticize the industry. According to Benjamin, the critics have raised the threshold to participate in the public debate. I commented that in my time in Changemaker, I had felt the same lack in willingness to compromise from those who disagreed with civil society. Benjamin agreed: “Yes, I think it is

\[^8\] “Litt av utfordringene er at det bare er yttersidene som engasjerer seg” (translated by the author).

\[^9\] “De argumenterer på helt forskjellige måter. Så du har aktivistsiden som argumenterer veldig emosjonelt. Eee… veldig breie strek, det blir sånn “dette er helt sykt dette her”, 2dette her er helt håpløss” og spissformulerer ekstremt. Og så har du den andre siden som er veldig sånn faglig opptatt. Eee… opptatt veldig av fakta og prosesser og lover og regler. Og [de] snakker liksom på to helt forskjellige måter” (translated by the author).

\[^8\] “Så det er det jeg føler. Vi står på hver vår topp og roper, og på helt forskjellige måter, vi kunne brukt forskjellige språk liksom” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

a consequence of this going on for so long.” He added a point that I have thought back on many times since our conversation: “We are so stuck. What is needed is someone on each side who is willing to begin for anything to happen.” Benjamin finished the topic by stating, “But they must find someone on both sides who is interested in discussing and take that burden. It is rarely popular internally in a very polarized environment to say that perhaps something different is more beneficial for us.”

When I asked why, in his opinion, Norway produces defense material, Benjamin answered fast: “If you want a defense, then the defense needs equipment.” Benjamin talked passionately about his job and about how the international industry works. “There is nothing less ethical, in my opinion, than to train people and then send them to a potentially dangerous situation without having the equipment or the prerequisite to do the job,” he added. I wondered if he saw any problematic aspects in how the international industry works. “Not in the first place. In principle, this is the (…) most tidy and most effective [way to secure a defense]; it is burden sharing in practice.” He underlined, “I hope we continue to work together to build security and that everyone does not begin to do that by themselves again. Then we are in big trouble.”

I did not manage to hide my skepticism to what he had just said. Benjamin explained that the challenge occurs when individual countries within NATO or business concerns use their military power to make deals with third parts to achieve their interests. “It is the price for international cooperation. It will never happen on only your

83 “Ja, jeg tror det er konsekvens av at det har pågått så lenge” (translated by the author).
84 “En har kjørt seg så fast. At, det krever at det er noen på hver side som er villig til å begynne, for at noe skal skje” (translated by the author).
85 “Men de må finne noen på begge sider som er interessert i å ha diskusjon og i å ta den støtten det er. Det er sjeldent populært intern i et veldig polarisert miljø å si at kanske vi har mer nytte av noe annet” (translated by the author).
86 “Skal du ha et forsvaret så må det forsvaret ha utstyr” (translated by the author).
87 “Det er ingen ting som er mindre etisk, etter min mening, enn å trene opp folk også sende dem ut i en potensiell farlig situasjon uten at de har utstyret eller forutsetningen til å gjøre jobben” (translated by the author).
88 “Ikke i utgangspunktet. Altså i utgangspunktet så er dette her den (…) ryddigste og mest effektive [måten å sikre en forsvarsindustri], altså, det er burden sharing i praksis” (translated by the author).
89 “Jeg håper jo at vi fortsetter å Samarbeide om å bygge sikkerhet og at ikke alle skal begynne å gjøre det selv igjen. Da er vi veldig ille ute” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

premises,”90 Benjamin stated. He was eager to get his points through and disagreed with the majority of the criticism the industry receives because the criticism, according to him, reflects premises of an industry that works in a completely different way than how the industry works. On the other side, he understood that people were critical to the foreign policy that many of the decisions are based on.

Slowly, more people entered what had been a quiet room in the café. I got a bit tenser, nervous about what effects the more crowded room would have on Benjamin and the content of our conversation, but it looked like he did not even notice, at least not care. I perceive Benjamin to be proud of what he is doing and confident of his own perspectives, hence, eager to convince others and not afraid of being heard, seen, or held accountable for what he says. In the context where we talked about international trade and cooperation, I asked Benjamin who he thinks is responsible for creating the limitations for who is allowed to buy Norwegian defense material. “National sovereignty lies as a fundament, and thus each country is sovereign in deciding what is allowed to leave their borders,”91 he answered. Hence, as Benjamin clearly stated later in our conversation, while the industry is responsible for being transparent and following the regulations, in his opinion, national authorities are responsible for what they allow to be transported across borders. He further underlined how important it is that the authorities have that power as neither specific companies nor the industry as a whole should be the ones that create and control the foreign policy. Benjamin added that the people working in the companies, in addition to being responsible for being transparent and for following the regulations, have a commercial responsibility to the owners of the

90 “Det er litt prisen for internasjonalt samarbeid. Det vil aldri kun skje på dine premisser” (translated by the author).
91 “Det er jo nasjonal suverenitet som ligger til grunn og dermed er også hvert enkelt land suverene i hva som skal få lov til å forlate deres grenser” (translated by the author).
companies, the board, and investors. The workers have a responsibility “to make sure that what we do is the right for the future of the company, solely business responsibility.”  

I asked Benjamin, “What do you think when someone says ‘war material’?” His body reacted in a way I interpreted as annoyed. “Then I get a bit discouraged,” he said with a dispirited voice. “We have never exported as much as a bullet from Norway to Saudi Arabia. Never. But when you say…I say ‘you,’ but when the critics say ‘war material,’ then that is the picture most people get. And I think the critics know that.” Benjamin described what he perceived to be an imprecise debate, where different topics are mixed together and the industry is in an incorrect way connected to the war in Yemen. He asked, “For when you have put the premise that we are selling war material used to bomb civilians (…), why should we participate in a debate that already is weighted against us?”

Benjamin presented his own analyses of how we, as society, have created the debate climate that exists today:

We might have developed a state-society, a political society, and an administration that is very focused on what is logical. So everything must be documented and written; everything is in numbers and long reports. And it is logos; everything is logical. We have gradually become so good at that, so accountable and documented, and so effective that the public and the establishment do not have room for the more emotional, more pathos. The emotional arguments do not exist. There is no room for them.

He continued, “And then a huge vacuum is created out there. For most people, and neither of us really, just think logically. We are not ultra-rational human beings. We are emotional
9. Research Conversations

animals.”

I agreed with humans not being ultra-rational before Benjamin added, “And in that huge vacuum, we have created a space where populists from all sides can play. Because they love to play on the emotional arguments.”

As the focus of the conversation turned back to the regulation and wording, I challenged Benjamin’s understanding of the critical functions of the products Norwegian companies have sold to, for example, Saudi Arabia. It might not be bullets or weapons, but in my opinion they are products necessary for warfare. I asked Benjamin what he thought about Norway selling “communication equipment and things that are absolutely necessary for warfare.”

Benjamin answered by pointing at the danger of making politics a question of 

\textit{everything} or \textit{nothing}. In his opinion, current regulations created possibilities for the Norwegian authorities to adapt to different situations. He meant that what was missing was rather a discussion about foreign policies. “There has to be an discussion about foreign policy regarding if we want to have a relation to this country of this type or not.”

Benjamin stated, “All politics are about the distribution of power. Compete to distribute power. Including foreign policy. It is about how you distribute power or collaborate between units.”

Benjamin made a point of what politics is all about that surprised me as he put human beings and our relations at the center of focus. In his opinion, politics are relations: “In principle, it is not very different from the Roman Empire and up to today. We have built more institutions

98 “Og da skapes det enormt vakuum der ute. For folk flest, og ingen av oss egentlig, tenker jo kun logisk. Vi er ikke ultrarasjonelle mennesker. Vi er følelsesdyr” (translated by the author).

99 “Og i det enorme vakuumet, så har vi nettopp skapt plass for populister på alle sider til å spille. For de elsker jo å spille på de emosjonelle argumentene” (translated by the author).

100 “Kommunikasjonsutstyr og ting som jo er helt nødvendig for å drive en krigføring.” (translated by the author).

101 “Det må rett og slett være en utenrikspolitisk diskusjon om vi ønsker å ha en relasjon til det landet, av denne typen eller ikke” (translated by the author).

and processes around it. And much more history, of course. But in principle it is the same. It is relationships between people.”

Benjamin drew long lines and brought his philosophical thoughts to the table. I could follow his emphasis on relations, but with his focus on relations, I found it difficult to understand his perspectives on the need for war material. I wondered what understanding he had on how human beings interact with each other. When the conversation was close to an end, I asked if Benjamin thought “we can get to a point where there is no need for a defense?” His answer made me realize that, while we shared many thoughts on how our society works, we had very different understandings of humans. Benjamin saw human beings as predators living in a world defined by survival of the fittest:

We are predators. We feel threatened. We will seek in flocks. We will look for safety in flocks. We will seek protection from others. We will look for someone who will secure our (...) feeling of safety from others, but then there is always someone who will try to use that [our fear]. (...) We have to keep fighting our worst instincts.

As Benjamin expressed a view were he saw human beings as intrinsically dangerous, I suddenly saw his words and perspectives through different lenses. I saw why he meant the Norwegian industry that produces war material was worth fighting for and why he wanted to participate in the public debate. He meant that he and people working in the industry have to convince me and others that to participate in international trade, which secures money to our own industry, is what will secure our, the Norwegian flock’s, safety. Benjamin sees the reactions from critics regarding what he calls defense material as an almost instinctive one, not thought through but caused by not being used to weapons. If the critics get the chance to

---

103 “I prinsippet er det ikke så veldig forskjellig ifra Romerriket og fram til i dag. Vi har bygget masse mer institusjoner og prosesser rundt det. Og mye mer historikk, selvfølgelig. Men i prinsippet så går det på det samme. Det er relasjoner mellom folk” (translated by the author).

104 “(...) vi kan komme til et punkt hvor det ikke er nødvendig å ha et forsvar?” (translated by the author).

reflect upon the topic, they would realize that “after all, someone has to guarantee that peace.”

We ended the conversation talking about how fear influences the debate in a polarized society. After the recorder was turned off, we talked about the mind map I had in front of me. Before Benjamin had to hurry on to his next meeting, he shared about his own attempt to try to use a mind map technique in his daily life. Inspired, I started to mind map my experience. Many of the points raised by Benjamin made sense to me, but still our conclusions based on those points, for how we as a society can facilitate peace, were far apart. Nevertheless, we agreed on at least one conclusion: the need for more authentic communication.

9.1.2 Allan, Employee in a Labor Union

I call the participant from the group labor unions Allan. Allan and I met a couple of times when I was working in Changemaker. As we took the elevator up to his office, we small talked about Innsbruck and winter sports. After a—almost mandatory in Norway—talk about the quality of the coffee machine in the workplace, we sat down in his office with filled coffee cups. I started out by asking Allan what he concretely works with and why he has chosen to work with this industry. Allan briefly explained the role of the labor union he works for in the Norwegian processes related to salary negotiation. He concretized the union’s work to be to “facilitate and create best possible conditions for competition, which in turn can lead to growth for Norwegian industry and employment” and added that they “also work politically, with industrial policies.” Allan has studied political science. He said that coincidences brought him to this area and that the defense industry was just one of the

---

106 “Det er jo noen som skal garantere den freden” (translated by the author).
107 All further references to Allan are from a research conversation conducted in Oslo on January 11, 2019.
108 “Legge til rette og skape både best mulig konkurransesforhold som igjen kan føre til vekst for norsk industri og ansettelses og sann ” (translated by the author).
109 “Jobber vi jo også politisk, næringspolitisk” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

industries he works with. Among the other areas he works with is, for example, the petroleum industry.

I addressed that, as far as I knew, Allan is one of few people from a labor union who have been vocal about the topic. As there, in my experience, have been few voices in the public debate, I asked Allan why he has chosen to speak up. He disagreed and denied that he has been vocal in the public debate. “I think you refer to an article on our own home page, where we at that point had the need to explain why we have the opinions we have,” Allan said and underlined that this is an industry with problematic aspects. “It is a demanding and difficult topic. Lots of dilemmas and so on. And then maybe the easiest is to keep a low profile.” We talked about the public debate and lack of voices. According to Allan, it is a hard debate to be part of:

Like opinion-wise, reputation-wise, it is clear that… If you see brutal pictures from a war in Yemen, which has been very relevant, then it does not matter. It is difficult to explain regardless how rational, and so on, it is […] I think it is hard and that you might lose, or feel that you lose, if you participate in that debate and try to rationally explain why we have the regulations we have and why we export as we do and so on.

“Do you think, or what can we do for the unions to participate more actively?” I asked Allan.

That I do not know. I feel we are, like everyone else, in a split. We have both wishes, values, visions of solidarity and peace, and so on. (…) No one wants war, neither the boss in Nammo or Kongsberg, I believe. But we need to base on… The world is like hell; we all have a responsibility to try to make the world a better place, but I feel that to make the world a better place in the long term,

107

110 “Det jeg tro du referer til er en nyhetssak på vår egen hjemmeside, hvor vi vel da hadde behov for å forklare hvorfor vi mener det vi mener da” (translated by the author).
111 “Det er krøvende og vanskelig tema. Masse dilemmaer, også videre. Og det letteste da er kanskje å holde en lav profil da” (translated by the author).
112 “Sånn opinionsmessig, omdømmemessig, så er det klart at det er… Altså hvis man ser grusomme bilder fra en krig i Jemen som jo har vært veldig aktuell, så spiller det ingen rolle. Altså, det er vanskelig å forklare uansett hvor rasjonelt, også videre, det er. […] jeg tror det bare er vanskelig og at man kanskje taper, eller føler at man taper, hvis man deltar i den debatten og prøver å forklare rasjonelt hvorfor man har det regelverket man har og hvorfor man eksporterer som man gjør også videre” (translated by the author).
113 “Tror du, eller hva kan man gjøre for at fagforeningene deltar mer aktivt?” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

the best is to use reality as a starting point. That means how the reality is and then try to pry things so it gets better in the end. 114

For Allan, the main reason for a Norwegian defense industry is to produce material for our own defense. “We need to be able to defend ourselves—or deter,” 115 he stated. Allan changed the topic and started to talk about the EU. During most of the conversation, Allan took his time to think through his answers and make sure he did not say anything he would regret, but when talking about the EU, his voice was different. He was clearly proud of the blue EU flags he had decorated his office with. “I look at the EU as a great peace project and hung up that flag that you see over there the day after they received the Peace Prize.” 116 I think it was my wondering reaction that made him reaffirm what he just had stated. “That is the most well-deserved Peace Prize ever in my view.” 117 That is a view I believe Allan is aware is quite controversial, especially within the labor unions, where regulations adopted as a result of agreements in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) are seen by many as being responsible for lowering the standards of workers’ rights. Somehow, as Allan works with the conditions for both the petroleum industry and the industry that produces war material in Norway and has chosen to be a vocal EU supporter within a labor union, he has chosen a confronting path. I wondered how it is and feels for a person who clearly fights for his principles regarding EU to see the paradoxes of Norwegian exportation of war material to authoritarian regimes and still fight for the possibility to continue that export.

I asked Allan how we as a Norwegian community can contribute globally to a more peaceful society. “It is through promoting those values that are fundamentally common in the


115 “Vi må kunne forsøvare oss, eller avskrekke da” (translated by the author).

116 “Jeg ser på EU som et stort fredsprosjekt, og hang opp det flagget som du ser der dagen etter de fikk fredsprisen” (translated by the author).

117 “Det er den mest velfortjente fredsprisen noeninne etter mitt syn” (translated by the author).
end. Fundamental common human values.” He problematized his own statement: “But we need to understand that everyone wants a better future and, what to say, try to contribute to it in the most adequate manner.” Allan pointed at people wanting to enter Europe to create a better future. “If we had opened all the borders there, it would have created a lot of dissatisfaction (…) a bit of the basis of Brexit, Trump in the United States.” As Allan wanted to defend common human values, I asked where he sees the border between defending human rights and exportation of defense material.

The decisions have to be made based on the most insights possible, the most information possible, the most facts possible […] We believe that we need to trust that our Ministry of Foreign Affairs has better insight, more information, and can make those decisions in a manner based on facts and not feelings alone.

He continued, “But if you are to operate in a world, you need to be rational.” He compared the defense industry to other industries he works with. One of the industries he compared the defense industry to various times throughout the conversation was the petroleum industry, a very controversial industry in Norway that nevertheless employs a significant number of people and that to some extent is defended with a similar line of arguments as the industry that produces war material. As Allan stated later in our conversation:

Norway is a country with high costs, a well-developed country. With high wages, high welfare level. Most people in Norway will still have that. (…) Even if we can say, on a good day, that we will freeze the economic growth and drink from the same coffee cup the rest of our lives. […] We still want to have it even better. If we are to, in any way, maintain that level of welfare and so on, then we need jobs that in a way can sustain the cost level that exists in Norway. Jobs that are profitable in that perspective. And then we need to be in front in something in a global competition, right? And the defense industry has in that respect, at least part of it, proved to be an industry or a sector which in a way manages

118 “Det er jo gjennom å fremme de verdiene der, som er grunnleggende felles når det kommer til stykke. Grunnleggende felles menneskelige verdier” (translated by the author).
119 “Men man må også ha forståelse for at alle ønsker en bedre framtid og, hva skal en si, prøve å bidra til det på den mest hensiktsmessige måten da” (translated by the author).
120 “Hvis vi hadde åpnet alle grensene der, hadde det skapt stor misnøye (…) litt grunnlaget for Brexit, Trump i USA” (translated by the author).
121 “Avgjørelsene skal tas basert på mest mulig innsikt, mest mulig informasjon, mest mulig fakta […] Vi mener da at vi må ha tiløft til at vårt Utenriksdepartement har bedre innsikt, mer informasjon, og kan ta de beslutningene på en måte basert på fakta og ikke følelsjer alene” (translated by the author).
122 “Men hvis man skal drive i en verden må man være rasjonell da” (translated by the author).
that...high technological, that is the kind of jobs within all sectors and industries that we (...) work to ensure that have the best possible conditions. And we want that kind of development because we see that if we are to win contracts and compete in a global world in the future, then this is the direction we have to go. And the defense industry has proven to be one of those sectors. And in addition, the industry has had a lot of spinoffs to civil industry. [...] And so we see in the petroleum and gas industry (...).\(^{123}\)

Allan meant we need better defense material than leaders in authoritarian regimes because “if that kind of development is left to regimes that do not share our core values, then it would be a major threat to our values and our, let’s say, free world and peaceful world.”\(^{124}\)

Furthermore, he used the argument that if Norwegian companies stopped, other companies would fill the gap in the market. “You can say that it is easy to say that many are queuing up to deliver, and in fact the only thing you have achieved is to build down the industry in Norway.”\(^{125}\) At the same time, Allan did not hide the challenges. When I asked him if his job could be challenging, after he had just reflected on international trade, authoritarian regimes, and Norwegian exports, Allan answered, “Of course it is challenging. It hurts to see news about that Norwegian industry exports to regimes that operate in a completely different way from what I stand for. Of course it is.”\(^{126}\)

As soon as I switched off the recorder, the atmosphere changed. In my perspective, Allan relaxed; he spoke more freely and asked me about my views and opinions. From being

\(^{123}\) “Altså Norge er jo et land med høye kostnader, et velutviklet land. Med høye lønninger, høyt velferdsnivå. Det vil de fleste i Norge fortsatt ha. (...) Selv om man kan, på en god dag si at vi vil frysje den økonomiske veksten og drikke av den samme kaffekoppen resten av livet liksom. [...] Så vil man fortsatt ha det enda bedre. Hvis vi skal, på en måte opprettholde det velferdsnivået også videre, så må vi ha arbeidsplasser som på en måte tåler det kostnadsnivået som er i Norge. Og som er lommesome ut i det perspektivet. Og da må vi jo være i front på noe i en global konkurranse, ikke sant? Og forsvarsindustrien har jo sann sett, en del av den hvert fall, vist seg å være en næring eller en sektor som på en måte klarer det da...høytteknologisk, altså det er den type arbeidsplasser innenfor alle sektorer og næringer som vi (...) jobber for at det skal være best mulig grunnlag for. Og vi ønsker en sann mulig utvikling for vi ser det at hvis vi skal vinne kontrakter og konkurrere i en global verden framover så er det den reiningen vi må gå. Og da har forsvarsindustrien vist seg å være en av de sektorene. Og den har jo også hatt veldig mye spinoffs til stiv industri, [...] Og sånn ser vi jo i olje- og gassindustrien (...)” (translated by the author).

\(^{124}\) “Hvis den type utvikling overlates til regimer som ikke deler vårt verdigrunnlag så ville det være en stor trussel mot våre verdier og vår, skal vi si, frie verden og fredlige verden” (translated by the author).

\(^{125}\) “Man kan si det er lett å si at det står mange i kø til å levere, og egentlig så er det eneste du har oppnådd å bygge ned industrien i Norge da” (translated by the author).

\(^{126}\) “Det er klart det er utfordrende. Det gjør vondt å se oppslag om at norsk industri eksporterer til regimer som driver med helt andre ting enn det jeg står for. Klart det er det” (translated by the author).
a question-and-answer session, it transformed into a more authentic conversation. I felt my voice rise and got more engaged, and we both dared to be more honest about our views and curious about the other person’s perspectives. When I took the elevator down, one question kept me busy: When we, as human beings, with open eyes, let fear influence our decisions, why are we afraid of letting feelings like compassion and love influence the same decisions? Do we perceive fear to be a more rational feeling than compassion?

9.1.3 Daniel,127 Political Advisor in a Political Party Defending the Status Quo

Daniel is the name I have given to the participant I invited as a representative from the group ‘political party defending the status quo.’ I have met Daniel various times, mostly in closed lobby meetings but also in other settings. In some of our previous interactions over the phone, I was quite annoyed; thus, there was already a history of episodes in play before this research conversation. We planned to meet at the parliament. After I passed the obligatory security check, I waited in the hall. As we had planned the meeting some weeks before, I was nervous that he had forgotten. I took a relived breath when I saw him in the entrance hall. Daniel had booked a huge and breathtaking meeting room with a serious and lavish atmosphere. We sat down at one of the ends of a big table. Daniel placed a printed version of the e-mail I had sent, with some notes, in front of him. He was clearly prepared.

Despite our different perspectives on Norwegian exportation of war material, I knew Daniel and I also had common grounds. He had, for example, been a member of Changemaker when he was younger. Today, Daniel works as a political advisor in the areas that are of relevance for the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense and has a past in the MFA. After telling me about his path to his current position, Daniel underlined that the parliament does not have much power when it comes to foreign policies. According to him, the committee has more power in decisions related to defense. Still, as it was the

127 All further references to Daniel are from a research conversation conducted in Oslo on January 15, 2019.
majority at the parliament that laid down the main principles for who shall not be allowed to buy Norwegian defense material, that exact topic stands out as one where the politicians in parliament have more power than in other aspects of Norwegian foreign policies. I wondered if the structural division of the politicians’ focus, as their opinions matter more in questions related to defense than foreign politics, by default creates a bias toward defense in issues where both areas must be taken into account.

I asked Daniel if he thinks the discussions around Norwegian exportation of war material has changed during the time he has been working with the topic. “Honestly, not really. Almost the contrary. Because it is a bit like the usual suspects. Because it is an annual event, it is very recognizable.” He talked fast, with many half sentences, almost as to be sure he would get his point across while he had the words. Still, he appeared confident, as he knew what he wanted to say, that his perspectives have value and that he would manage to convey them. “What do you think about the debate in Norway around the export of defense material?” I asked. With the bell ringing for voting in the background, Daniel pointed at two challenges regarding participating in the debate: that “part of the politicians often avoid participating” and that “part of civil society and some other actors are posing.” Daniel meant that many journalists, with some exceptions, “buy, devour too much of the argumentation from civil society, too wholeheartedly.” He exemplified this by using one of the examples that always made me annoyed when I worked in Changemaker. “It has been repeated too often that Norway has exported weapons to Saudi Arabia,” Daniel stated. I sensed that my body prepared to verbally fight back and defend the organizations I had

---

128 “Ærlig talt, egentlig ikke. Nesten snarligere tvert i mot. For det er jo litt sånn de usual suspects. Fordi det er en årlig greie, så er mye veldig gjenkjennelig” (translated by the author).
129 “Hva tenker du om debatten rundt eksport av forsvarsmateriell i Norge?” (Translated by the author).
130 “En del av politikerne ofte skygger banen” (translated by the author).
131 “En del av sivilsamfunnet og en del andre aktører som driver med posering” (translated by the author).
132 “Kjøper, sluker litt for mye av sivilsamfunnsargumentasjonen, litt for helhjertet altså” (translated by the author).
133 “Det har blitt gjentatt litt for ofte at Norge har eksportert våpen til Saudi-Arabia (...) ” (translated by the author).
worked for and with, but I managed to listen instead. The conflict around Norwegian exportation of war material has quite a few repeating patterns. The export to Saudi Arabia is, in my opinion, an episode that is repeated, with only minor differences, in the public debate. To explain why I reacted as I did to Daniel’s statement, I think an explanation of how I perceive the discussion around exportation to Saudi Arabia can be useful.

The argument Daniel put forward here is the argument I perceive Norwegian authorities start most of their public statements regarding war material with. While it is correct that Norwegian authorities do not approve licenses for sale of products classified as category A, such as, for example, weapons, to Saudi Arabia, I rarely hear anyone claim that, though when I worked in Changemaker, I felt that the authorities claimed that we were lying by insinuating that actors in civil society said that Norwegian companies export weapons to Saudi Arabia. Hence, the debate often became a discussion about who said what. The fact that, as seen in section 6.4 Words and Concepts, different actors use different terms for the same products fuels this discussion. Actors who advocate for stricter regulations argue that as long as Norwegian companies are selling products that are produced for military use and the companies need a license to export these products out of Norway because of their characteristics, the companies are strengthening the military power of the authorities in the country they sell to. These actors often use terms like *war material* or *military equipment* to describe what is sold to Saudi Arabia. The same actors often advocate to repeal what they characterize as an artificial distinction between products in categories A and B\(^{134}\) as products in both categories strengthen the buyer’s military power. Therefore, these actors argue that the regulations that today apply to products in category A should apply to those in category B as well.

\(^{134}\) I describe the distinction between categories A and B in section 6.4 Words and Concepts.
9. Research Conversations

On the other hand, the actors who advocate for the status quo often use the term *defense material* and argue that the distinction between products in categories A and B is based on a real difference in how the products are used. These actors argue that to say that we export war material to Saudi Arabia paints an especially incorrect picture because of the associations the word *war* brings up. In their opinion, *war material* is an incorrect term to use for products in category B, and as Norwegian authorities do not approve license applications for export of products in category A to Saudi Arabia, only products in category B, *war material* is in their view an incorrect term to use on products sold to Saudi Arabia. In November 2018, Norwegian authorities stopped the approval of licenses of products in category B for sale to Saudi Arabia (Utenriksdepartementet 2018a).¹³⁵

Back to the conversation with Daniel, who continued, “We have exported more than we should, but in my definition, B material is not a weapon.”¹³⁶ Even though our choices of words differ, I do agree with Daniel’s statement regarding the politics of language. He stated, “Yes, one plays with, not plays with words, but it is intended. There are politics in the use of language.”¹³⁷ Daniel looked self-critically at his own party’s participation in the public debate and explained how, in his perspective, politicians avoid the debate mostly because they “do not feel safe enough on the substance and the details.”¹³⁸ “And that, in turn, is related to the use of language and all the details in it. By that, *weapon, strategic goods, war material*. Yes, you need to watch your steps;”¹³⁹ Daniel continued.

I asked Daniel concretely about his opinion regarding the term *war material*. “You might get more media coverage, but I do not think you will get more impact [by using the

---
¹³⁵ For more information about the Norwegian stop in approvals of licenses, see chapter 1. Author’s Perspective.
¹³⁶ “Vi har eksportert mer enn hva vi burde, men altså B-materiell er etter min definisjon ikke våpen i hvert fall” (translated by the author).
¹³⁷ “Ja, man leker med, ikke leker med ord, men det er litt sånn bevisst, ja. Språkbruk er det jo en god del politikk i” (translated by the author).
¹³⁸ “Ikke føler seg trygg nok på substansen og detaljene” (translated by the author).
¹³⁹ “Og som igjen henger litt sammen med språkbruken og alle detaljene i det. Ved at våpen, strategiske varer, krigsmateriell. Ja, man må liksom ha tungen rett i munnen for å dekke opp” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

term],” he said and directed the conversation to the distinction between the different categories of products.

What I personally have problems with. I often meet those who: “No, A and B material must be erased; it is all the same.” I strongly disagree; there is a difference. Because if we are to follow that argument to the end, then we cannot export anything whatsoever to Saudi Arabia. For very much supports the Saudi defense. So you have to be able to operate with categories, and they are fairly agreed on internationally; the EU system uses the same A and B material.

At the same time, when I asked Daniel later in the conversation if he found civil society to argue “unnuanced and not based on real facts,” he resolutely disagreed. He pointed at how the actors, when he met them for personal conversations, discussed the topic without arguing with the slogans that characterize the debate in the media.

I asked Daniel how he thinks civil society can contribute to engage the politicians to participate in the public debate. Daniel answered by presenting his understanding of the political dynamics and the different political parties’ perspectives on Norwegian exportation of war material. With a touch of annoyance in his voice, he ended his reasoning by saying:

But the point I want to reach through some detours was that there are a number of parties, and some civil society actors, that, no matter how much you move the needle, it does not become sufficient. […] Politicians are humans, and humans need…it is more like recognition and popularity and, yes, recognition. So when we think we have been involved in moving it…move the policy in the direction that, for example, civil society has demanded, we still experience that what we get in return is only shame for not having done more.

140 “Du får kanskje større medieoppslag, men jeg tror ikke du får så mye mer gjennomslag av det [å bruke begrepet]” (translated by the author).
142 “Unyansert, og lite basert på reelle fakta” (translated by the author).
143 “Men poenget jeg vil fram til gjennom noen omveter var at det er en del partier, og noen sivilsamfunnsaktører, som uansett hvor mye man flytter nåla så blir det ikke godt nok. […] Så er politikere mennesker, og mennesker trenger... det er litt sann ekstra på at dette her at det er anerkjennelse og popularitet og, ja, anerkjennelse. Så når vi liksom mener at vi har vært med å flytte det... flytte politikken i den retningen som for eksempel sivilsamfunnet har krevd, så opplever man likevel at det som kommer tilbake bare er skam på at man ikke gjorde mer” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

We talked a bit about how civil society works in Norway, and Daniel expressed what he means is a lack of more concrete solutions. I asked Daniel why he thought Norway produces defense material. His answer was clear. He told me he that when he worked in the MFA many years ago, he had been involved in formulating what was the official rationale. According to Daniel, the justification has three aspects: “preparedness of our own defense, export revenues and jobs, and technology transfer to other industries.”

Somehow, various times during our conversation, we touched upon the question of who is responsible for the exportation. Daniel said that people in his party had scrutinized what went wrong when Norway exported offensive products to countries that actively took part in the war in Yemen. They wanted to figure out if the regulation or the practice was the problem.

It is unambiguously the practice. The regulations are imperfect, but that is not where the main problem lies. That lies in how the regulations are practiced, and it is the, at any time, sitting government and management in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who are the ones with the responsibility for the practice. We have also been principally reticent to move the proceedings de facto more in the direction of the parliament. In this regard, we are principally boring in relation to the distribution of power, that the power should be there, and then we shall post control, and steer, and send signals.

Daniel pointed at some challenges with how the regulations are practiced, before he ended his reasoning saying, “But besides this, our opinion is that now it [the regulations and how the regulation are put to practice] is about where it should be. At least from our side, we have not seen any need to make huge changes.”

144 “Beredskapen til vårt eget forsvar, eksportinntekter og arbeidsplasser, og teknologioverføring til andre bransjer” (translated by the author).

145 “Altså bare helt entydig så er det praktiseringen. Altså regelverket er uperfekt, men det er ikke der hovedproblemet ligger. Det ligger i praktisering, og det er det til hver tid sittende regjering og ledelse i Utenriksdepartementet som er de som sitter med praktiseringansvaret. Altså vi har også vært sånn prinsipielt tilbakeholdne med ilskom å flytte saksbehandling de facto mer i retning av Stortinget. Der er vi kjedelig prinsipielle på maktfordeling, at den skal ligge der, også skal vi drive etterkontroll, og styring og signaler” (translated by the author).

146 “Men ellers så mener vi at nå ligger det [reglene og hvordan de er praktisert] omtrent som vi skal være. Hvert fall vi fra vår side, har ikke sett noe behov for å gjøre kjempestore endringer.” (translated by the author).
When I asked Daniel if he believes we can have a world without weapons, he said that as “weapons are invented, we cannot uninvent them” and drew parallels to nuclear weapons. To understand this parallel, it is useful to know that the discussion around if Norway should sign the ban against nuclear weapons or not has been quite present in the public debate. The conflict lines in the discussion around a ban on nuclear weapons coincide with those regarding the regulation of the exportation of Norwegian war material. Daniel continued, “Weapons in one form or another are just as old a phenomenon as humanity itself. Unfortunately.”

With that topic, we ended our conversation. Daniel is familiar with and knows how to play the political game. I perceived him to have chosen in advance which stories and perspectives he wanted to share with me, which made it harder to get his personal opinions but at the same time showed that he had put some effort into preparing for our conversation. Besides the interruptions by some important messages he had to answer, he had talked almost nonstop for about an hour. We made some jokes on our way out, and he hurried on to his next task. I was a bit relieved when I left the parliament, mostly because I felt that the actors I had previously been in opposition to—Daniel, Allan, and Benjamin—had, despite their busy lives, been both friendly and willing to use their time to help me with my research.

9.1.4 Maria, Political Advisor in a Political Party Wanting Stricter Regulations

I call the person I invited from the political party wanting stricter regulations Maria. We met at the parliament, as we did when I was representing Changemaker. Maria bought me lunch in the canteen before we sat down in her office and shared our irritation about the political chaos in Norway that autumn and the beginning of the year. Maria has the same role as Daniel but in another political party. As are so many others working with this topic, she was active in

---

147 “Våpen er funnet opp, vi kan ikke avfinne dem opp igjen” (translated by the author).
148 “Våpen i en eller annen form er jo like gammelt fenomen som menneskeheten selv. Dessverre” (translated by the author).
149 All further references to Maria are from a research conversation conducted in Oslo on January 18, 2019.
Changemaker when she was younger. She works in a political party that has traditionally had close contact with the part of civil society I am familiar with. Maria expressed frustration over what she perceives to be a stuck situation: “The regulations have almost not changed anything at all. [...] And I almost think that the atmosphere is more negative now than it was.” She problematized the complexity of the debate.

In addition, you have the war in Yemen, which has both created a lot of attention but also made it quite complicated for those who want a change in the regulations to fight for it because one has to argue along several lines at the same time. It has both become harder to work with and more challenging to communicate why we want it [to change the regulations] to the public. Because there are actually several issues in one.

Maria began to share her thoughts about the annual committee hearings, which we have both participated in.

It is a bit the same exercise every year, right? Roughly speaking, it is three types of actors that take part. It is civil society that is worried that we violate our own regulations and international—if it is international law—in various ways through our export. The second is the industry. And the last are the labor unions that are present on behalf of the employees in the industry.

“And what strikes me every time is that they do not speak the same language, right? They are on different planets,” Maria said. “And it is possible that that applies for both sides, that no one makes any attempt to approach each other and actually have a form of dialogue,” she added. Maria pointed at how the industry seems to avoid all the challenging aspects and only talks about how “it is important that we have an industry, and with good conditions and

150 “Altså, regelverket har jo ikke endret seg noen ting nesten. […] Og jeg synes nesten at liksom stemningen rundt er mer negativ nå enn den var” (translated by the author).

151 “Også har du fått krigen i Jemen, som har liksom både gjort at det her har fått mye oppmerksomhet, men også gjort at det er ganske komplisert for de som ønsker en endring i regelverket å kjempe for det, fordi man må argumentere langs flere linjer samtidig. Sann at det har både blitt litt vanskeligere å jobbe med det, og mer krevente å kommunisere hvorfor vi vil det [endre reguleringene] til allmennheten da. For det er egentlig er flere saker i en” (translated by the author).


153 “Og det som slår meg hver gang er at man snakker ikke samme språk sant? Man er på forskjellige planeter” (translated by the author).

154 “Og det er mulig at det på en måte gjelder på begge sider, at man ikke gjør noe forsøk på å tilnærme seg og egentlig ha noen dialog da” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

blablab, and that there are so many jobs, and fantastic technology, and so on.”

"And like everything they say, it is impossible to disagree with,” she concluded.

Maria described a way of behaving in the committee hearings that she perceives to be “a bit denoting for the development of society and the debate climate.”

It is like “an adult is missing in the room,” she said, referring to specific situations and aggressive behavior. I presented how I perceive the different actors to be screaming to each other, thus not being open for a conversation or to be changed. I told about how I think it is scary to enter a debate in a way where I am open to be changed and hence be ready to question my own truths regarding a topic I care about.

I asked Maria what she thinks civil society can do to improve the debate climate. Maria underlined more than once that she did not want to criticize civil society. However, without giving civil society responsibility, she wondered if it is “possible to enter in direct dialogue (...) with the industry, with the labor unions, in a closed room where there is no camera and no politicians.” In Maria’s perspective, the goal can be “to, in a way, see if one can at all manage to establish some common understanding of some of the issues in the debate.”

I wondered if Maria’s political party had any contact with the industry or labor unions regarding this topic. She told me that while they often cooperated with the labor unions on other topics, they did not talk to each other regarding exportation of war material, a sign of how little the different actors involved in this topic communicate with each other.

155 “Det er viktig at vi har en industri, og med gode rammesettinger og blablabla, og det er så mange arbeidsplasser, og så fantastisk teknologi, også videre” (translated by the author).
156 “Og liksom, alt det dem sier, er det jo umulig å være uenig i” (translated by the author).
157 “Litt betegnende for hele samfunnsutviklingen og debattklima” (translated by the author).
158 “Det mangler en voksen i rommet” (translated by the author).
159 “Går det an å gå i en direktedialog (...) med industrien, med fagbevegelsen, i lukket rom hvor man ikke har kamera og ikke har politikere” (translated by the author).
160 “For å på en måte se om man i det hele tatt klarer å etablere noen felles forståelse av noen av de problemstillingene som ligger i den debatten” (translated by the author).
I asked Maria what she thinks about being criticized for basing her arguments on feelings. “I disagree with that criticism. There are facts behind our argumentation,”\textsuperscript{161} Maria said and pointed at how “all the concern for Norwegian industry is emotional rhetoric.”\textsuperscript{162} She further painted a dichotomous picture, which is substantiated by duality of feelings versus facts, and which Maria means we need to transform. On one side are men dressed in suits advocating the interest of the industry, looking down at young female activists who do not look that straight on the other side.

When I asked Maria why, in her perspective, Norway produce war material, she referred to what Norway experienced in 1935 and how Norwegian defense policies since then have been based on that experience. “We benefit from having a defense to defend our own territory and to defend our interests and our sphere of interest, especially in the north.”\textsuperscript{163} She thought a bit and added, “I still have not heard a criticism of having a defense industry that is not purely pacifist. And I myself am not pacifist. So I have not heard a convincing argumentation for shutting down the defense industry.”\textsuperscript{164} Maria did not mean that there are no challenges, “but that [the challenges] are what we can make some barriers for through the export regulations, which we are now missing.”\textsuperscript{165} In Maria’s perspective, the foreign minister has the major responsibility for the export, and secondly the prime minister and the government. I asked Maria if she thinks she and the opposition parties get sufficient information. After presenting different challenges with how the system works today, she

\textsuperscript{161} “Jeg er uenig i den kritikken. Det ligger fakta bak vår argumentasjon” (translated by the author).

\textsuperscript{162} “Hele det her hensynet til norsk industri og sånn er jo føllesbasisert retorikk” (translated by the author).

\textsuperscript{163} “Vi er tjent med å ha et forsvar til forsvar av vårt eget territorium, og til forsvar av våre interesser og vår interessesfære, spesielt i nord” (translated by the author).

\textsuperscript{164} “Jeg har til gode å høre en kritikk av det å ha en forsvarsindustri som ikke er rent pasifistisk. Og jeg er selv ikke pasifist på egne vegne. Så jeg har ikke hort en overbevisende argumentasjon for å legge ned forsvarindustrien” (translated by the author).

\textsuperscript{165} “Men det er jo det man kan lage noen skranker på gjennom eksportregelverket, og som vi nå mangler” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

concluded, “Yes, we get too little [information], and we get it too late; that is the short answer.”

The more personal questions I asked, less related the overall debate and regulations and more related to Maria’s own opinions, the more she asked me about my personal opinions. I asked her how she thinks we as individuals and as a Norwegian community can contribute to a more peaceful global society.

It is no simple answer to that (…). Firstly, we need to contribute to both reduce our own emissions and choose politicians who want to make major changes in our societies so that we contribute to the avoidance of a two- or three-degree increase in the global temperature. For the increase in the global temperature is what will create war and conflict in the future. That is the most obvious that comes to my mind. Then you have issues that are closer to one’s heart: that we have a commitment to be honest and proper with each other in public debate (…). What do you think?

“I think that [what Mari said] about the debate is very important, and a want to understand each other,” I answered and added:

One of the most important things we can do is to make human dignity matter again. I believe that as soon as we do not see others as humans, it is very easy to defend horrible politics. And in Norway, one of the clearest examples, in my opinion, is how we treat asylum seekers. I just, yes, I can get so angry and really upset.

As the conversation flowed, I touched upon the topic of doxa, on how I as a human take so many things for granted and perceive them to be the only possible reality. Maria followed up by stating:

---

166 “Ja, vi får litt for lite [informasjon], og vi får det alt for sent; er det korte svaret” (translated by the author).
167 “Det er jo ikke noe enkelt svar på det (…). For det første så må vi jo bidra til å både redusere våre egne utslipp og velge politikere som vil gjøre store endringer i samfunnene våre sånn at vi bidrar til å unngå to eller tre graders oppvarming. For det kommer til å være det som skaper krig og konflikt i framtiden. Så det er det mest åpenbare som slår meg. Så har du litt mer nære ting; at vi har en forpliktelse til å være redelig og ordentlig med hverandre i offentlig debatt her hjemme (…). Hva tenker du?” (translated by the author).
168 “Jeg tror det [Maria sa] med debatt er kjempeviktig og det å ha lyst å forstå hverandre.” (translated by the author).
169 “Noe av det aller viktigste vi kan gjøre er å få menneskeverdet til å ha noe å si igjen. For jeg tror at med en gang vi ikke ser på andre som mennesker så er det veldig lett å forsvare forfærdelig politikk. Og i Norge synes jeg et av de tydeligste stedene er hvordan vi behandler asylsøkere. Som jeg bare, ja, jeg kan bli så sur og skikkkelig opprømt” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

It is a bit like that with everything. If a something has been practiced for a long time or something has settled and ask that question: ‘If we were to start from scratch today, would it have been like this?’ And if the answer is a clear no, then we need to at least find out what to do to start changing it [the practice].

I pointed out how “as soon as you ask some very fundamental questions, then you get dismissed as stupid and an outsider, very naïve and stupid…” Maria completed my sentence: “…unrealistic and naïve.”

I asked if she thinks a world without weapons is possible. “It sounds very narrow-minded, but it is hard to imagine today,” Maria stated. She pointed at human beings’ fear and lack of “a peaceful world order that we trust to be able to manage the peace between us in a good way.” Maria referred to Christopher Cramer, a professor at SOAS University of London.

We live in an (…) illusion that human nature is to be nice and peaceful. That is just nonsense. The nature of humans is to…or we have violence inherent in us; we have all those things. He [Christopher Cramer] believes there is violence inherent in all human relationships, in all social processes. From such a perspective (…) it is quite impossible to envision a world without war. So the question is how to balance those forces and, what is it called, calm them down or pacify them. And many will say that in a modern world, one does that by having defensive defense capabilities.

Maria was curious on what the other research participants had answered to that question. I perceived her to be interested in new perspectives, both to look for ways to change this stuck situation but also for the debate in itself. I recognized the curiousness and

170 “Det er også litt sånn med alt da. Hvis en praksis som har vært ført over lang tid eller noe som liksom har satt seg, og stille det spørsmålet: ‘hvis vi skulle startet på scratch i dag, hadde vi hatt det sånn her?’ Og hvis svaret er soleklart nei, så må vi hvert fall finne ut av hva vi skal gjøre for å begynne å endre på det [praksisen] da” (translated by the author).
172 “…urealistisk og naiv” (translated by the author).
173 “Det høres veldig trangsynt ut, men det er vanskelig å se for seg nå” (translated by the author).
174 “En fredelig verdensorden som vi har tillit til at skulle kunne forvalte freden mellom oss på en god måte” (translated by the author).
175 “Vi lever i en (…) illusion om at menneskets naturtilstand er å være grei med hverandre og fredelig. Det er jo bare tull. Menneskets naturtilstand er å…eller vi har vold iboende i os; vi har alle de tingene. Han [Christopher Cramer] mener at det finnes vold iboende i alle menneskelige relasjoner, i alle sosiale prosesser. Ut ifra et sånt perspektiv (…) så er det jo helt umulig å se for seg en verden uten krig. Så spørsmålet er hvordan man skal balansere de kreftene og, hva heter det, liksom roe dem ned, eller pastisere dem. Og da vil jo mange si at det gjør man ved å ha defensive forsvarskapasiteter i en moderne verden” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

engagement but also openness to more philosophical reasoning that I experienced in the conversation with Benjamin. Both came with suggestions for books to read or films to see, new knowledge, and more perspectives. Following the mountain model, I wondered how this curiousness can be used to encourage the actors to dive into the water that covers their own mountainsides.

Maria and I explored concepts I perceive to be taken for granted and agreed that human beings have invented the nation states but that it is hard to imagine a world without them. “But what would happen if not, then? If we had not invented the nation state, we would have invented something else that would put people into a system,” Maria questioned. “And we need communities. And to somehow imagine that that would emerge without violence and thus without the existence of conflict and thus without the existence of weapons, I find that difficult,” she stated.

When the temperature in our conversation raised, and our different roles got less clear, I recognized the bubbling feeling I get when I discuss topics I feel matter and where I believe I can contribute to a change. After a while, we had touched upon all the topics I had envisioned, and I turned off the recorder, and we talked more concretely about possible entry points to change the regulations in the context of a newly extended government in Norway. Suddenly, I found myself in a familiar role: talking about solutions I believe in to Norwegian politicians or political advisors. Maria followed me out of the parliament building while I was wondering if I had talked too freely, scared of being perceived as unrealistic and naïve.

176 “Men hva hadde oppstått hvis ikke da. Hvis vi ikke hadde funnet opp nasjonalstaten hadde vi funnet opp noe annet da, som hadde satt mennesker i system” (translated by the author).
177 “Og vi trenger jo fellesskapene. Og det å på en måte se for seg at det skulle oppstå uten at det er vold og uten at det dermed er konflikt og uten at det dermed kommer til å finnes våpen, det synes jeg er vanskelig” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

9.1.5 Sara, Employee in a Civil Society Organization

I call the person I have invited from the civil society group Sara. Sara and I have been active members of, and worked in, different organizations, but we have worked closely together with the topic in question during my last years in Changemaker. We met in a quiet café in Oslo one early Monday morning. I was on my way to Lisbon and had lots of luggage, while Sara was on her way to work. The waitress was still putting the tables in their places for the day, so various times during the conversation, we could almost not hear each other due to the sound of tables being dragged along the floor.

Sara has been active in Norwegian civil society for many years, first in a youth organization and now as senior advisor in an international organization. I felt more at home with her than in any of the other research conversations. The atmosphere was confusingly similar to all the morning meetings in cafés the two of us have had over the last years in our attempt to create strategies for how to change the situation regarding Norwegian exportation of war material to the countries participating in the war in Yemen. However, now the setting was different, and various times during the conversation, Sara expressed nervousness at being quoted. Her expressed nervousness underlined the importance of me not misusing the trust I have been given by the human beings who participate in the research conversations. As I know how important it is, as part of civil society, to ground your arguments in facts that can be proven, I decided that in this conversation, I needed, in addition to being open and honest, also to self-take the initiative to share my personal opinions to create the needed trust.

We talked about the killing of the Saudi Arabian journalist Jamal Khashoggi and that Norwegian authorities had stopped issuing new export licenses to Saudi Arabia. Sara referred to a discussion with a colleague:

Do you remember what Stalin says? (…) The death of one man is a tragedy; the death of millions is a statistic. Maybe that was what happened. And of course it

178 All further references to Sara are from a research conversation conducted in Oslo on January 21, 2019.
Regarding the situation around the stop in issuing new licenses for sale to Saudi Arabia, I was quite clear on what I think was the reason. “I think I am even more cynical than you regarding this topic. I think it [the stop in issuing new licenses] happened because Germany did it,” I said. Sara picked up the thread:

Yes, yes, but it is precisely that, that there are others who go in front. Now we see that Denmark goes further than Norway. So I think it is a bit like that, and that is how we need to work too; someone needs to take the lead, and the others need to follow. And our goal is in a way that Norway takes the lead, and in some aspects we have done so.

I asked Sara what she thinks about the public debate. “It [the debate] is quite stuck and repetitive. And it is not just the authorities but also the industry, labor unions, and civil society.” She pointed at one argument the Norwegian authorities use:

One of the things civil society often meets when we criticize Norwegian arms exports is that thorough risk assessments are carried out. And we do not really get anywhere, for where is the error when the export happens? Is it the regulation? Is it the risk assessments to check the regulation? Is it the lack of retrospective control? Is it somehow naivety about the end-user declarations? Or is it in a way that parliament has in some way made the wrong rules or in a way does not use the possibility for control to say something about the interpretation? Because they nearly never do that, other than in the narrative. They say something about it, but they do nothing about it.
I challenged Sara with the critique that she and civil society base their arguments on feelings. Sara meant that both actors who want stricter regulations and those advocating for the status quo play on human beings’ feelings. “In any case, no one has presented facts proving that Norwegian jobs will get lost or that Norwegian industry is not able to adapt,” Sara said and continued, “And I think, obviously it is about feelings.”

We have never been interested in setting Norwegian jobs up against deaths in Yemen. Because it is not the industry’s responsibility to be strict regarding the regulations; that is the politicians’ responsibility. But then the politicians need to be aware that there exist two bottom lines for Norwegian export of weapon. One is the economy in Norway, and the other is the consequence of irresponsible export of weapons out there. (…) I feel we have been quite, or at least my organization has been quite, fair by not talking about one single weapon, one specific weapon factory in Norway and make that factory responsible for what happens with their products. That is in some way the role of the media, and that is the role of the politicians, but our role is precisely to speak to Norwegian politicians who are responsible for Norwegian export of weapons and that are supposed to have exactly that role. But of course there are feelings; there are feelings as soon as we look up from the accounts.

Regarding the public debate and what terms to use, Sara’s perspective corresponds with many of the perspectives I had heard in the different research conversations. “The whole debate is wrapped in technicalities,” she stated. “I often perceive that politicians, and perhaps also the industry, but they are not that involved in the public debate, grab every opportunity to correct wrong use of language when it really does not matter that much,” Sara shared, frustrated. After talking to actors with different views, I think her frustration is...
shared beyond people in the group of civil society and maybe even exists within all the
different groups of actors, though I think the perception of who misuses the technicalities
differs between the groups.

I asked Sara what she thinks civil society can do to create a space where more people
choose to participate in the debate. “We might need to talk to other people than those we talk
to today,”189 Sara replied. She pointed in the direction of the different associations that are
part of the biggest labor union but problematized the need of resources to really dive into that
approach. That said, Sara thought it might be possible if the different civil society
organizations managed to gather their resources and cooperate.

“Why does Norway produce defense material?”190 I asked. “I do not know. Or actually
I do not have any perspective on it. The only thing I know is that we supposedly need it [war
material] in case of war,”191 Sara replied. “I have never involved myself that much in that part
of the discussion because weapons exist in a way, and we just need to control them and not
sell them where they—”192 Sara stopped in the middle of the sentence. As we already talked
about topics that seemed to be far from our daily life, I asked if she thinks we can ever create
a world without weapons. “No, I do not think so, unfortunately. Or in a post-apocalyptic
world where the United States of America and Russia and India and the United Kingdom
have bombed some nuclear bombs around.”193

While the other actors had been quite vague regarding where to draw the lines for who
should be allowed to buy Norwegian war material and who not, Sara was clear. She first
underlined that the limits were fluid and had to be seen in a context but then stated, “I think
we should not sell weapons to countries that, one, somehow sell it onward without telling

189 “Man kanskje er nødt til å snakke med andre enn de vi snakker med i dag” (translated by the author).
190 “Hvorfor produserer Norge forsvars materiell?” (Translated by the author)
191 “Jeg vet ikke. Altså, eller jeg har ikke noe perspektiv på det egentlig. Det eneste jeg vet er at vi visstnok
trenger det [krigsmateriell] for i tilfelle det blir krig” (translated by the author).
192 “Jeg har aldri engasjert meg så mye i akkurat den delen av diskusjonen fordi at våpen og finnes på en måte
og vi må bare ha kontroll på de og ikke selge de der de—” (translated by the author).
193 “Nei, det tror jeg dessverre ikke. Eller jo, altså i en sann der postapokalyptisk verden hvor USA og Russland
og India og Storbritannia har liksom bombet noen atom bomber rundt om” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

about it; two, kill and imprison their own population; or, three, participate in war, period.”

We discussed the nuances in how the guidelines are interpreted and the challenges that arise when that happens in the context of alliance politics. Sara was not in doubt that the politicians in the government and parliament were the ones responsible for the export. Therefore, it is “ultimately, in a democracy, the people who decide what is okay and not okay,” she stated.

When I asked what she and I could do to create a more peaceful society, Sara answered almost without thinking, “By voting for the right people to represent us. At least in a representative democracy.” Sara presented various actions that she thinks Norway can do for a more peaceful global society. “I think one thing is to push for reform of the UN and the Security Council,” she began and underlined what she perceived to be a need for more equality both between countries in international institutions and between people. “I think that if people are well and have their rights—can say what they mean, think what they mean, live and love the one they want, create more peace than if they are not doing well and do not have enough to live from.”

As various actors had pointed at before, Sara also mentioned the oil fund: “And I think to clear up at home, by not contributing to bad things in the world. Whether it is through the oil fund, or through Norwegian export of weapons, or through oil activities.”

Sara was already way too late for her work. Still, as we both had much in our hearts, the conversation continued but at a higher speed. We touched upon a wide spectrum of topics, from lack of transparency, the importance of employment, and the political game to the

194 “Jeg tror at man ikke bør selge våpen til land som: én, på en måte bare selger det videre uten å fortelle om det, to, dreper og fengsler sin egen befolkning, eller tre, deltar i krieger, punktum” (translated by the author).
195 “Til snydende og sist så er det jo, i et demokrati, folket som må beslutte hva som er greit og ikke er greit” (translated by the author).
196 “Gjennom å stemme på rett folk til å representere oss. I hvert fall i et representativt demokrati” (translated by the author).
197 “Jeg tror det ene er å pushe for altså reform av FN og Sikkerhetsrådet” (translated by the author).
198 “Jeg tror det at folk har det bra, og kan ha rettighetene sine; si hva de mener, tenke hva de mener, leve og elske den de vil, skaper nok mer fred enn når de ikke har det bra og ikke på en måte ikke har nok å leve av” (translated by the author).
199 “Også tror liksom rydde i eget hus, ved å ikke på en måte bidra til kjipe ting i verden. Om det er gjennom oljefondet, eller gjennom norsk våpeneksport, eller gjennom oljevirksomhet” (translated by the author).
industry’s participation in the debate. I brought up a thought that had bothered me since the research conversation with Allan, namely the question of what happens if more voices get heard in the media. Will those voices that are heard today, for example, civil society, lose the power they have over the discourse? If yes, do I, by advocating for more voices, work against civil society? I also mentioned how the representative from the industry had expressed that it was difficult to get heard in the media, thus that the struggle to be heard is a struggle civil society shares with other groups of actors. Sara’s view gave me a new perspective on how the media somehow has its own homeostasis: “I believe that space demands that you take part in all the aspects of the debate. You cannot deny all truths that are not your own. Then you are already in your own echo chamber, and you do not have anything to do in national media.”

We continued the conversation until Sara had to run, speculating on how decisions are made regarding when to stop selling as what representatives from the different political parties say in the media and the questions they raise in the committee hearings often do not correspond to their voting in parliament. After the chaotic conversation, I thought about the similarities between the frustrations the different actors put forward. Somehow, the shared frustrations ensured me that possibilities exist for transformation.

9.1.6 Martin, Journalist

I call the journalist I talked to from the media group Martin. Martin and I briefly met once, but we have been in contact various times on both the phone and through messages, especially when the temperature in the public debate regarding Norwegian war material was high. I decided to ask Martin for various reasons, primarily because, in my opinion, he is one of the journalists who has had the most impact on Norwegian exportation of war material in

---

200 “Jeg tror at med den plassen så fordrer det nettopp at man må være en del av alle aspekter av debatten da. For du kan jo ikke bare avskrive alle sannheter enn din egen. For da er du allerede i dit eget ekkokammer og da har du ingenting i riksmedier å gjøre” (translated by the author).

201 All further references to Martin are from a research conversation conducted through the call-function on Facebook messenger on January 28, 2019.
9. Research Conversations

the last years. In addition, I wanted to talk to a man to create more gender balance in the
critical voices toward today’s practice of Norwegian exportation of war material. As a
journalist, Martin himself does not advocate for stricter regulations, for the status quo, or for
less strict regulations. Still, by telling stories of what happens on the ground, his voice has
been important for those advocating for stricter regulations. As Martin reports from the
ground, he does not live in Norway, and hence this is the only one of the research
conversations where I did not physically meet the participant but talked through the call-
function on Facebook messenger.

I asked Martin how he got interested in the Middle East and the topics he writes about.
“‘I noticed very early that I was interested in foreign policy and everything that had to do with
diplomacy and international politics.’\textsuperscript{202} He concretized, ‘And I got more and more interested
in conflicts. When politics failed so hard that one resorts to the most extreme mean, which is
warfare.’\textsuperscript{203} Martin told me that his interest in Norwegian exportation of weapons was rooted
in his interest in conflicts.

And weapons, Norwegian weapons or the Norwegian weapon industry, is there. The industry is not huge compared to many other countries, but it is worth to notice and very little is written about it. And, in my opinion, very vague, very little concrete. About what I wanted when the war in Yemen became more and more relevant, and these were regimes that Norway exported to, then it was worth it to take a proper look at it. In a way, it is the pursuit of good news pieces. (…) It is not that one, “Now I will look at export of weapons,” but one needs a theory about that there is something to find. Otherwise, one can get lost. So I tried not to think that now I am going to look at that topic and see if I find something, but I had a clear theory of what I wanted to find. And I wanted to find out if Norwegian weapons were used in one of the deadliest wars in the world.\textsuperscript{204}

\textsuperscript{202} “Jeg merket veldig tidlig at jeg var interessert i utenrikspolitikk og alt som hadde med diplomati og størtpolitikk å gjøre” (translated by the author).
\textsuperscript{203} “Og at jeg ble stadig mer og mer interessert i konflikter. Altså når politikken feilet så hardt at man tyr til det ytterste middelet da, som er krigføring” (translated by the author).
\textsuperscript{204} “Og våpen, norske våpen eller norsk våpenindustri, den er der. Den er ikke kjempestor sammenlignet med veldig mange andre land, men den er jo verdt å merke seg og den blir skrevet veldig lite om. Også veldig sånn vakt synes jeg, veldig lite konkret. Om hva jeg ønsket etter hvert når Jemenkrigen ble mer og mer aktuell og dette var regimer som Norge eksporterte til, så var det verdi å se litt ordentlig på det. Det er jo egentlig jakten etter gode saker på en måte. (…) Det er ikke sånn at man ”Nå skal jeg se på våpeneksport,” men man må ha en teori om at der er det noe å finne da. For ellers kan man gå seg bort. Så jeg prøvde ikke å tenke sånn at nå skal jeg se på det feltet og se om jeg finner noe, men jeg hadde en klar teori om hva jeg ønsket å prøve å finne ut av.
Martin was honest that it was the politicians’ absolute certainty that triggered him.

For me, when a Norwegian politician says, “No, we have no proof that, that has happened. Or that Norwegian weapons or ammunitions are used, for example, in Yemen.” Then, I mean, it was my duty to find out if that is right. Because the absolute certainty can often be a bit provocative. I did not think they were right. So I wanted to try to figure it out. 205

In the same way Martin was honest about what provoked him, he was also honest that he never found exactly what he was looking for. “I never found Norwegian material made in Norway on a Norwegian license used in the war in Yemen.” 206 As so many of the actors have pointed at before him, Martin underscored the complexity of the topic: “The whole weapon export, or the system, is made in a very complicated way to make ordinary people lose track of all the details.” 207 “I meant it was right to try to describe the situation as it was. That many Norwegian products were sold to other countries that had different export regulations, then changed or put together, for example, there, and then sold,” 208 Martin said. He underlined, “I did not want to say if it was right or wrong, but I wanted to at least write that it happens.” 209

Martin’s voice was, despite a bit blurry Facebook line, clear and convincing. Without being patronizing, he knew that he was good at what he was doing and not afraid of stating his opinion.

I asked Martin what he thought about the public debate. His critique was clear:

I thought the debate was very poorly enlightened a few years ago. (...) And I thought it was very un specific. I thought it was like, “Yes, export of weapons is

---

205 “For meg, når en norsk politiker sier, ”Nei det har vi ingen bevis på, at det har skjedd. Eller at norske våpen eller ammunisjon er brukt, for eksempel i Yemen.” Så mener jeg at da var det hvert fall min plikt å prøve finne ut om det er riktig da. Fordi skråsikkerhet kan ofte være litt sånn provosierende. Jeg trodde ikke de hadde rett da. Så jeg ville prøve å finne ut av det” (translated by the author).

206 “Jeg fant aldri norsk materiale som var laget i Norge på norsk lisens brukt i Jemenkrigen” (translated by the author).

207 “Hele våpeneksporten, eller systemet, er jo laget på en veldig sånn innviklet måte som gjør at vanlige folk skal falle av i alle detaljene” (translated by the author).

208 “Jeg mente at det var riktig å prøve å beskrive situasjonen sånn den var. At veldig mange norske produkter ble solgt til andre land som hadde andre eksportregler, også endret eller satt sammen for eksempel der, også solgt” (translated by the author).

209 “Jeg ville ikke si noe om det var riktig eller galt, men jeg ville hvert fall skrive at det skjer” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

a bad thing.” And then, “Okay, but what does that mean?” I thought it was very vague. Also the criticism of the Norwegian authorities, it was extremely incorrect (…) What I wanted to do was to enlighten the debate and bring it down. Okay, Nammo sells this rocket engine to Germany; the parts are put together there. These missiles that are put together there are used on Saudi Arabian bombers, right? Just write it the way it is.210

“On the anti side, or the opposition side, I thought it was a lot like, “Norwegian bombs kill children in Yemen.” And that is not correct.”211 He pointed at how these mistakes were present also in the debates in parliament. When I asked Martin why he thought that was the case, he put words to something that has often passed through my mind during the last years:

“I think it is like this in almost a lot of political affairs, but because I knew this topic a bit more, I noticed that there were a lot of mistakes.”212 Martin perceived the use of different terms to contribute to the confusion and mistakes in the public debate.

No, it has been quite confusing and that [the terms] is one of the things that have led to a lot of confusion. To like that one has been at the parliament and says bombs, and then there are no bombs, and what are bombs, what are missiles, what is military equipment? I think it has been quite messy.213

Martin talked about his engagement in the debate and how he and his bosses’ engagement reduced as the export of the deadliest war material to the main actors in the war in Yemen was stopped. As the debate turned from the situations where Martin had concrete examples to write about to those more based on principles, the consequences and direct link to Norway was less graspable; hence, more explanation was needed and the topic not as easy to write about. Martin’s words made sense to me; he points at what I perceive to be a big

210 “Jeg synes debatten var svært liksom dårlig opplyst for noen år siden. (…) Og jeg synes det var liksom veldig lite konkret. Jeg synes det var sann der ja; ”våpeneksport er en dårlig ting.” Også bare sann; ”okay, men hva betyr det da?” Jeg synes det var veldig vagt. Også kritikken av norske myndigheter, det var så ekstremt mye feil (...) Det jeg ville gjøre var å opplyse den og bare bringe det ned liksom. Okay, Nammo selger denne rakettmotoren til Tyskland, det settes sammen der. Disse missilene som der settes sammen brukes på Saudiarabiske bombefly, ikke sant? Bare skrive det sann det er ” (translated by the author).

211 ”På den antisiden da, eller motstandssiden liksom, så synes jeg også det var veldig mye sann da: ”Norske bomber dreper barn i Jemen.” Også er ikke det riktig ” (translated by the author).

212 ”Jeg tror det er sann i nesten veldig mange politiske saker, men fordi at jeg kunne den saken litt ekstra godt, så merket jeg at det var mye feil” (translated by the author).

213 ”Nei, den har vært ganske forvirrende og det [begrepen] er en av de tingene som har fort til at det har vært masse forvirring. Til at liksom man har stått på Stortinget og sier bomber, også er det ikke bomber, og hva er bomber, hva er missiler, hva er krigsmateriell? Jeg synes det har vært ganske rørete” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

challenge: difficulties to raise debates and create concrete changes before the consequences, and the links to Norway, are visible and possible to experience.

As I perceive the public debate to lack voices from the spectrum of actors involved, I asked Martin about his opinion. Then our Facebook line broke, but luckily we managed to reestablish the call. Martin differentiated between different actors within the industry and admired one of the big Norwegian companies for its openness and the way it had behaved toward him, while the other big company, according to Martin, was impossible to get to speak. The same was the case with politicians; some were very active and wanted contact, others behaved rudely, and others, again, refused to speak. “I actually think it has been as usual. Those who benefit from talking, they want to talk. Those who do not benefit from talking, they do not want to talk. Classic politicians,” Martin summed up.

When I asked about his opinion regarding the limitations on who should be allowed to buy Norwegian war material, he was not sure. He brought up the challenges with alliance politics and the lack of debate regarding what we export to the United States. I picked up on what he said about the United States as I perceive it to be a topic that an actor who wants to be taken seriously cannot raise and wondered how he thinks we, civil society and the media, can widen the sphere of what is debated. “No, I do not know. The point is that one needs to have some clear examples and some serious violations in order to start a debate,” Martin replied.

The conversation approached an end, and I asked how he or I as individuals can contribute to a more peaceful society. “I mean that one must never distinguish between the suffering of civilians, or one needs to have a moral that everyone has equal value.”

---


215 “Nei, jeg vet ikke jeg, altså. Poenget er at man må jo ha noen tydelig eksempler og noen grove overtramp for å i det hele tatt starte en debatt” (translated by the author).

216 “Nei jeg mener jo at man aldri må skille mellom lidelsene til sivile, eller altså man må ha en moral som at alle er like mye verdi” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

referred to a specific Norwegian politician who has been quite vocal about the need for better conditions for the Norwegian defense industry: “He must think that a family in Iraq can be his family. One must be able to put oneself in the shoes of others to understand the suffering that is experienced around the world. A focus on that what is unfair for me is also unfair for an Iraqi or a Yemenite.”

Martin’s words brought me to the memories I keep with me from encounters with human beings fleeing from war. His words hit me even though they had traveled through a noisy Facebook line, which was not helpful for my aim to actively listen or for creating a connection deeper than the words that were used. The feelings, both Martin’s and my own, and the nuances in how we communicated were harder to both sense and understand during the conversation through a Facebook line than what they had been in the conversations where I was in the same room as the person I communicated with. Nevertheless, I believe the conversation gave me useful insights from a journalist’s perspective and experience.

The research conversations gave me insights within the five areas I had outlined. I acquired a broader understanding of where the participants come from and how and why they think as they do. Furthermore, I got insights into the participants’ perspectives on both Norwegian exportation of war material and the public debate and the terms that are used. I obtained a better understanding of the participants’ worldviews and how they see their own role within this view. Finally, I left the conversations with new perspectives on what Norwegian civil society can do to transform the status quo. In the beginning, the new insights were quite confusing. As thoughts, emotions, and new perspectives buzzed around in my head, I found myself on a moving pendulum between believing that the only way of transforming Norwegian exportation of war material was to be strong, confronting and

217 “(…) Han må tenke at en familie i Irak kan være hans familie da. At man må klare å sette seg selv i andres sko for å forstå hvilke lidelser som er ute å går rundt omkring i verden da. Et fokus på liksom hva som er urettferdig for meg er også urettferdig for en Iraker eller en Yemenit” (translated by the author).

218 See section 8.1 Mapping the Cardinal Theme.
9. Research Conversations

winning discussions on moral arguments, and that what was needed were understanding and human encounters. To grasp what was going on inside and to systematize what I had learned, I used mind mapping\textsuperscript{219} as a tool to visualize the chaos within myself, and tried to, piece by piece, use ECM as a guiding tool.

To secure transparency in my use of methods, I reflect upon first and secondary partial collaborative action research in the context of the presented research conversations before I explore the images of peace I identified in the conversations.

9.2 First- and Second-Person Partial Collaborative Action Research

To be honest about my ability to approach the conflict in an elicitive manner and be transparent in action research spirals I conduct, I asked myself in what ways did and do I include the voices from the conversation partners? To what extent and in what way have the conversation partners influenced my ways of understanding, my values, and my choices in this research?

As I started this research, I chose to use ECM. Hence, I already put on a pair of lenses that made me look for themes, peace families, and layers. By using specific methods to analyze, organize, and make sense out of what I see, hear, and read, I limit the amount of possibilities. At the same time, I might see aspects and links I would not have discovered without the focus and attention these methods provide. As a result of the limited possibilities, there exist many aspects that I did not manage to sense. I tried to keep attention on what was there and what was not and to let the cocreated knowledge guide my next step.

The first research conversation I conducted was with Benjamin, who stated that “humans are humans; we are predators.”\textsuperscript{220} The way Benjamin described the world fit my prejudiced picture of how people working in the industry that produces war material perceive

\textsuperscript{219} See attachment 4 in the appendix for the mind maps I made after the research conversations. The mind maps are in Norwegian, and I have removed the names.

\textsuperscript{220} “Mennesket er mennesket, vi er rådyr” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

the world. Reflecting on what was expressed in the conversation, I became and more curious about what the perspective Benjamin had put forward actually implied. Did the other actors share his view? To my surprise, I experienced that Benjamin’s view on the nature of human beings was shared and expressed more or less directly by research participants who hold different views on Norwegian exportation of war material. The actors did not use the same words, but in my understanding, the underlying assumption was the same. Consequently, the first participant’s clear understanding of human behavior turned out to influence the following research conversations with other actors and consequently the cocreating of knowledge. Hence, as I, together with the actors, started to dive into the water, or explore our perspectives, values, and needs, I discovered that despite the different perspectives on Norwegian exportation of war material, the participants had quite similar values and perspectives on humans and shared the belief that humans always have fought and always will fight each other. In section 9.3.1.1 The Nation State and the Dangerous Human Being, I explore the consequences of a perspective on humans as dangerous beings that need to be controlled by a state.

At one point in the conversation with Allan, I raised the topic of lack of voices. I stated how I perceived that many voices that have an interest in Norwegian exportation of war material are never heard in the public debate. Decision makers in a democracy have to listen to the majority. If the population mostly hears from one perspective, the majority is inclined to listen to this. Thus, Allan pointed at how, in his perspective, the missing voices were a benefit for the views that are actually voiced and heard in today’s debate. Norwegian civil society is vocal in this question. Even though Allan’s perspective is a fundament for the campaign work that I have done for years, I walked home from the conversation wondering if by trying to contribute to a space where more voices are raised and more perspectives heard, I, in the end, work against the view I have been advocating for years. I remembered the
9. Research Conversations

importance of the peace workers’ courage to be transformed, how Satir (Dietrich 2013, 44) stresses the need for detachment from one’s own ideas of justice as a prerequisite for transformation, Lederach’s focus on the transformative power of dialogue, and how Reason and Bradbury underline that action research “starts from an orientation of change with others” (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 1).

The meeting with my own fear of contributing to what, if I am honest with myself, still within the context of my society perceive as something that makes the world a worse place for human beings, started one of many cycles of planning, action, and reflection that characterize action research. “Each cycle increase the researchers’ knowledge of the original question, puzzle, or problem” (Herr and Anderson 2014, 5). The knowledge I gained through the action research spirals was not only regarding the topic in question but, as the researcher cannot be an objective observer, and as I am part of the conflict, also about my own relationship to the topic. If I am afraid of contributing to a change that I do not desire, am I actually able to meet the actors with an open heart? Am I able to leave a desired end state and rather build on what is? And do I really have the courage to explore my perspectives, values, and needs with an attitude open to be changed in the process and in the human encounters?

I do not want a society where only my views are put forward. I want a society for all, including people I disagree with. The fear of contributing to something I have spent so many years fighting stuck in me for a while. Was I naïve and co-opted? The moments I opened to be changed, I felt scared that I failed on my own convictions and the community I have been part of. When I searched for connection rather than trying to win the argument, I felt foolish. It was like the less measurable quality of connection was submissive to graspable arguments of numbers of dead or economic benefits of putting our resources in other industries. The modern images of peace, where the world works as clockwork, measurable and calculable, are so integrated in me that even when I mentally try to widen my horizon, the modern values and
understandings are present. Consequently, before I continued, I needed to connect with my courage. I remembered my first research conversation with Benjamin. He had taken a step to talk with those who disagreed with him. In relation to transformation of the status quo, Benjamin expressed that “we are so stuck”\textsuperscript{221} and that we need “someone on each side who is willing to begin, for anything to happen.”\textsuperscript{222} With what I perceived to be wise words from someone I so inherently disagree with, the peace worker’s ABC, and my own limits in mind, active listening and NVC became an even more important part of my research. For me to actually see the human beings behind their official roles and the phrases of courtesy we so often exchanged, I needed to listen not only with my ears but my whole being.

The research participants influenced and formed important decisions throughout the research. During the concrete conversations, I followed the themes outlined in the research guide but tried to create a space where the actors could tell their stories and give their opinions about the topic in question and then follow up with questions building on their stories. Yet I only managed to create this space to a certain extent. The conversations clearly flow on my premises. Transrational approaches to research and academic work, in my experience as a Norwegian, can be alien. Thus, I believe a more thorough introduction to what I was doing, the methods I used, and the thoughts behind them could have helped the actors participating in their way of engaging and in getting some kind of ownership of the development of the research.

The actors were not part of deciding the initial research question. Hence, it was I, as the researcher, who put down the framework for the research and further invited the participants that I perceive to be actors in the conflict to tell their stories and give their opinions about the topic. To be a fully collaborative research, I argue that the actors themselves should have been part of not only answering the research question but also

\textsuperscript{221} “En har kjørt seg så fast” (translated by the author).
\textsuperscript{222} “Noen på hver side som er villig til å begynne, for at noe skal skje” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

developing the question and putting together the research puzzle. Furthermore, I have included the actors in the reflection on the different views put forward in the different research conversations only to a limited degree. This was both to secure their anonymity—as the milieu is small, referring to what group the different actors belong to is already at the limit of what I can do while still keeping the participants anonymous—and because of the time available. The participants have approved the quotations I use. The challenges around the question of anonymity manifested itself when participants referred to other participants various times in the conversations without knowing that the concrete human beings they referred to also took part in this research. That the group of people who actively engage in the public debate is quite small, and hence they know each other, has consequences for the research design. The personal relations between these actors have an impact on the conflict itself and how the actors perceive, and act within, the conflict.

Aware of the flaws but also the strengths of the way I applied first and secondary partial collaborative action research in the context of the concrete conversations, I used mind mapping as a tool to look into the different images of peace that were revealed in the research conversations.

9.3 Images of Peace

Along with the pre-collected information, I base the further analyses on what was said in the research conversations and on my own experiences from these conversations. With the peace families as a framework, I relate different narratives to different peace families. Visualized on paper, I see how modern understandings of peace are dominating. All the participants told narratives that revealed modern images of peace. Further more, the narratives disclosed moral images. To my surprise, I also find postmodern and energetic images of peace, but these are, in my perspective, clearly rarer than the modern and moral approaches.
9. Research Conversations

By scrutinizing different images of peace expressed in the narratives and what I perceive to be the underlying assumptions of these images, I aim to both contextualize the images of peace that exist within the narratives and reveal the consequences of these underlying assumptions. I explore the dichotomous perspectives on emotions and rationality that was put forward in the research conversations, look at the terminology used in, and the consequences of this terminology for, the public debate, and discover resources for conflict transformation that exist within and between the actors.

9.3.1 Images of Peace and Underlying Assumptions

In the creation of a space for transformative dialogue, I believe it is important to understand what is talked about, but as important is what is not mentioned or spoken out loud. Behind words about modern equipment and bombed school buses, I perceive the existence of a huge field of doxa, topics or aspects that cannot be discussed because that is just how the world is. I felt it in the clear “no” and the skeptical looks from the research participants when I questioned if, in their opinion, a world without weapons is possible. Both the actors who express that they want stricter regulations and those who defend the status quo reacted as if production of war material is obvious and beyond need for justification.
9. Research Conversations

I am not aware of all the conditionalities and limitations that I live with and within. Through socialization, shared patterns for and of behavior, and what experiences and thoughts I have encountered, there are many things in and aspects of life I take for granted or that have just never passed my consciousness. Nevertheless, I believe we as human beings can explore what lies beneath the water. We can see, discover, and, hence, change what is doxa. In my attempt to reveal some of the underlying preconceptions, I sketch what I perceive to be the main line of arguments used by actors who support the status quo in relation to regulations on Norwegian exportation of war material.223

Norway needs war material to defend Norwegians, the Norwegian border, and the way Norwegians live their lives. Hence, Norwegian companies produce war material. The cost of highly technological production, as the production of war material is because everyone wants the newest and most efficient war material to be able to win against the enemy, is so expensive that neither the companies alone nor the Norwegian state can afford it. The production has to be directed toward foreign markets so the products can be exported to other countries and so Norwegian companies can make cooperation agreements with foreign companies. If Norwegian companies are forced to imply stricter rules than foreign companies, they will lose the competition and will not be chosen for cooperation agreements because stricter regulations will decrease the number of possible buyers. Thus, other companies participating in the agreements would rather choose companies that do not close the door for the final product to be sold to potential buyers. For example, the United States, which today is the most important customer of Norwegian war material, will not buy material from

223 This is my personal paraphrasing of what I perceive to be the main narrative of exportation of Norwegian war material told by actors who argue for status quo in the research conversation, from my previous experience within the field, and in the collected material.
Norwegian companies if Norway puts a limit on where the material can be used and which countries the material can be resold to.

On the other hand, what I perceive to be the main narrative told by actors who want to impose stricter regulations can, in my perspective, be summed up like this:224

Norway, and hence Norwegian decision makers, is responsible for what is produced by Norwegian companies. Therefore, the authorities are responsible for where and for what products that are completely or partly produced by Norwegian companies are used.

Furthermore, two main lines of arguments follow:

1) Today, Norway sells war material to countries that participate in a war where proof exists that the actors on both (or all) sides are violating international humanitarian law. 2) Norway sells war material to countries where the authorities are violating human rights and suppressing the population.

Consequently, in both situations, by selling war material, Norway directly participates by either providing the means or legitimizing the authorities’ use of power.

The production itself is seldom touched upon in the line of arguments put forward by the actors who want stricter regulations.

Through experience with all our senses and through reflection, conversations, and exchange of ideas and perspectives, I argue that it is possible to gain insights into, and bring parts of, what today is doxa into the sphere of opinion. Some of the underlying concepts that are not discussed in the two main narratives, and that I argue to be part of doxa in the society I am part of, are the nation state itself, the nation state’s need to defend itself from an outer enemy (hence, the existence of such an enemy), and that this need for defense implies a need

---

224 This is my personal paraphrasing of what I perceive to be the main narrative of exportation of Norwegian war material told by actors who argue for stricter regulations in the research conversations, from my previous experience within the field, and in the collected material.
for war material. Another underlying assumption is that my security, as a human being with a Norwegian passport, depends upon the Norwegian state’s possibility to get the newest and best war material.

The Darwinist assumption of the survival of the fittest adopted at the level of nation states fits remarkably well with Hobbes’s view on human nature and a war culture driven by fear. These views are combined with nation states seen as actors with agency. In my experience, the nation state “was there before he [I] was born, and it will be there after his [my] death” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 60). Thus, while the nation states only exist through construction, they strike me “as historical and objective facticities” (Berger and Luckmann 1967, 60).

Furthermore, an underlying assumption is that the market mechanisms make it impossible to compete and be part of the market for any company that is regulated stricter than any other company. Consequently, in a world divided into countries with laws and agreements regulating both the relations within and between these countries, and where the authorities in Norway argue that they cannot apply stricter regulations because that will destroy Norwegian companies’ possibilities to compete, a weak interpretation of international law and regulations easily become the roof rather than a floor. As Benjamin, the participant from the industry that produces war material, said, “That is the price for international cooperation. It will never happen on only your premises.”

To get a broader understanding of how the concept of nation states influences how we see our own role in and, as a society, deal with Norwegian exportation of war material, I explore the nation state’s role in the Norwegian debate around this topic. Moreover, I look into how arguments related to international cooperation contribute to impeding the involved actors’ realization of their, in my opinion, ethical responsibility.

225 “Det er litt prisen for internasjonalt samarbeid. Det vil aldri kun skje på dine premisser” (translated by the author).
9.3.1.1 The Nation State and the Dangerous Human Being

Nation states and how we humans have divided the world into different countries make up the framework for this research. Even though I seek to see the human beings behind the nation state, I have, by putting Norwegian exportation of war material in focus, by default used the nation state as a fundament. The internalizing of the concept of nation states goes deeper because my interest in the topic builds on my feeling of being Norwegian. I feel I have possibilities to change the status quo but also feel responsibility. As I am living in what I see as a democracy, I feel responsible for what the authorities elected by my fellow citizens and me do. To question the system of nation states is frightening. It somehow touches my socioemotional layer and plays with my need for social belonging. Within the organized system of nation states, I know how to “look for your [my] place and act accordingly” (Dietrich 2012, 1–2; Dietrich 2018, 65). Complexity and chaos are difficult to grasp; the worldwide system of nation states is not only a way of simplifying and reducing complexity, but it also works as a system to categorize some states as authoritarian and evil and others as democratic and good. The system creates a framework that nurtures both moral and modern images of peace. This dualism characterizes both how the actors who take part in the debate around Norwegian export of war material interpret the arguments put forward and the arguments that are put forward: good or evil countries, argumentation based on feelings or facts, and actors characterized as rational or naïve.

The generic lines of arguments further reveal the underlying assumption of an existence of enemies, which we in turn, as Norwegian citizens, need to be secured from. In the research conversations, when I asked why, in the participants’ opinions, Norway produces war material, all raised the need for defense. Except from vague hints, who or what we needed to defend ourselves and Norway’s borders from was not clear. “We benefit from having a defense to defend our own territory and to defend our interests and our sphere of
interest, especially in the north,” said Maria. “For the first time, a country in Europe has annexed parts of another country,” underlined Allan. He further stated, “That would be a major threat to the democracies that exist. If we somehow left [...] what has been invented, that would be nuclear weapons or other atrocities. And let them [dictatorships] rule that arena alone.’” Sara pinpointed what I was thinking when rereading the transcript from the conversations: “The only thing I know is that we supposedly need it [war material] in case of war.” Somehow the unknown and maybe imaginary danger to the Norwegian borders and population in the future is seen as sufficient justification for both the production and the sale of war material and for the consequences for the human beings exposed to this material. Modern images of peace, where peace is seen to exist out of security, are present in narratives building on an unknown danger. These narratives are further fueled by the dualities between good and bad.

I perceived the underlying rationale to be that war material, and hence the production of war material, is needed to create a peaceful society. In this rationale, war material is needed to ensure that the good win over the evil. That said, we all know that produced material is also used and that it is used to harm and injure other human beings. Consequently, the narrative implies a willingness to sacrifice those human beings to ensure the victory over the evil. What this good consists of is still a bit vague for me, but Allan painted a picture of some concepts that need to be defended: “our values and our, let’s say, free world and peaceful world.”

226 “Vi er tjent med å ha et forsvar til forsvar av vårt eget territorium, og til forsvar av våre interesser og vår interessesfære, spesielt i nord” (translated by the author).
227 “For første gang så har et land i Europa annektert deler av et annet land” (translated by the author).
228 “Det ville være en stor trussel mot de demokratiene vi har da. Hvis vi på en måte overlot [...] det som er funnet opp av enten det er atomvåpen eller andre grusomheter. At de [diktaturer] skulle råde den arenaen alene” (translated by the author).
229 “Det eneste jeg vet er at vi visstnok trenger det [krigsmateriell] for i tilfelle det blir krig” (translated by the author).
230 As two of the hints go in the direction of Norway’s neighboring country to the east, it should be mentioned that, even though I do not dive deeper into the current security situation, both Norwegian and Russian authorities report on attacks and threatening behavior from exactly Norway and Russia (NRK n.d.a; NRK n.d.b).
231 “Våre verdier og vår, skal vi si, frie verden og fredlige verden” (translated by the author).
In the research conversations, I asked the participants if they believed human beings can create a world without weapons. Personally, I perceive this to be quite a utopian question. Thus, that the participants thought a world without weapons is impossible was not surprising, but my aim was to figure out why they think that. The more conversations I conducted, the more similarities I saw between the answers. Deterministic arguments building on Hobbes’s understanding of human beings were common, perspectives like: “Humans are humans; we are predators,” as Benjamin said; “We live in an (...) illusion that human nature is to be nice and peaceful,” as Maria put forward; “It is quite impossible to envision a world without war. So the question is how to balance those forces and, what is it called, calm them down or pacify them. And many will say that in a modern world one does that by having defensive defense capabilities,” as also underlined by Maria. Or as pointed at by Benjamin, “It is an almost instinctive response when one [people in Norway] sees weapon and thinks that that is not peaceful. And maybe [people in Norway] don’t think about that, after all, someone has to guarantee that peace.” In these statements regarding how human beings relate and how the society we are part of works, war material is needed to defend ourselves against dangerous human nature.

Except from some dilemmas raised by Martin, the views put forward in the conversations revealed a fundamental trust in the Norwegian state and the regulative systems’ possibilities to regulate the situation, as long as the system is used correctly. The trust in the state is somehow paradoxical in my view; as we know that human beings have created the state and do not trust human beings, it is hard for me to see the reasons for trusting the

---

232 “Mennesket er mennesket, vi er råvdyr” (translated by the author).
233 “Vi lever i en (...) illusion om at menneskets naturtilstand er å være grei med hverandre og fredelig” (translated by the author).
234 “(...) så er det jo helt umulig å se for seg en verden uten krig. Så sporsmålet er hvordan man skal balansere de kraftene og, hva heter det, liksom roe dem ned, eller pasifisere dem. Og da vil jo mange si at det gjør man ved å ha defensive forsvarskapasiteter i en moderne verden” (translated by the author).
235 “Det er en nesten instinkтивt respons når en [folk i Norge] ser et våpen og tenker at det her det er ikke fredlig. Og tenker ikke over kanskje at, det er jo noen som skal garantere den freden” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

institutions created by someone who is seen as dangerous and not trustworthy. Nonetheless, the trust in the state is in line with modern images of peace, where interactions between humans and, hence, the institutions and regulations that human beings have created are perceived to be based on calculable principles (Dietrich 2012, 156) and, therefore, the truth. Consequently, without any actor concretely stating that, the state is, in my view, portrayed as the savior that protects humans from our natural condition and competition.

After the research conversation with Maria, my need to be seen as trustworthy left me with a knot in the belly. Maria holds a position that somehow makes me, almost unconsciously, listen more tentatively and make sense of her perspectives. During the conversations, Maria had asked me about my opinions, and we had talked in depth about what I perceived to be underlying assumptions that we all take for granted. One of the topics I had put forward was the nation state. Leaving the conversation, I wondered if Maria would ever take me seriously after I brought up what I perceived to be quite radical perspectives in the context. My own fear made me reflect. First of all, if I am so afraid of being taken seriously if questioning the state, I am probably not alone. I believe this social self-censorship contributes to impeding transformation. Furthermore, I thought about what debate climate I contribute to when I am so afraid of my perspectives not being accepted.

I draw various insights that can be useful in my search for long-lasting transformation of Norwegian exportation of war material from the perspectives on the nation state, human behavior, and my own fear of questioning what I perceive to be seen as the truth in the society I am part of. Foremost, I argue that we who take part in this debate must explore the underlying assumptions in our arguments and perspectives. If we dive into our own lines of arguments, the rationale that has brought each and every one of us to hold the views we hold today and the needs behind them, I believe we would find an incongruence in the rationale behind our arguments and how we actually think the world works and human beings relate.
Thus, we might also find that the strategies we have created to fulfill our needs are not the most adequate.

9.3.1.2 The Nation State and International Cooperation

In my presentation of what I perceive to be the lines of arguments, I mentioned the United States. As that country constitutes such a big part of the market and is an ally in NATO, it is seen as unserious to discuss Norway’s exports to the United States. Consequently, even though all actors know that the United States sells Norwegian war material to states that Norwegian authorities would not approve applications for export licenses to, and even though the United States violates international laws, violations the Norwegian Parliament has decided should lead to declination of applications for export licenses, the question of exporting to the United States is seldom discussed or raised in the public debate. This is not part of social doxa, as most actors are aware, but a result of institutionalized processes, power dynamics, and a want to be perceived as a serious actor. Martin touched upon the lack of discussion around exports to the United States and pointed at how Norwegian newspapers during the last few years have reported much less of the sufferings of civilians resulting from actions of war by the United States than by Russia and Assad. If that is the case, the worldview Norwegian citizens get through reading Norwegian newspapers further contributes to which countries we perceive as good and which we perceives as bad.

Consequently, even though the actors are aware of the situation around sales to the United States, that country is portrayed as a needed good compared to other bad superpowers. As the researcher cannot be neutral but is part of what is researched, neither can journalists; they can, in the best case, like the peace worker, be all-partisan. I argue that as long as there exists a fundamental impression of Norwegian production of war material being dependent on the possibility to sell to the United States and that the production itself is not to be discussed,

---

236 See section 9.3.1 Images of Peace and Underlying Assumptions.
an actor who questions exports to the United States is perceived to question the whole industry. Hence, the risk of not being taken seriously keeps most actors in silence. Maybe it is our socioemotional and communal layers, our need for belonging, for being seen and respected, that play out.

Dietrich (2018, 48) points at how laws, by creating a social-dynamic balance, can be homeostatic tools. In the case of international regulation of trade of war material, I believe that the intention has been to create common rules and some kind of balance between the different actors and their interests. I think international regulations have an important place in the global society we have created. Nevertheless, I question if these regulations work as homeostatic tools. I argue that in many aspects, international regulations work as the opposite. Instead of facilitating “harmonization of intra- and interpersonal tensions and conflicts” (Dietrich 2018, 53), laws can stabilize a dysfunctional system and hamper transformation. Laws can justify the power of the few. In relation to exportation of war material, laws can legalize powerful countries’ power to sell and buy war material, while, for example, the population in Yemen continues to be victims of the same material. Parts of the regulations, in my opinion, do not work as intended but rather justify, sustain, and support a dysfunctional system and consequently block homeostasis.

Aware that the actors’ and my own understanding of both the concrete topic in question, conflicts, and our own role in this world are built un underlying assumptions, I believe we can increase the sphere of opinion by exploring these assumptions. I argue that a bigger sphere of opinion can disclose more possible courses of action for transformation. Before I look deeper into conflict transformation and possible courses of action, I explore the different narratives of human behavior and the terminology used to describe the topic in question.
9. Research Conversations

9.3.2 Emotions versus Rationality

Various actors explicitly mentioned that human beings are far from rational beings. Benjamin stated, "We are not ultra-rational human beings. We are emotional animals."237 Maria indicated that "we have to play on people’s feelings to reach them."238 Allan put forward how "feelings trump most things."239 And Sara meant that "of course it is about feelings."240 Despite the agreement regarding humans as emotional beings, I argue that there exists either an explicit or underlying acceptance that important decisions, like decisions regarding Norwegian exportation of war material, must be made based on facts and rational arguments, not influenced by feelings. As a consequence, while various actors honestly and intentionally try to touch people’s feelings in their argumentation, they argue that the emotional human being needs rational, institutionalized regulations to make adequate decisions.

The clear disregard of feelings and, hence, the body is in Dietrich’s (2012) peace families coinciding with moral and modern images of peace. Within moral images of peace, the earthly and the body are portrayed as sinful and dirty, in risk of making impure the path to the one true God (Dietrich 2012, 92–94). As we feel and desire with our body, feelings are dangerous and not to be taken as guidance. Within modern images of peace, reason is what can lead us to the one and single truth. Furthermore, in such a mechanistic worldview, reality is perceived as calculable. Hence, things that can be quantified and, with use of reason, placed within these calculable principles are valued and can be part of decisions made based on research and reason. On the other hand, feelings, sensations, and values, as they are not quantifiable objects, are disregarded (Dietrich 2012, 152–154) and not to be part of research or any valid decision-making process.

237 “Vi er ikke ultrarasjonelle mennesker. Vi er følelsesdyr” (translated by the author).
238 “Vi må jo spille på følelser for å nå hjem til folk” (translated by the author).
239 “Følelser trumfer jo det meste” (translated by the author).
240 “Selvfølgelig handler det om følelser” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

Both Allan and Benjamin highlighted the difference between the arguments used by actors who want stricter regulations and those who want to maintain the status quo. In their perspective, the latter base their arguments on facts and reality, while the former use emotional arguments. Maria, Sara, and Martin opposed this. Maria and Sara claimed that all sides in this conflict mostly use emotions in their argumentation. In Maria’s perspective, “all the concern for Norwegian industry is emotional rhetoric.”

Sara pointed at the argument from those who advocate for the status quo: “God, how many thousands of jobs that are related to these cornerstone companies. And then that is not really the case [...] Both sides play on emotions.”

When I raised the topic of emotions versus facts in the conversation with Martin, he underlined that he did not perceive any of the actors to use argumentation that was especially emotional. Furthermore, he questioned what direction our society is moving in if we do not accept that human beings react to the suffering of other human beings or if we reduce these reactions to irrational feelings. Rather, in Martin’s opinion, this is a question about morals and ethics. “If you get angry and sad when a concrete family is killed by a bomb that [...] has something to do with Norway, for example, and that is seen as irrational emotions. If that is the case, I mean that we are off track. Of course, that is morals and ethics, right?” Martin stated. Looking at Martin’s statement in the framework of the peace families, it can be related to various images of peace. One the one side, he acknowledges emotional reactions, the truth of human experience in the here and now, and fears a society where these reactions are not welcome. Colored by the whole research conversation I had with Martin, I perceive this to be a way of valuing human beings’ different truths that points in the direction of postmodern

241 “Hele det her hensynet til norsk industri og sånn er jo følelsesbasert retorikk” (translated by the author).
242 “Gud hvor mange tusen arbeidsplasser som egentlig er knyttet til disse hjørnestensbedriftene da. Også er det jo egentlig ikke det [...] det spilles på følelser på begge steder” (translated by the author).
images of peace. At the same time, he points toward the concepts of morals, a concept related to moral images of peace.

Even though the actors expressed different perspectives on the validity of feelings as part of the debate around Norwegian exportation of war material, I note an underlying agreement that emotionally based arguments are needed to awaken people’s engagement but are simultaneously not usable in any real decision-making process. Martin’s problematization of the danger of disregarding emotions is a mentionable exception. The common view was that in a decision-making process, the evaluation must be based on rational and objective evaluations of if there have been violations or not of national or international regulations. In a time when the way populist movements play on human emotional reactions is evident, I understand the fear of accepting emotions as a valid base for decisions. At the same time, who decides what is a rational decision? Rationality is, by some of the actors, used as an argument to justify exportation of war material to the states that Norway exports it to today. Hence, rationality is used as an argument to justify the export to authorities in states where we know the authorities have previously used war material directly or indirectly to kill civilians. In my perspective, that is not rational. Consequently, their rationality is not my rationality, and the question of whose rationality is the correct one arises. Using transrational lenses, I believe we need to move beyond a dichotomous understanding and instead of asking emotions or rationality, make it be about emotions, rationalities, and so much more. Is it possible to bridge different aspects of being human in an environment where there exists an underlying assumption of the irrational human being who needs a rational state?

To bridge different aspects of being human, the resources that each and every one of us has within and the resources that exist in our relations must be the starting point. That brings me to one experience from the research conversations with Allan that left a special mark on me. At one point, the atmosphere in the room suddenly changed. Allan had reflected
on Norwegian industry and the need for regulations that support the companies’ appearance as trustworthy business partners. He talked about the balance between his own values and what he saw as the minimum conditions for a viable industry and, further, the possibilities to change situations where he experienced that values and practical interest met in a cognitive dissonance. We both got quiet and thoughtful as Allan’s voice changed radically, and he said quietly, “Now I felt that I also got a bit naïve.”

The conversation continued, but behind the words was a moment of connection and understanding, a window for transformation. Together with compassion for the victims of Norwegian exportation of war material and a desperate feeling of being tracked in a society where there is no actual choice, I felt a hope for change, a hope for what Allan called “peaceful coexistence.” In that moment, I felt that we had dived into, at least dipped our feet in, the water that lies as a lake between the mountaintops, covering unexplored perspectives, values, and needs. For a moment, what I had thought were different value foundations rather mirrored our shared needs as human beings and our shared want to create a world where everyone can get these needs fulfilled.

Before discussing the resources for transformation that exist within and between the actors, I look at a conflict within the conflict, or rather, the conflict around what words is used.

9.3.3 Words and the Public Debate

I argued that which words we use describing what Norwegian companies produce and export influence how we perceive this exportation. As I personally mean that the wording that conveys what I want is war material and at the same time know that this wording might create resistance toward me and my thoughts around the topic, I decided to address the terminology in the research conversations. I wondered what different feelings the words war

---

244 “Nå kjente jeg at jeg også ble litt sånn naïv” (translated by the author).
245 “Fredelig mesmaksistens” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

material\textsuperscript{246} and defense material\textsuperscript{247} awoke in the actors. “Then I get a bit discouraged”\textsuperscript{248} was Benjamin’s first reaction when he heard the words war material. He continued to explain that when civil society says that Norway exports war material to Saudi Arabia, people in the industry do not listen. “How can a cable for communication be war material?”\textsuperscript{249} he asked rhetorically. Even though I disagree, I do understand Benjamin’s reaction. I can put myself in the shoes of feeling mistrusted and accused for actions that I, in my own perception, mean I have not done. If human beings who work in the industry mean they are exporting cables for communication, and then actors who are more critical of the export state that they are selling war material, then there exist a dissonance between the understanding those who who work in the industry have of their own actions and what other actors say they are doing. In that way, terminology can create resistance, hinder dialogue, and become a blockage that hamper the dynamic equilibrium.

Rather than tools to clearly communicate, what words are used become tools in a competition to win the discourse. Both the participants from political parties, Daniel and Maria, underlined the need for understandable terminology when communicating through media but also that debate climates in the long run probably do not benefit from the simplification that is common today. Furthermore, they both pointed at how easy it is to take a wrong step in this complex terminology. Daniel pointed at how the politicians sometimes turn down invitations because they “do not feel safe enough on the substance and the details.”\textsuperscript{250} This shows how we, the actors who have taken part, have made the debate so complex and conflicted, ready to shoot down the other actors’ arguments based on the words they use rather than the content, that important voices keep away. While Daniel, who works for a political party that is satisfied with the status quo, explained how the politicians feel

\textsuperscript{246} In the research conversations, I used the Norwegian word krigsmateriell.
\textsuperscript{247} In the research conversations, I used the Norwegian word forsvarsmateriell.
\textsuperscript{248} “Da blir jeg litt oppgitt” (translated by the author).
\textsuperscript{249} “Hvordan er en kommunikasjonskabel krigsmateriell?” (translated by the author).
\textsuperscript{250} “Ikke føler seg trygg nok på substansen og detaljene” (translated by the author).
9. Research Conversations

insecure, Sara, who works for a civil society organization, underlined how politicians use the complex terminology to derail the debate: “I often perceive that politicians, and perhaps also the industry, but they are not that involved in the public debate, grab every opportunity to correct wrong use of language when it really does not matter that much,” she said.

Martin points at the challenges that come with the complexity. “No, it has been quite confusing and that [the terms] is one of the things that have led to a lot of confusion.” He underlined the number of errors and half-truths that all actors participating in the debate present. In my perspective, Martin, Daniel, Maria, and Sara point at the same challenge, a debate lost in translation, where different understandings of words and a complex terminology combined with a want to win the discussions have become a hindrance to authentic and honest communication.

Sara brought up her perspective on what normally happens at the annual committee hearings in parliament. In her interpretation, there are three main types of actors who participate in the committee hearings: civil society, actors from the industry, and labor unions. “And what strikes me every time is that they do not speak the same language, right? They are on different planets,” Maria said and wondered if any of the actors with conflictive views make any effort to create dialogue. In her opinion, it seems like the industry omits the difficult aspects and highlights industrial benefits, such as jobs, a need for good regulatory framework, and amazing technology. On the other hand, the actors representing civil society skip the benefits and only express worries for possible violations of Norwegian and international regulation. Hence, even though different actors talk about the same topic, they shed light on different aspects. Therefore, different actors also use different terminology,

251 “Jeg oppfatter veldig ofte at politikere og kanske også industrien, men de er ikke så deltagende i den offentlige debatten, hopper på enhver mulighet til å på en måte rette opp i feil språkbruk når det egentlig ikke har så mye å si” (translated by the author).
252 “Nei, den har vært ganske forvirrende og det [begrepene] er en av de tingene som har først til at det har vært masse forvirring ” (translated by the author).
253 “Og det som slår meg hver gang er at man snakker ikke samme språk sant? Man er på forskjellige planeter” (translated by the author).
suitable for the aspects they want to highlight. I believe that the aim of the words used is seldomly to convince actors who have a clear opinion on the topic but rather to convince a third person or audience. This way of communicating contributes to a standstill and hampers transformation. To start transformative processes, we need to enter into dialogue, actively listening and expressing with a want to understand and connect, not to convince.

The actors’ images of peace, the underlying assumptions behind these images, the implications of these assumptions, and the actors’ choice of words are all puzzle pieces that can help in my search for courses of actions that can transform Norwegian exportation of war material. By challenging the understanding of one single truth and giving more attention to postmodern images, where multiple truths coexist, the elicitive peace worker can contribute to transformation. Furthermore, that the actors expressed a common frustration over the situation, the terminology used, and the debate climate indicates that there exists a wish for something different.

10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

With Lederach’s definition of conflict transformation\textsuperscript{254} in mind, I searched for new courses of actions to transform Norwegian exportation of war material. I argue that the transformation of the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material require a change in focus from abstractions, from judgments of actions in the past and envisioned revenge or justice in the future, to concrete, here-and-now, lived experiences. Based on the research conversations, this chapter explores the resources for transformation that exist within and between the different actors in the conflict. Furthermore, I consider for what possible courses of action these resources can be a facilitating force before I present my view for what implications my findings might have for further research.

\textsuperscript{254} See section 5.3 Conflict Transformation for Lederach’s definition of conflict transformation.
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

Before I elaborate on the process of conflict transformation, I want to underline that even though I explore the debate in Norway, many aspects of the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material occur far from the public debate there. The need for reduction of violence in relation to Norwegian exportation of war material is, as an example, strongest in the physical, direct violence experienced by victims of those who use this war material. The real-life problems in human relationships are also evident in areas where Norwegian war material is used.\(^{255}\) The violence and uncertainty that come with armed conflicts or with living under suppressive authorities cannot be compared to the real-life problems that exist in the relations between the actors in the public debate in Norway. Although the need for transformation might be more visible where the material is used, I believe the need is also present in Norway. Moreover, I argue that transformations in Norway, in a systemic view, will also lead to transformations on the ground where the material is used. Based on that thought, I explore the resources for transformation.

10.1 Resources for Transformation

Following Adam Curle, I argue that the resources needed to transform the conflict are to be found within and between the conflictive parties themselves. Additionally, in line with the elicitive approach, to elicit a transformative process, requires building on, and eliciting, the social knowledge that already exists. That means building on what is there, using what is alive in the different actors who take part in the conflict as a starting point for transformation. To do so, the context, the web of human relations, the actors’ feelings, needs, and history, all these aspects and many more make a difference and can give the peace worker an idea of where the psychological and relational blockages exist. This complex mosaic is never the same. In the process of putting the existing resources into words on a paper, the resources are,

\(^{255}\) I do not know any systematic collection of evidence regarding where Norwegian materials have been used. What is publicly known is the result of occasional media revelations. Information about where Norwegian war material might be used is based on where the countries that buy it use war material.
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

on the one hand, reduced in a way that does not value the living nature of relations, and, on the other hand, the written words do not account for the dynamic nature of a conflict consisting of numerous ever-changing aspects. Still, I argue that some of the facets that have become evident through the research conversations can be useful even as static measures, as long as I as a peace worker am ready to leave my picture of these resources when they do not fit the concrete situation. In the next sections, I outline what I perceive to be resources for transformation.

10.1.1 Shared Understanding of a Need to Transform the Current Situation

The common opinion regarding the public debate is that we, as the actors, are all part of a standstill. “That is the most striking thing about it [the debate]. What is constant, the constant factors more than the changes,”256 as Daniel put it. “We argue the same way [as in 1935]. […] Then you do not achieve anything. Then you just stand there pushing,”257 Benjamin reflected. Sara underlined that the debate “is quite stuck and repetitive.”258 Maria pointed at what she perceived to be a tougher debate climate: “I almost think that, like, the atmosphere is more negative now than it was.”259

Benjamin meant it was challenging for the debate climate that some actors benefit from creating confrontations in their search for visibility, recruiting members, and building credibility. My experience corresponds with his point. I have written countless letters to editors and attended even more Monday morning media meetings. Confrontation is a key to get the needed attention, from both media and politicians, but also to create enough pressure to get the industry speaking. While I perceived a familiar unwillingness from the involved actors to change rhetoric, I still believe the common understanding that the current deadlock

256 “Det er det mest slående med det [debatten]. Det konstante, altså de konstante faktorene mer enn endringene” (translated by the author).
258 “Er ganske fastlåst og repetitiv” (translated by the author).
259 “Jeg synes nesten at, liksom stemningen rundt, er mer negativ nå enn den var” (translated by the author).
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

does not lead anywhere can work as fertile ground for transformation. Furthermore, the positive response from the actors, except from the leader of the section for export control, to participate in this research shows their interest in discussing the topic in new ways and in contributing to transformation. I believe this is essential for further transformation of Norwegian exportation of war material.

10.1.2 Shared Value Fundament

In spite of the actors’ expressions of different views on Norwegian exportation of war material, I experienced that there are many similarities in their fundamental understanding of the world, on what is human behavior, and their values. On one hand, this leads to a limited field of opinion as there are many underlying assumptions that are silently agreed on and not discussed. On the other hand, the shared perspectives, values, and needs can be a resource for facilitating creation of a space where the actors can resonate and empathize with each other.

Even though the actors share many aspects of the way they understand the world, I argue that they talk about different facets of the topic in question and that this complicates the dialogue. The similarities in worldviews and in how societies work can be used as a resource to start a transformative process and fruitful debate where the different actors understand each other and acknowledge the facets of the topic that they normally avoid. If the actors, in addition, manage to challenge and explore the underlying assumptions of their own worldviews, the transformative process will be further strengthened. Sara, Benjamin, and Martin explicitly mentioned the danger of judging others based on one’s own worldview or disregarding truths that differ from our own.

10.1.3 Shared Needs

According to Rosenberg (2005b, 38), “All human beings have the same basic needs.” Hence, by connecting with the needs of other human beings, we connect with our humanness. This
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

connection can facilitate our seeing and hearing the other, which again can help us to be in tune with others and put ourselves in their situations.

10.1.3.1 Increased Justice in the Direct Interaction

The participants in the research conversations addressed the need for increased justice in the direct interaction. Various times, actors referred to concrete situations involving other actors with different views where they felt poorly or unfairly treated or where the other actor had refused to communicate with them. Consequently, what on the surface looked like disagreements about a topic reached deeper, and the authentic communication between these actors was blocked. In line with the principle of correspondence, the dissonance between the involved parties can manifest in both inter- and intrapersonal blockages in relationships. Furthermore, the principle of resonance tells us how these interpersonal conflicts further influence the broader conflictive system and hamper the recreation of a dynamic equilibrium (Dietrich 2018, 59). Thus, as Rosenberg underlines, a peace worker’s first priority is to facilitate processes that can strengthen the conflictive parties’ “caring and respectful quality of connection among themselves” (Rosenberg 2012, 2). Rosenberg (2012, 2) only starts his search for strategies that can contribute to transformation when that connection is present. Following an elicitive approach, the processes of establishing authentic connection is already part of transforming a conflict.

To create safe spaces where humans can unfold, experience peaces, and explore different perspectives, I argue and mean that we, the involved actors, must reduce the violent characteristics that we give actors with different perspectives and opinions than our own. In several of the research conversations, the participants expressed that they felt characterized by other actors in ways that did not reflect their personal experience or that they had been given motives they do not have. The actors who advocate for the status quo also pointed at how these experiences and the confronting climate in the debate raised the cost of participating in
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

the public discussion. Hence, to transform the situation, it is not enough to look at the different actors’ understanding of the topic at stake. In addition, it is necessary to consider the relationship between the actors and their basic needs in these relations. It is important to address what the different actors perceive as unjust in a way that gives space to move the focus from the judgments of past experiences to the here-and-now relations between human beings.

Looking at the different conflict narratives through the peace families, I found thematic emphases on security and justice. When there exist discursive overweight on security and justice, “harmonization of intra- and interpersonal tensions and conflicts” (Dietrich 2018, 53) requires presence of truth and harmony. Harmony presupposes inclusion of the polarities and a shift from the past and future to what the experiencing subject perceives in the here and now (Unesco Chair for Peace Studies. 2014n).

10.1.3.2 Respond to the Real-Life Problems in Human Relationships

In the conversation with Sara, she pointed at how different actors looked at different bottom lines and, thus, talk about different aspects of the topic in question. By underlining this difference, Sara points at one of the aspects where the arguments used by the actors who want stricter regulations do not correspond to the real-life problems in human relationships experienced by the human beings in Norway who have a direct relation to the Norwegian industry that produces war material. The arguments, and hence the concrete suggestions for change, are mainly directed toward politicians and the regulations decided by the same politicians. This is a deliberate choice as politicians are seen as responsible and therefore to be held accountable.

However, there is a lack of transparency regarding how the industry works. Hence, information that would be useful to provide concrete suggestions for transformation is not open or accessible. This information gap keeps civil society away from discussing jobs in the
sector. The dominating opinion in civil society is that the industry itself, as it possesses the necessary information, is responsible for proving the validity of its arguments. Hence, the industry’s claim that if Norway stops part of the export, the result will be huge losses in jobs is seldom explored further. Neither are possible sustainable ways of transforming the industry. Consequently, the actors advocating for stricter regulations do not address the fear of losing jobs and the consecutive social consequences unemployment can have, a fear I perceive to exist in the labor unions, in the industry, and in the political parties that advocate for maintaining the status quo.

Furthermore, the public debate seldom touches upon topics related to allies and security policies. While security policies are a clear backdrop, what is discussed with allies regarding the production and exportation of war material is not made public. Hence, the debate does not mirror the questions and challenges brought to the table in the human relations that unfold in meetings between diplomats, politicians, and industries that produce war material in different countries. As these questions are not brought up in the debate, they are rarely explicitly addressed but still influence the debate.

10.1.3.3 Increased Justice in Social Structures

The need for increased justice in social structures is what Martin points toward when he underlines the need for concrete examples, which show the consequences, from where Norwegian material is used. We have built structures and ways of interacting that create a disconnection, even physical distance, between the human beings benefiting from the export and the human beings experiencing the consequences. In the end, both those who benefit and those who experience the consequences are vulnerable and strong human beings with the same needs. By seeing concrete examples, we can relate to the human experience and create

---

260 During the period I have been researching Norwegian exportation of war material, both Jeremy Hunt, the British secretary of state for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, and the French president Emmanuel Macron have put pressure on Germany regarding its ban on sales to Saudi Arabia and publicly voiced their dissatisfaction and concerns with Germany’s decision (Reuters 2018a, Wintour 2019).
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

connection. That can open spaces where the consequences of the structures we have created can be explored and transformed.

Within the Norwegian public debate, the need for increased justice in social structures also lies at the surface. In the research conversations, actors advocating for stricter regulation pointed at a lack of transparency and uneven access to information. Their expressed need for information can be seen in relation to moral and modern images of peace. As these understandings build upon the belief that one truth exists, the actor who holds information to justify his or her own narrative can prove that his or her truth is the correct one.

Based on the understanding that “everything we do is in service of our needs” (Rosenberg 2005b, 11), the actors can, by being aware of what the different actors experience as real-life problems in human relationships, identify the needs that these experiences express. When the needs are identified, it is easier to create a “resonant space” (UNESCO Chair for Peace Studies 2014b) where they can be addressed.

10.1.4 We Are All Humans

With a shared understanding of the need for transformation of the current situation, the actors have taken a first step toward transformation, which opens up the way for further initiatives and transformation. I argue that similarities in how the actors understand the world can both limit the field of opinion and make it easier for them to see the situation from the other actors’ viewpoint. Hence, while the basic constructions for a resonating space might already be there, it can be challenging to realize that there is something important to explore beneath the water’s surface or even understand that there is a possibility to dive.

Moreover, I believe that through exploring our human needs, we can connect with the other actors and their needs. Hence, our shared needs become a platform to facilitate change processes such as reduction of violence, increased justice in the direct interaction, increased justice in social structures, and responding to the real-life problems in human relationships.
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

Maybe the actors’ most important resource is shared humanness and all that this shared humanness brings of possibilities to see, hear, resonate, and empathize with other actors in the conflict.

By working with what is alive within and between the actors in ways that make the actors themselves see their own patterns of behavior and preconceptions and explore what worldviews make the fundament for what they believe is right regarding Norwegian exportation of war material, I believe transformation is possible. Furthermore, through creating spaces for exploration of relations, creating awareness about what is their own contribution to the debate and the topic in question, the actors’ themselves can get the possibility to express what real-life problems in human relationships they experience, what forms of violence and injustice in direct interaction and social structures they perceive, and how that can be changed.

If human beings, and thus perception, are relational (Dietrich 2013, 38), encounters become of utter importance for our understanding of the world we live in. In my endeavor to grasp what was told from the participants’ points of view (Rogers and Farson 1987, 3), I tried to put myself in their situations. It was useful to get a notion of what underlying assumptions the participants seemed to build their narratives on, and I understood that I myself am blind to many of my own assumptions. Still, the participants’ images of peace and underlying assumptions were not sufficient to understand what was alive in the human beings in front of me. By using active listening and NVC, looking for their needs and feelings, but also by showing up authentically; I experienced connection and that even though we disagree, we are all vulnerable human beings trying to dance this mystery of life.

With some of the resources that exist within and between the conflict parties identified, I embark on the endeavor to outline how civil society can build on these resources in an effort to facilitate transformation of Norwegian exportation of war material.
10.2 Possible Next Steps

While the journey for transformation continues, the process of this research is approaching an end. Still, an essential part is missing: what courses of action for civil society to transform Norwegian exportation of war material have I discovered through mapping the conflict and through the human encounters in the research conversations? Before I dive into possible courses of actions, a glance at the research question in light of new perspectives I have acquired through the thesis process is needed.

Today, I see how the research question in itself discloses my personal underlying preconceptions. These are underlying assumptions that I have internalized in my way of making sense of the world around me. While I think that I, as a human being, need ways to make sense of the world I am part of, I believe it is of utter importance to be aware that my ways of making sense of the world are only some of many. Hence, by being aware that the concept of nation states, the concept of civil society as a group of actors who work as active agents for change within the frame of a system of nation states, and even more fundamental for this research, that there exists a need for transformation are all examples of how my ways of making sense of the world I am part of are mirrored in this research.

As I build on theories of transformation that focus on the relational web and draw on the resources inherent within and between the conflictive parties rather than a final solution coming from an external part, it could be seen as a paradox that I try to discover possible courses of action to transform Norwegian exportation of war material. As I see myself as an involved actor, and I look for courses of actions in a context I am familiar with, I argue that the findings can still be valuable. I outline three possible processes that civil society can facilitate that can remove blockages in the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material and, hence, create transformation, change in focus from abstract regulations to relations, exploration of underlying assumptions, and proximity and connection.
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

10.2.1 From Regulations to Relations—Creating a Safe Space

While regulations are important in the society we are part of, I argue that to transform the situation, increased focus on relations can be useful. In line with an emphasis on modern and moral images of peace, with peace out of security and justice, there is an unbalanced emphasis on the abstractions and discussions related to the interpretation of regulations. That removes focus from concrete, lived experiences in the here and now. Consequently, following Dietrich (2018, 54–56), increased focus on energetic and postmodern images of peace, where peace out of harmony and truth are in focus, can contribute to moving the energy in the conflict toward balance of the system. Through adopting a process-focused approach, civil society can create an environment where a shift in focus is possible. By building on the common understanding that the deadlock and debate climate today is not fruitful for any of the involved actors, civil society can invite the actors to together explore possible paths out of this standstill. Using the mountain model, civil society can facilitate a space where the actors are encouraged to dive together in a process where the focus is not at the episode of the conflict, nor short-time victories, nor changes in regulations but deeper exploration of their own perspectives, relations to each other and the multiple possible truths existing when truth is seen as contextual in the here and now.

Through such a process, the actors can meet, see, and hear the human beings behind official roles and, in the same way, be met, seen, and heard. Several of the actors raised the need for more contact with other actors. Both Maria and Benjamin suggested more regular contact, in different forms and settings, between the involved actors, and Sara pointed at the need for civil society to talk to other actors than they talk to today.

A safe space is protected from media, and the actors who participate can themselves agree on rules for sharing and what is to be discussed. The actors can overcome their different focuses in the public debate and bridge the different aspects in an explorative dialogue. I
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

argue that the relations between the actors in such a space will take a different form than those we see play out in the public debate today. Instead of being an arena for political decisions and, hence, a place where those who disagree need to be convinced, exploration and learning can be put as the purpose. Creating a safe space requires resources and a long-term approach that goes beyond grant periods and short-term campaigns. Furthermore, it requires authentic communication from the involved actors.

I believe a safe space where the actors can meet and together dive into the exploration of their own perspectives, values, needs, and relations can contribute to transforming the confronting debate climate and contribute to less violent characteristics of each other and to less fear of using the complex terminology wrong. If the actors meet and talk in safe spaces, it can have the beneficial effect of opening the space for such kind of dialogue also in the public sphere. Moreover, this change in the relational patterns can open a space for exchange of information, which can increase transparency and fulfill some of the actors’ expressed need for information.

Furthermore, a change in perspective, where the actors not only see each other less as enemies and more as fellow humans but also understand what lies behind the assumption of someone as an enemy, can lead to deep-reaching transformation. A view where I see fellow human beings as enemies implies both that we are separated and that my fellow human beings are a threat. If I, on the other hand, based in relational thinking, understand human beings as interconnected, this complete separation is simply my illusion. I cannot know any fellow human being’s intentions toward me, but following Rosenberg (Rosenberg 2005b, 11), we can both connect to our shared needs and, hence, the actions conducted to fulfill these needs.

10.2.2 From Doxa to Opinion—Reaching Toward the Epicenter

To use the window that the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material opens to explore what in our way of relating is no longer suitable for the context, I believe we,
as involved actors, need to explore our internalized worldviews and, with that, internalized strategies to fulfill our needs. Following Rosenberg (2005b, 11, 38), every message that human beings send out, regardless of content and form, expresses a need. Hence, by being aware of the needs we try to express and fulfill with our actions, we can choose different strategies to meet the same needs. The strategies we choose to meet our needs are formed by how we understand the world. My strategies to fulfill my need for safety will be different if I have internalized an understanding of human beings as dangerous than if I have internalized an understanding of human beings as compassionate and different again if I have internalized a picture of human beings being both dangerous and compassionate at the same time.

What possible strategies we see will depend upon what is doxa and opinion in the society we are part of. To facilitate the actors’ exploration of internalized worldviews and aspects of doxa, an elicitive approach calls for the peace worker to have the socioemotional-communal layers in mind. Through the research conversations, I felt and understood, both in my own and the participants’ reactions, that to question doxa challenged our need for belonging within the broader society and within subgroups. Through expressing certain views, we identify ourselves with, or distance ourselves from, certain subgroups in society. For example, when I questioned topics of the nation state, I was afraid of not being taken seriously, not seen or respected. Benjamin pointed at how he, because of his political, religious, and family background, always has difficulties feeling sympathy for some political parties and groups. Daniel underlined how he perceived another political party and parts of civil society to move their views according to his party’s view. He meant that if his party expressed a stricter view, these actors would be even stricter. Both Daniel’s and Benjamin’s points underline the importance to create an atmosphere where the exploration of doxa is not perceived as a threat to the actors’ feeling of belonging but rather as an enriching choice that can increase our possible strategies to, for example, create a sense of safety.
10. Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

I believe that to guide the energy in the conflict toward balance of the system and to create long-term transformation, we, the involved actors, ought to explore both our personal underlying assumptions and the doxa in the society we are part of. That way we can reach toward the epicenter of the conflict, recognize blockages, and broaden our possibilities of strategies to fulfill our needs.

10.2.3 Proximity and Connection

Experiencing proximity can help us to relate to others and their stories and to see the human beings. In line with the layers (Dietrich 2013, 207–224) and principle of resonance in ECM (Dietrich 2018, 39–46), I think we as human beings can experience this proximity in various ways: embodied proximity grounded in similar experiences, mentally or experienced proximity—or even oneness—grounded in a mental or experienced understanding of our shared humanness, or through human encounters, to mention some. Civil society can facilitate experiences of this proximity and connection.

How can I argue with a man who has lived through a war that the weapons that were used to kill his family guarantee peace? How can I tell a Yemeni child who has lost both her legs that we cannot let our feelings take over; we need to be rational and therefore continue to sell war material to those who bombed her house? Or how can I reassure an industrial worker and single mother who is her family’s breadwinner that she should not worry about her job? Connection in itself can, if experienced and reflected upon, question our worldviews. The need for proximity and relatable examples is in line with Martin’s point when he underlines the need for concrete examples of how Norwegian war material is used. It is also in line with Sara’s point when she exemplifies the difference between the death of a person and numerous casualties. With one death, it is easier for us to see the brutality of the situation and connect to the loss, while the numbers of casualties remain, to a large extent, numbers.
I argue that there are possibilities for experiences of proximity and resonance in today’s debate but that these are limited and seldom run across groups of actors. Human beings, and especially those who work in the industry, can relate to the fear of losing their jobs if Norwegian authorities approve fewer licenses for export. Human beings who have experienced war can relate to the situation in Yemen. Human beings who know how it is to live under authoritarian rulers can relate to the arguments put forward by those who question the sales to authoritarian regimes. Nevertheless, I believe that for most of the population in Norway, including most of the actors in the debate, also me, the process of relating to these arguments is mainly an exercise in abstraction and mentalizing. I have never lived through a war, never lived in an authoritarian regime, and never even felt the fear of losing my job because of new policies. However, I am a human being and can relate to needs and feelings. To connect based on our shared humanness, we need to experience the humanness: to see the human behind the worker who may lose his or her job and the Yemeni child behind the numbers of victims of Saudi Arabian bombers. Hence, the question is how Norwegian civil society can facilitate experiences of this proximity and connection.

What is suitable will depend on the context. As Norwegian civil society has access to Norwegian decision makers, civil society can use its social network to facilitate human encounters that connect the people who experience the consequences of the regulations and of Norwegian war material and decision makers. In that way, civil society can work as a catalyst for connection between actors at top, middle-range, and grassroots levels. This can be done through already existing channels, such as committee hearings or parliamentary seminars, or through a space like the one described in section 10.2.1 From Regulations to Relations—Creating a Safe Space.

While I will not advocate for anyone to go to war zones with the aim of grounding their experience of proximity in an embodied experience, I do believe we create deeper
connection and understanding through embodied experience. Hence, such deeply embodied understanding must be secured in a different way. To ensure that decisions are made in the interests of those affected by them, civil society can work systematically to get human beings with these embodied experiences into positions where they can influence decisions. Furthermore, I believe civil society can facilitate connection and proximity grounded in a mental or experienced understanding of our shared humanness by basing the approach to the topic in question on the fact that we are all human beings with the same needs, by treating opponents with respect, and by showing the courage to question adopted truths.

10.2.4 Transforming Norwegian Exportation of War Material

With the theoretical fundaments as lenses, I have explored the topic of Norwegian exportation of war material through human encounters. Based on the cocreated information, I have outlined three possible courses of actions that civil society can initiate as a next step to transform Norwegian exportation of war material. First, I argue that we need to shift the focus from abstract regulations to relations in the here and now. In the terminology of transrational peace philosophy, we can meet the overemphasis on moral and modern images of peace with energetic and postmodern images of peace. In addition to creating a shift in focus, civil society can create a safe space where these relations can flourish and where the actors can meet, see, and hear the human beings behind official roles.

Secondly, I mean we must explore our underlying assumptions and doxa in the society we are part of. Through exploring perspectives, values, and needs that lie beneath the water, and, hence, why we see the world as we do, we can assess if our chosen strategies help us to meet our human needs and connect with what we have in common as human beings. Civil society can facilitate this process by being curious, exploring how our ways of understanding the world are just some of many, and using the created safe space to invite the other actors to do the same.
Thirdly, I mean it is important to create connection and tell stories that make it possible to relate to those who are affected by Norwegian exportation of war material, both in Norway and other places in the world. Civil society can facilitate this by being a catalyst for connection between actors at different levels, by consciously choosing what aspects of the topic they highlight, and by advocating that people who themselves have been affected are in positions where they can influence decisions.

10.3 Value Beyond the Topic in Question and Implications for Further Research

To support the measures outlined in section 10.2 Possible Next Steps, I believe it is fruitful for further research to develop a fully collaborative approach. A dream scenario would be to assemble all the actors in reflection groups that regularly meet, not with the aim of winning a discussion but to listen, wanting to understand and together take transformative steps, a group process I believe can be inherently transformative. In addition, I believe further research can benefit from including actors who have not been included in this research, especially human beings who experience the violence from the use of Norwegian war material and those who work on the ground in the industry. Further research can, together with these actors, map both challenges and possibilities for transformation and identify research questions that can lead to transformation in the relational web.

I believe the results can have value beyond the question of Norwegian exportation of war material. Within the last few years, the rhetoric in the public debate has become tougher, and the tension between leaders in powerful countries has increased both globally and regionally.²⁶¹ The strategies we have chosen, built on the dominant understandings of human

²⁶¹ A statement about increased tension and which countries are powerful will always depend on the eye of the beholder. I ground my statement in, among others, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 2019 Doomsday Clock Statement. Every year, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists assesses how close we are to destroying the world based on the technology we have invented. On January 24, 2019, their doomsday clock showed two minutes to midnight (Mecklin 2019).
11. Conclusions

nature in the current global society, have not created safer and more sustainable societies. We need to search behind our strategies and look at what views these strategies are based on. By creating spaces where human beings can experience really seeing their fellow human beings, really being seen, and be exposed to ideas that challenge the underlying assumptions that lie as fundaments for the dominant views in the society they are part of, we can redefine how we look at human nature by being more compassionate and communal.

11. Conclusions

As I revealed in my author’s perspective, the MA in Innsbruck pushed me to look beyond my own preconceived morals of what was right and wrong. I was invited to look for my own role in the conflictive systems I am part of and seek to hear, see, and understand the other human beings who are part of the same systems. I took the challenge, and in this research, I have looked into one of the topics I am most passionate about and that I have worked with as part of Norwegian civil society for years. To conclude this explorative journey, I first summarize the research and the steps I have taken to reach the conclusions. Thereafter, I present my findings analyzed throughout the research process and answer the question: *What new courses of action are possible for Norwegian civil society to transform Norwegian exportation of war material?*

With a transrational approach (Dietrich 2012, 2013, 2018) combined with an expanded constructivist approach, I explored possible courses of action for Norwegian civil society to transform Norwegian exportation of war materials. Based on the beliefs that humans are relational beings and become human beings through relations, and that the institutions are not absolute truths but exist in our relations and are, hence, transformable in the same relations, the human encounters and our web of relations become of utter importance for any transformation. In line with a transrational approach, I have seen conflict as an inherent part of human relations, as a window that opens the possibility for transformation where the
needed resources to transform the conflict exist within and between the conflictive parties themselves (Curle 1994, 96; Lederach 1995, 55–62). Placing the humans in Norway who take part in the conflict around and about Norwegian exportation of war material and their relations in focus, I used a combination of first- and second-person partial collaborative action research (Reason and Bradbury 2008, 1–10) to cocreate information and knowledge that I analyzed by using ECM. I talked to actors from different generic groups that I had identified through mapping the conflictive picture in the public debate. Rather than the actors representing the view of a generic group, I wanted to meet the human beings behind their official roles. Drawing on transrational peace philosophy’s roots in humanistic psychology, I looked to insights from active listening (Rogers and Farson 1987) and NVC (Rosenberg 2003, 2005a, 2005b, 2012) for the concrete human encounters. I combined the theoretical fundamentals in a mountain model that incorporated aspects of the transformative power of human encounters, the actors’ different life history dimensions, aspects of the underlying assumptions behind our perspectives, unexplored values and shared needs, and the interconnectedness between me as a researcher and what I was researching.

By analyzing the information cocreated through the research conversations based on the theoretical fundamentals and the model, I outlined three possible processes that civil society can initiate as courses of action to transform the public debate regarding Norwegian exportation of war material and, as a result in the longer term, the actual export. Firstly, I argued that Norwegian civil society can, by creating a safe space for honest communication, turn the focus from abstract regulations to relations. Secondly, with a safe space where honest communication can take place, Norwegian civil society can facilitate the process of exploring underlying assumptions behind the actors’ perspectives, their values, and their shared needs as human beings. Thirdly, Norwegian civil society can facilitate connection between those who experience the consequences of Norwegian exportation of war material, both in Norway
and on the ground where the material is used, and decision makers. Further research can benefit from using a more participatory approach, where representatives from different groups of actors commonly decide upon the research question. Such an approach can, to a greater extent, utilize the transformative power of human encounters.

Writing these last sentences of my inquiry into what new courses of action are possible for Norwegian civil society to transform Norwegian exportation of war material, I am nervous, curious, and full of hope. I am nervous about what others will think. As I left traditional positivistic approaches and rather claimed an inevitable interconnectedness between me as a researcher and what I have been researching, I am worried I might get disregarded as foolish, ignorant, and irrational. At the same time, I am curious how I can integrate my new insights into how my own underlying assumptions frame my worldview, perspectives, and values. I wonder if I will manage to challenge these assumptions, both for myself and in the society I am part of. Most of all, I am full of hope. Throughout this research, I have seen fear—a fear of the other—but I have only met human beings with the same needs as me for understanding, community, connection, and safety. I do not say that we as human beings do not have shadows, but I am surer than ever that if I dare to be transformed, I am not the only one transforming.

When I feel “spør i angst, udekket, åpen: hva skal jeg kjempe med, hva er mitt våpen?” (Grieg 1947, 185), then I remember:

\begin{quote}
\emph{Her er ditt vern mot vold,}
\emph{her er ditt sverd:}
\emph{troen på livet vårt,}
\emph{menneskets verd.}\footnote{“Perhaps you are fearful, out in the open and with no cover. What will you fight with, where are your weapons?” (Translated by Powell, 2011).}
\end{quote}

\footnote{“This is your sword, and this is your shield: a belief in life and in humankind’s worth.” (Translated by Powell, 2011).}

(Grieg 1947, 185)
References

The references consist of written sources as books, articles, websites and poems, films and audios, personal communication through research conversations and email-correspondence, and figures. Below, the references appear in the over mentioned order.

Written Sources


References


References


References


References


References


References


References


Utenriksdepartementet. 2014. “Guidelines of 28 February 1992 for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs when dealing with applications concerning the export of defence-related products, as well as technology and services for military purposes”. https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/e19e0d2f0fe74437897036c1ddaf45f6/guidelines-for-defence-related-exports.pdf.


References


Film and Audio


UdeAInternacional. 2016. Construcción de Paz y Transformación Elicitiva de Conflictos. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Z3XMeeWzOI.

Research Conversations and Personal Communication

I conducted the research conversations in confidentiality. The names of the participants are withheld by mutual agreement. The participants have been given aliases and worked within
one of the identified groups in chapter 7: one from the group *Industry*, one from the group *Labour Unions*, two from the group *Political Parties*, but representing different views, one from *Civil Society* and one from *Media*.

Allan works in a Norwegian labour union with, between other topics, the topic of export control.

Benjamin works in a company that produces A-material.

Daniel works in a political party that advocate for status quo regarding the regulation of Norwegian export of war material.

Maria works in a political party that advocate for stricter regulations of Norwegian export of war material.

Martin works as a journalist, and has written about Norwegian export of war material.

Sara works in the Norwegian branch of an international humanitarian organization advocating for, between other topics, stop in the Norwegian export of war material to countries that participate in the war in Yemen.


**Figures**

https://www.uibk.ac.at/peacestudies/unescochair/ecm/.


References


Appendix

Attachment 1: Letter of Consent

To: Full name participant
From: Tuva Krogh Widskjold
Subject: Informed Consent to Participate in Research Conversation
Date: Date

Request for Participant to Research Conversation

This is a request for participating in a research conversation as part of a master thesis in Peace, Development, Security and International Conflict Transformation at the University of Innsbruck, Austria. The aim is to look at Norwegian civil society’s possibilities to contribute to changes in Norwegian export control of strategic material. In this document there is information about what participation in this project will mean for you.

Why do you receive this request?
I aim to talk to representatives from different groups who work with and have opinions on Norwegian export of strategic material.

What does participation in this project mean for you?
If you choose to participate in this research conversation you agree to participate in a conversation of approximately one, to one and a half hours. In the research conversation, I want to talk about your connection to the topic, the current export practice, the regulations and the public debate.

If you do agree to this conversation to be recorded, I would like to record the conversation so I can use it for reference until the study is completed. Recordings and data will be stored on a memory stick after the completion of the research and used if I have to prove that the conversations have taken place.

It is voluntary to participate in this project. If you choose to participate, you have the right, at any point, to withdraw from participating for any reason.

If you agree to participate in this project, you need to sign the declaration of consent.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the project.

In advance, thank you for your help,

Tuva Krogh Widskjold
Mail: tuvawk@gmail.com
Appendix

Mob: +351 912752210

Consent to Participate in Research Conversation

I, full name participant, have received and understood the information about the project on Norwegian civil society’s possibilities to contribute to changes in Norwegian export control. I agree to participate in this research conversation and I give permission:

- for this research conversation to be recorded.
- for my professional title to be included in publications resulting from this study.
- for direct quotes from this research conversation to be included in publications resulting from this study.
- for my information to be stored and processed for use in this study.

-----------------------------------------------
Date, Signature
Appendix

Attachment 2: Guide for Research Conversations

Guide for Research Conversations

Introduction
- Present myself
- Present the research
- Time aspect of the conversation, Anonymisation, Consent

Relation to the topic
- Position, Tasks, Experience
- Why did you choose to work/get involved with this topic?
- Have your perspective on the topic changed while you have been working with it?

The debate
- Your opinion
- Number of voices
  - How can civil society facilitate that more voices get heard
  - Terms and concepts: “war material”

Worldview
- Why does Norway produce defence material?
- Contribute to more peaceful societies
  - Individuals
  - Norwegian community

Today's situation and regulations
- Personal opinion?
- Problematic aspects?
- Regulations, Limits, Criteria
- Who is responsible?
- Jobs as a reason to export
- How can civil society facilitate transformation?

Conclusion
- Anything you want to add?
- How was this conversation for you?
- If you want to add anything later, please contact me?
- Can I contact you if I have any questions?

Cardinal themes – Checklist
- Security
  - Fear
  - Nation state
  - Borders
  - NATO
  - Jobs
- Justice
  - Information
Appendix

- Moral
  - Responsibility
- Truth
  - Procedures
  - Control regimes
- Harmony
Appendix

Attachment 3: Mind Map, Preparing for Research Conversations

Figur 11: Mind Map Preparing for Research Conversations, January 10, 2019 (Widskjold 2019d)
Appendix

Attachment 4: Mind Maps, after Research Conversations

Figur 12: Mind Map after Conversation with Benjamin, January 10, 2019 (Widskjold 2019e)
Figur 13: Mind Map after Conversation with Allan, January 11, 2019 (Widskjold 2019f)
Figur 14: Mind Map after Conversation with Daniel, January 15, 2019 (Widskjold 2019g)
Figur 15: Mind Map after Conversation with Maria, January 18, 2019 (Widskjold 2019h)
Figur 16: Mind Map after Conversation with Sara, January 21, 2019 (Widskjold 2019i)
Figur 17: Mind Map after Conversation with Martin, January 28, 2019 (Widskjold 2019j)
Affidavit

I hereby declare that I have written the presented Master thesis/Masterarbeit by myself and independently and that I have used no other than the referenced sources and materials.

In addition, I declare that I have not previously submitted this Master thesis/Masterarbeit as examination paper in any form, either in Austria or abroad.

Oslo, Norway 16.11.2019
Place, Date Signature