

level (e.g., with regard to group identification) this distinction is less clear-cut.

The present chapter examines reconciliation in this complex, unclassifiable context. Consistent with the goals of the present volume, we use this examination to point to overarching psychological principles that apply to a range of contexts in which interventions are designed to restore intergroup relations. Specifically, drawing on the Needs-Based Model of reconciliation (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008), which will be described in depth in the next section, we argue that (a) intergroup conflict threatens two dimensions of groups' identities, their sense of power and their moral image; (b) the experience of these threats enhances group members' needs for social *empowerment* and *acceptance*, and (c) resolution of these needs is a critical step toward reconciliation. Then, based on recent theorizing and findings by Noor and colleagues (Noor, Brown, & Prentice, 2008a; Noor, Brown, Gonzalez, Manzi, & Lewis, 2008b; Noor, Shnabel, Halabi, & Nadler, in press), we argue that under certain conditions the parties involved in a conflict engage in competitive victimhood; namely, competition over the role of the "true" victim. This competition serves several instrumental and psychological functions. In particular, it can be mobilized to address each group's psychological needs for empowerment and acceptance at the same time in that acknowledgment of groups' victimhood may restore both their sense of power and moral image. Finally, we consider how important needs can be satisfied in the context of such competitive victimhood and point to strategies that might break the cycle of competition and promote reconciliation. We support our theoretical arguments throughout the chapter by providing examples and presenting studies conducted in the context of the conflict between Israeli Jews and Palestinians.

The Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation

In his book *Healing the Heart of Conflict* (2004), international mediator Mark Gopin suggests that conflicts, whether personal, intergroup, or international, are rooted in deep-seated emotions that cannot be solved simply through "rational" discussion and negotiations. This reflects a growing awareness among both scholars and practitioners of the need to address the emotional sides of conflicts to "heal" the relations between former adversaries rather than simply to reduce material conflict (e.g., Kelman, 2008). The Needs-Based Model

II

Competitive Victimhood Among Jewish and Palestinian Israelis Reflects Differential Threats to Their Identities

The Perspective of the Needs-Based Model

Nurit Shnabel and Masi Noor

Restoring civil societies following a crisis is a complex task that requires overcoming numerous emotional barriers that block the path to harmonious relations between the different groups involved in the crisis. This task is even more complicated in the Israeli context. Restoration implies returning to a positive *ex ante* state of affairs (i.e., harmonious intergroup relations) whereas in the case of Jews and Palestinians in Israel it is doubtful whether such a state ever existed. Civility also implies non-military contexts, but the complex relations between Israeli Jews and Palestinians do not easily lend themselves to the military/non-military dichotomy. Jews and Palestinians who are citizens of Israel form a civil society, but Palestinians under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian Authority (i.e., the West Bank and Gaza) are not part of this civil society (i.e., these Palestinians are not Israeli citizens). While there may be a clear legal distinction between Palestinians who are citizens of Israel and those who live in the Palestinian Authority, at a psychological

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contributes to this trend by introducing a new theoretical framework for understanding reconciliation.

The main tenet of the model is that conflict episodes pose different types of identity threats for victims and perpetrators. Victims, by definition, are harmed by acts over which they have little power or control. Thus, victimizing experiences threaten group members' sense of themselves as powerful human beings who have agency and equal worth, leaving them with a feeling of loss of control, self-efficacy, respect, and pride (Scheff, 1994). Perpetrators are more powerful than victims but their identities are threatened as well, albeit in the form of threats to their image as morally worthy human beings. When their wrongdoings are exposed, perpetrators risk accusations of blame and exclusion from the "moral community" to which they belong (Tavuchis, 1991). Because the threats to the identities of victims and perpetrators are not symmetrical, they give rise to different needs in each group. For victims, identity threat brings about an enhanced need for power. For perpetrators, identity threat enhances their need to regain social acceptance from relevant others.

The Needs-Based Model suggests that satisfying these needs may restore the victims' sense of power and the perpetrators' moral image. Victims and perpetrators can achieve the restoration of impaired identity dimensions unilaterally. Victims may restore their sense of power by taking revenge, while perpetrators may reduce the threat to their moral image by using "exonerating cognitions" to legitimize their actions, belittling the painful consequences of their actions, or psychologically distancing themselves or even dehumanizing their victims (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008). Obviously, these unilateral methods of restoring victims' and perpetrators' social power and moral image will likely fuel rather than quell intergroup conflict.

Alternatively, these impaired identity dimensions can be restored through reciprocal interactions in which the victims' need for empowerment is satisfied by the perpetrators and the perpetrators' need for acceptance is satisfied by the victims. A primary illustration of this social exchange transaction is the apology-forgiveness cycle which, if successful, can alter the conflictual reality between two adversaries (Tavuchis, 1991). By apologizing and taking responsibility for past wrongdoings, perpetrators put their fate in the hands of victims who have the power to grant or withhold forgiveness. This is an empowering experience for victims, while at the same time expressing empathy toward the perpetrator's distress and understanding of the circumstances that compelled the perpetrator's behavior, as well as ultimately granting forgiveness, removes the threat to the perpetrator's moral image

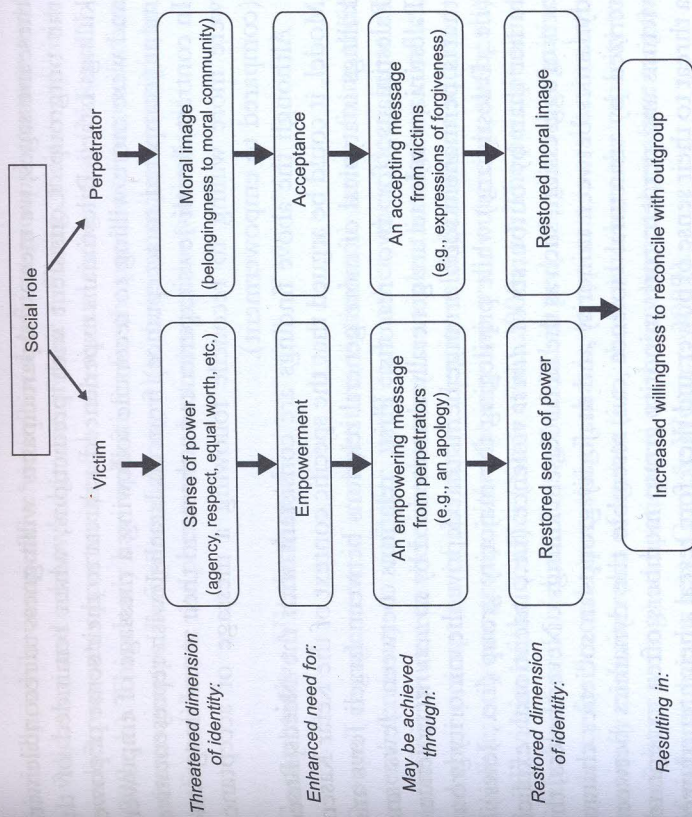


Figure 11.1 The needs-based model of reconciliation.

(Gobodo-Madikizela, 2008). Thus, our model suggests that a process of reciprocal need satisfaction removes threats to victims' and perpetrators' identities and produces a greater willingness for reconciliation. This process is modeled in Figure 11.1.

The predictions derived from this model have been examined in several contexts. In one study (Shnabel, Nadler, Ullrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009), Israeli Jews and Israeli Palestinians were reminded of the Kfar Kasem killings of 1956, in which an Israeli border patrol killed 43 unarmed Arab civilians who had broken a curfew restriction. These participants were then exposed to speeches ostensibly made by representatives of their outgroup (i.e., a Palestinian or Jewish representative, respectively) on the fiftieth anniversary of the killings. The main message conveyed in these speeches was either empowering ("we should acknowledge the right of the [participants' ingroup] to live in respect and to feel strong and proud in their homeland") or accepting ("we should accept our brothers the [participants' ingroup] and remember that it is not easy for the [participants' ingroup] to deal with their emotions following the killings"). Following exposure to

these messages, we measured participants' willingness to reconcile with the outgroup. Consistent with predictions, when reminded of the killings Israeli-Palestinians experienced a threat to their sense of power and were more willing to reconcile following a message of empowerment (compared to acceptance) from an Israeli-Jewish representative. In contrast, Israeli-Jews experienced a threat to their moral image and were more willing to reconcile following a message of acceptance (compared to empowerment).

Although the above findings are consistent with the Needs-Based Model, it could be argued that the specific context of the Kefar Kasem killings is atypical of more general relations between Israeli Jews and Palestinians, for two reasons. First, relations between Jews and Palestinians in Israel are generally characterized by *structural* violence – that is, permanent social arrangements that deprive the minority group (i.e., Palestinians) while privileging the majority group (i.e., Jews) – rather than by outbursts of *direct* violence (i.e., intentional, explicit acts of aggression, such as the Kefar Kasem killings). Nevertheless, the dynamics between minority and majority groups in societies characterized by structural violence can resemble the dynamics between victims and perpetrators: minority group members often experience a threat to their sense of power and therefore reveal a heightened need for empowerment, whereas majority group members often experience a threat to their moral image and therefore reveal a heightened need for acceptance. For example, in interracial interactions in the United States, a context also characterized by structural inequality, minority group members are typically motivated to gain respect (a form of social empowerment) whereas majority group members are typically motivated to be liked (a form of social acceptance; Bergstieker, Shelton, & Richeson, 2010). Thus, the needs elicited by a specific event in which Palestinians are victimized by Jews are likely to parallel the needs present in Israeli society more generally.

Second, the specific context of the Kefar Kasem killings is marked by clear-cut roles of victims and perpetrators, and there is consensus that Jews victimized Palestinians in this particular case. However, the relationship between Jews and Palestinians more generally is marked by *competitive victimhood* (Noor et al., 2008a, b). Both groups compete over the role of the “true” victim of the conflict; namely, who suffered more and whose suffering is more illegitimate (Nadler, 2002). Such competition is typical of intergroup relations characterized by intractable conflict. In such settings, both groups perceive a deep sense of victimhood, often irrespective of their differential access to material and social power and their role in the conflict (Nadler, 2002).

Ironically, while competitive victimhood reflects groups' *common need* for validation and acknowledgment of their suffering, their competitive mindset prevents opportunities for such mutual recognition (Noor et al., 2008a, b). This clearly has implications for the process of reconciliation between groups. Before considering what these consequences might be, we first elaborate the phenomenon of competitive victimhood.

Competitive Victimhood

Groups' engagement in competitive victimhood stems from their general tendency to compete with each other, their deep sense of victimization due to their involvement in a violent intergroup conflict, and their perception of the victim identity as dichotomous and non-divisible: only one group, *either* the ingroup *or* the outgroup, can be the “real” victim of the conflict (Noor et al., 2008a, b). The perception of victimhood as non-divisible is grounded in people's general cognitive tendency for “moral typecasting”; that is, to typecast moral actors into *mutually exclusive* roles of agents (i.e., those who have the capacity to do right or wrong) and patients (i.e., those who are the passive targets of right or wrong acts; Gray & Wegner, 2009).

The general cognitive tendency for moral typecasting, which has been found in individual-level transgression contexts, is likely to be intensified in intergroup conflicts. As suggested in Bronfenbrenner's (1961) classic paper on Soviet-American relations, in intergroup conflicts both sides often have a distorted picture of their adversarial group, deemed “a mirror image in a twisted glass” (p. 72). A major theme in this mirror image is that the outgroup is an irrational aggressor who cannot be trusted, whereas the ingroup is rational, innocent, and trustworthy. Distorted images can be fueled by propagandist “us-them” journalism (Lynch & Galtung, 2010) and ideologies that legitimize violence. For example, the “doctrine of the just war” is a cultural narrative that supports episodes of violence by specifying conditions under which direct violence is justified (Christie, Tint, Wagner, & Winter, 2008). Needless to say, the outgroup's violence is rarely justified in a similar manner.

This general perception of ingroups as the “good guys” and outgroups as the “bad guys” is particularly intensified in intractable conflicts. Intractable conflicts are defined as protracted (i.e., there is at least one generation that never knew a different reality), violent, demanding of extensive investment (e.g., military, economic), and occupying a central place in the lives of the involved societies. They

are perceived as unresolvable, existential, and zero-sum in nature (Bar-Tal, 2007). To cope with the challenges (e.g., pain, stress, exhaustion) posed by such harsh conditions, societies involved in intractable conflicts develop a socio-psychological infrastructure that consists of mutually interrelated collective memories, an ethos of conflict, and a collective emotional orientation (see Bar-Tal, 2007). This repertoire of emotions, beliefs, and attitudes motivates the involved parties to delegitimize and dismiss the suffering of and injustices caused to their outgroup while highlighting their own, ultimately leading them to perceive the outgroup as the guilty, violent perpetrator and the ingroup as the innocent, moral victim (Bar-Tal, 2007).

While it is clear that competitive victimhood occurs, it is worth inquiring why groups would compete over the victim's role, a role that is associated with weakness and helplessness. We propose that although being victimized is indeed a negative experience that may have many harmful consequences, being recognized as a victim may serve several positive functions (Noor et al., 2008a, b). First, collective feelings of victimization may bolster group members' identification with and commitment to their ingroup. Second, perceptions of the ingroup as the true victim of conflict may make group members feel that they are entitled to use violence against the outgroup by justifying this as self-defense or a morally right retribution (Zitek, Jordan, Monin, & Leach, 2010). Third, competitive victimhood can be used by groups in the aftermath of a conflict as a strategy to minimize the outgroup's claims and to maximize the ingroup's claims for compensation as a result of the violent conflict (Manzi & Gonzalez, 2007). Finally, groups may compete over their share of victimhood to recruit the support and alliance of third parties outside of the immediate conflict. Because people are generally more likely to help and express empathy toward "innocent victims" (Friedman & Austin, 1978), efforts may be made to display innocence and reduced responsibility to elicit third parties' empathy and secure practical aid. For example, pro-Palestinian media watchdogs promote the use of the term "apartheid wall," which highlights the injustice it causes to the Palestinians, whereas pro-Israeli media watchdogs promote the use of the term "security fence" to describe the same entity, as it draws attention to its role in decreasing Palestinian suicide bombing attacks in Israel. In other words, both groups try to portray themselves as victims in the eyes of third parties (e.g., media consumers in the United States or European countries). Thus, in light of the various instrumental goals that recognized victimhood may promote, it is not so surprising that adversarial groups often compete over the social role of the "true victim."

Applying the Needs-Based Model to Contexts of Competitive Victimhood

Beyond the attainment of the various instrumental goals mentioned above, competitive victimhood may also reflect groups' attempts to satisfy their different emotional needs, as specified in the Needs-Based Model of reconciliation. Specifically, receiving acknowledgment of one's victimization from significant others has important implications for both one's sense of power *and* moral image and can accordingly serve as a form of both empowerment *and* social acceptance. Thus, while both victims and perpetrators (or, minority and majority groups within a civil society) may engage in *similar* behaviors associated with competitive victimhood, they may do so in an attempt to address *different* threats to their identities: victims may do this in an attempt to gain empowerment, whereas perpetrators may do this to gain social acceptance, or at least guard against accusations of immorality.

How is this dynamic manifested in the context of the relations between Jews and Palestinians in Israeli society? Because both sides in this intractable conflict have victimized each other time and again, members of each group may experience an enhanced need for either empowerment or acceptance, depending on the particular role of their group in a given victimization episode. For example, Jews experience a heightened need for acceptance when reminded of the Kefar Kasem killings, in which their group was the perpetrator, but a heightened need for power when reminded of the Ma'ale Akrabim massacre, in which their group was the victim (Harth & Shnabel, *Third-party Intervention in Intergroup Reconciliation*, manuscript in preparation). Beyond the experience of particular needs in response to specific conflict episodes, we believe that the essential differences in Jews' and Palestinians' relative power in Israeli society (i.e., as majority and minority groups) determine their needs when relating to society in general. For the sake of conceptual clarity and simplicity our analysis below relates to the psychological needs resulting from Jews' and Palestinians' general status as privileged and underprivileged groups in Israeli society. We thus suggest that when relating to their *generic social roles* in Israeli society Jews are likely to experience a threat mainly to their moral image whereas Palestinians are likely to experience a threat mainly to their sense of power. As a result, Jews and Palestinians may engage in competitive victimhood to gain acceptance or power, respectively.

Based on the logic of the Needs-Based Model we suggest that for Palestinians, seeking an acknowledgment and validation of their

suffering may reflect their enhanced need for power. Such acknowledgment by the Jews would constitute an admission of responsibility and consequent moral debt to rectify the injustice. This empowers Palestinians, who can then decide whether and how this debt should be canceled. For example, to the extent that Jews admit that the lower socioeconomic status of Palestinians in Israel at least partially stems from intentional discrimination rather than from other causes (e.g., Palestinians' lack of motivation to become full members of Israeli society), their admission would imply that the status quo should be changed, and it is Jews' responsibility to bring this change about.

For Jews, in contrast, seeking an acknowledgment of their suffering may reflect their enhanced need for acceptance. The reason is that if their suffering is recognized, then there is room for expression – by Palestinians and third parties – of sympathy for their distress, understanding of the circumstances that compelled their actions, and compassion for their emotional hardship. Sympathy and understanding for the Jews' perspective provides reassurance of their belongingness to the moral community from which they feel potentially excluded. They are thus motivated to stress their own victimhood to emphasize the fact that they too are vulnerable human beings who can be identified with. For example, we believe that to the extent the Palestinians acknowledge that the persecution of Jews in Europe, rather than colonialist aspirations, led Jews to endorse Zionism, their acknowledgment would imply that Zionists are not racists; rather, they are persecuted people who wanted to escape their suffering in Europe.

To illustrate the dynamics of competitive victimhood, consider the issue of the security checks of Palestinians at the Israeli airport. This issue was often brought up in the dialogue group interventions analyzed by Sonnenschein (2008). Palestinians typically complained about the exhausting security checks that they undergo at the Israeli airport due to their ethnicity, claiming that even in the absence of any concrete suspicion against them they go through long inquiries and luggage search and this humiliates and frustrates them every time they go abroad. They expected the Jews to admit the injustice caused to them as a minority group. Jews typically responded by expressing empathy toward the Palestinians' distress, yet highlighting past victimization episodes in which Palestinians conducted or planned to conduct terrorist attacks in airports or on airplanes. They expected the Palestinians to understand that these security checks do not stem from racism *per se* but are grounded in a realistic sense of threat. Thus, both sides highlight their victimhood. Palestinians do so in an attempt

to gain the Jews' acknowledgment of their discrimination. This acknowledgment would serve as a form of empowerment because it would constitute an admission that the status quo should be changed toward equality. Jews, in contrast, highlight their victimhood in an attempt to gain the Palestinians' understanding that their acts stem from a desire for self-protection. Such understanding would serve as a form of moral acceptance because it would mean that the Jews' behavior, which might otherwise be interpreted as immoral, is in fact comprehensible under the circumstances.

Sonnenschein's (2008) analysis suggests that when Jews and Palestinians engage in such competitive victimhood the communication gets "stuck" and each group stops listening to the other. Indeed, research conducted in other contexts (i.e., religious conflict in Northern Ireland and political conflict in Chile) consistently shows that competitive victimhood is negatively associated with the willingness to forgive the outgroup, which is in turn a positive predictor of the willingness to reconcile with it (Noor et al., 2008b). Apparently, when groups are preoccupied with establishing their ingroup's suffering they are not ready to let go of the painful past, which is necessary for forgiveness and reconciliation. Thus, reducing competitive victimhood seems to be crucial for the restoration of the relations between adversarial groups in a society.

Our perspective suggests that focusing on the underlying needs, rather than the resulting claim of victimhood, may help move people past this competitive orientation. Accordingly, the exchange of reciprocal messages that provide empowerment to the minority group and acceptance to the majority group should decrease their need to engage in competitive victimhood and thus promote reconciliation. Although this hypothesis has not been experimentally examined, Sonnenschein's analysis of the dialogue between Jews and Palestinians supports this possibility. Unlike previous work, which concluded that intergroup dialogues of this kind eventually reach a dead end (e.g., Bekerman, 2002), Sonnenschein (2008) found that groups did find their way toward potential reconciliation. This happened when Jews recognized, rather than denied, the injustice caused to the Palestinians and Palestinians expressed their understanding of the Jews' perspective (e.g., empathized with their experience of existential threat) instead of merely reproaching them. These expressions of recognition of injustice on the one hand and empathy and understanding on the other, allowed the groups to let go of the "exclusive victim" role, and paved the way to a more constructive dialogue.

Forces that Enable Constructive Dialogue

The above analysis suggests that the road to restoration in civil societies requires a "constructive dialogue" through which each party receives the psychological "commodity" (i.e., resource) it needs. The majority receives acceptance from the minority and the minority receives power from the majority in a symbolic social exchange transaction. Yet, as game theory has repeatedly argued, one of the problems inherent to any exchange transaction is the issue of trust: "[M]ost transactions are potential prisoner's dilemmas. You agree to buy aluminum siding: how do you know the salesman won't skip town with your down payment? How does he know you won't stop payment on the check?" (Poundstone, 1992, p. 105).

Applying this dilemma to the present context, we suggest that taking part in the kind of constructive dialogue described by Sonnenschein is risky. If the Palestinians express empathy and acceptance toward the Jews, how do they know that the Jews will reciprocate by acknowledging the injustice and agreeing to redistribute power more equally? If the Jews acknowledge the injustice caused to the Palestinians, how do they know that the Palestinians will reciprocate by expressing acceptance and not use this acknowledgment to further reproach them?

Before a constructive dialogue can take place, a climate of trust clearly needs to be established. In the absence of a basic level of trust, the involved parties are unlikely to take the risk involved in satisfying the other party's needs because they fear that their gesture will not be reciprocated (Leunissen, De Cremer, & Reinders Folmer, 2012). Furthermore, empirical evidence suggests that even if the involved parties do take the risk and convey an empowering or accepting message to the other party, such a message can fail to bring about the desired effect in the absence of trust. For example, Philpot and Hornsey (2011) found that intergroup apologies failed to promote forgiveness because people are cynical about the motives behind group apologies. Similarly, Nadler and Liviatan (2006) found that expressions of empathy (i.e., a form of acceptance) by a Palestinian representative increased reconciliatory attitudes only among Jews who were already trusting of the Palestinians. In contrast, Jews who were distrustful of Palestinians were unaffected by the empathy statement. Integrating these findings with those of Sonnenschein (2008), suggests that the constructive dialogue described in her research came about because the participants in this dialogue group (i.e., Jews and Palestinians who agreed to take part in mutual discussions) had relatively high levels of trust to begin with.

This trust allowed them, at some point in the dialogue, to exchange the psychological commodities each side needed.

Another question that may arise is how a constructive dialogue can be encouraged that extends beyond the micro level of small groups. One strategy is encouraging groups to come to a shared view of history, which may help group members "acknowledge their own group's blameworthy actions and begin to accept the other group in spite of its blameworthy actions" (Staub, 2008, p. 411). This strategy can be applied in several ways. For example, Staub's intervention to construct a shared view of history among Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda focused on workshops for national leaders, who due to their social influence could serve as agents of change in society as a whole. Another way to encourage the construction of a shared view of history is through peace education. For example, the PRIME (Peace Research Institute in the Middle East) dual-narrative history project developed by Adwan and Bar-On (2004) focused on high school history teachers and their pupils. This project included workshops in which Palestinian and Jewish-Israeli teachers developed a joint textbook that included the Israeli and the Palestinian narratives in regard to several important historical dates in their mutual conflict, and then taught these narratives in their classrooms.

Admittedly, the Jewish and Palestinian teachers were not able to reach a single agreed historical narrative (Adwan & Bar-On, 2004). Nevertheless, we believe that becoming acquainted with the historical narrative of the outgroup in itself, even without endorsing it, may help set the stage for constructive dialogue. For example, a core component of the Jewish narrative is that the Jews accepted the partition plan to establish two independent states in Mandate Palestine, which was approved by the UN General Assembly on November 29, 1947, whereas the Palestinians as well as other Arab countries rejected it. This proves, in the Jewish narrative, that the Arabs are aggressive, irrationally stubborn, and unwilling to compromise. The Palestinian narrative, in contrast, highlights the fact that the partition plan distributed only 42.88 percent of the land to Palestinians, even though they constituted 69 percent of the population at that time. By becoming familiarized with the Palestinian narrative, Jews may be able to grasp, even if not necessarily accept, the reasons for the Arab rejection of the partition plan. This may break the "twisted mirror image" of the Palestinian side as an irrational aggressor; just as familiarity with the Jewish narrative can break the twisted mirror image that Palestinians have of the Jews.

In addition, exposure to the historical narrative of the other party may lay the foundation for feelings of empathy on one hand, and acknowledgment of injustice on the other. This is important because empathy and acknowledgment of injustice are the symbolic resources that need to be exchanged between the parties to promote reconciliation. For example, if Jews learned that many Jewish villages were built on the remains of Arab villages they might experience collective guilt, which could eventually lead them to acknowledge the injustice caused to the Palestinians. Similarly, if Palestinians learned that even though the Jews won the 1948 war they experienced immense suffering and losses (e.g., almost 1 percent of the population died), they may experience sympathy toward the Jews, which could ultimately lead them to the expression of empathy (e.g., understanding Jews' sense of existential threat).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have suggested that reconciliation requires a constructive dialogue through which a symbolic exchange transaction is conducted: the majority group empowers the minority (e.g., by acknowledging the injustice caused to the minority) whereas the minority group accepts the majority (e.g., by expressing empathy toward the hardship experienced by the majority). A successful transaction can reduce the parties' competition over the exclusive role of the "true" victim and pave the way for a harmonious civil society. Importantly, in a constructive dialogue of this kind both majority and minority groups are dependent upon each other to satisfy their needs and remove threats to their identities. Specifically, the majority group should acknowledge the immoral oppression and discrimination of the minority.

However, perhaps because morality is the most important dimension of ingroup perception (Leach, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2007), such acknowledgment may be tremendously difficult for the majority group. This leaves a particularly complex task to the minority group: on the one hand it needs to challenge the status quo (i.e., confront the majority group for its responsibility for causing injustice), but on the other hand it also needs to express compassion and empathy toward the majority group (e.g., understanding its fears of the minority) in order to prevent it from retreating into competitive victimhood. The effectiveness of this strategy in the case of Israeli Palestinians is reflected in Sonnenschein's conclusion that "the persistence and assertiveness of Palestinians' struggle to confront the Jews with their responsibility for

existing injustices along with the expressions of compassion and the ability to see the human sides of the Jews, led to the change among the Jewish group" (2008, p. 132). Sonnenschein's finding that in the "microcosm" of the Jewish-Palestinian dialogue group it was the Palestinians rather than the Jews who set the constructive dialogue in motion echoes Paulo Freire's claim that "the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed [is]: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well" (1970, p. 44).

As an illustration of how this "great task" could be fulfilled, we would like to end this chapter by noting the remarkable initiative of the Israeli Palestinian clergyman Emil Shufani, who was awarded the 2003 UNESCO Prize for Peace Education. In 2002, Shufani launched a project that involved a joint Jewish-Arab pilgrimage to the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp with the goal of showing brotherhood and understanding of the Jews' wounds. We believe that bold gestures of this kind have the potential to bring about a constructive intergroup dialogue that transcends the competition of who suffered more. As such, they are essential in disentangling the Gordian knot characteristic of conflictual intergroup relations such as those between Jews and Palestinians in Israel.

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