Chapter 14
Promoting Helping Behaviour Across Group Boundaries Through the Restoration of the Agentic Identities of Conflicting Groups

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Intergroup conflict—whether between adversarial nations or opposing political camps—almost never revolves solely around tangible resources, such as land or governmental funds. Rather, the conflict often additionally revolves around identity-related issues, such as who are the "good guys" or the "real victims" in the conflict (e.g. Kelman, 2008). For this reason, any effort to reduce intergroup conflict must address the strong motivation of group members to maintain their positive social identity (TajfSel & Turner, 1986). That is, interventions intended to facilitate prosociality across group boundaries should take steps to restore the positive social identities of the conflicting group members, which are often substantially impaired because of the conflict (e.g., Staub, Pearlman, Gubin, & Hagengimana, 2005). The goal of the present chapter is to shed light on whether and how such identity-restoring interventions can increase mutual prosocial behaviour among members of conflicting groups. In other words, we highlight the identity processes that might prevent or incentivise intergroup helping.

The theoretical framework that guided the research presented in this chapter is that of the needs-based model of reconciliation (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008), which argues that intergroup conflict threatens the identities of victimised and perpetrating groups asymmetrically. Specifically, theorising about social perception suggests that there might be two fundamental content dimensions (i.e. the "Big Two", Abele & Wojciszke, 2013) in which people judge social targets: the *agency* dimension, representing constructs such as competence, respect, strength

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and self-determination, and the *moral–social* (or communion) dimension, representing constructs such as warmth, sociability, trustworthiness and morality (see also the stereotype content model, which uses the terms "competence" and "warmth" to denote these dimensions; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007). Building on this theorising, the needs-based model argues that members of victim groups experience a threat to their agentic identity, whereas members of perpetrator groups experience threat to their moral–social identity. These threats bring about motivational states; thus, members of victim groups are motivated to restore their identity as agentic, influential social actors, whereas members of perpetrator groups are motivated to restore their identity as morally accepted social actors (SimanTov-Nachlieli, Shnabel, & Nadler, 2013).

The needs-based model further argues that the restoration of the positive identities of victim and perpetrator groups may increase their readiness to reconcile with each other. This argument has received empirical support in various contexts of intergroup conflict (e.g. Shnabel, Nadler, Ullrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009; Shnabel, Ullrich, Nadler, Dovidio, & Aydin, 2013). To illustrate, one study that focused on the context of the Holocaust (Shnabel et al., 2009; Study 1) revealed that a message from a Jewish representative who conveyed moral–social acceptance towards Germans (thus restoring their moral identity) increased the readiness of German participants to reconcile with the Jews more than an empowering message (i.e. a message that was equally positive—yet irrelevant to the identity dimension that Germans wished to restore). By contrast, an empowering message from a German representative (i.e. a message that restored the agentic identity of Jews by acknowledging the value and right for self-determination of their ingroup) increased the readiness of Jewish participants to reconcile with the Germans rather than an accepting message (i.e. a positive message that was irrelevant to the identity dimension that Jews wished to restore). This research, which suggests that addressing the *particular* identity needs of conflicting groups might open them up to reconciliation, provides valuable insights pertaining to the type of messages that representatives of victim and perpetrator groups should convey to each other to promote this cause.

Nevertheless, this research was limited in two ways. First, it focused on contexts such as the Holocaust, in which the roles of Germans as perpetrators and Jews as victims are clear-cut; however, many, if not most, conflicts are *dual*, that is, characterised by mutual transgressions. Therefore, understanding the psychological processes in dual conflicts has greater real-world application than understanding conflicts with clear-cut roles. Second, it examined the effects of different threats to identity on responses to messages, but not on the behaviour of group members towards the outgroup. In the next section, we describe recent research that addresses these limitations by exploring how the experience of threats to identity among members of "dual groups", who serve as both victims and perpetrators at the same time, translates into helping (or aggressive) behaviour. Based on this research, we developed an identity restoration strategy to promote intergroup prosociality (e.g. willingness to help the outgroup) in dual conflicts, which is described in the next section.

Applying the Needs-Based Model to Dual Conflicts: The Primacy of Agency Effect

The logic of the needs-based model offers a straightforward prediction pertaining to the threats to identity experienced by the duals: because duals serve as both victims and perpetrators at the same time, they should be expected to experience threat to, and consequent motivation to restore, both their agency and their morality (SimanTov-Nachlieli & Shnabel, 2014). The question remains, however, which of these identity threats would exert greater influence on the behaviour of duals, given that victimisation and perpetration should influence behavioural tendencies in opposite directions. In particular, victimisation often leads to heightened aggressive, antisocial behaviour: victims often feel entitled to behave antisocially (Zitek, Jordan, Monin, & Leach, 2010) and may take revenge against their perpetrators (Frijda, 1994) in an attempt to restore their impaired sense of agency (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). By contrast, perpetration may lead to prosocial behaviour: although perpetrator groups sometimes attempt to deny their culpability (Bandura, 1990), when faced with the immorality of their acts, they may also try to restore their positive moral identity by apologising (Blatz, Schumann, & Ross, 2009), compensating (Estrada-Hollenbeck & Heatherton, 1998), or offering help to their victims (Dovidio, Piliavin, Schroeder, & Penner, 2006; see also Rabinovich & Morton, 2010, for helpfulness as a means of mitigating threats to the moral identity of the ingroup; see also Van de Vyver & Abrams, 2017, for the importance of moral emotions in the context of intergroup helping).

Although we recognised these opposing influences, we expected the motivation of duals to restore agency (which should lead to heightened antisocial tendencies) to exert a greater influence on their behaviour than their motivation to restore morality. This expectation was based on previous findings that when people think about the attributes of their ingroup, they view agency- or competence-related attributes as more desirable than morality-related attributes (Phalet & Poppe, 1997). This is also consistent with Baumeister's (1996) claim that the experience of victimisation is psychologically more profound than the experience of perpetration, and with findings that members of groups involved in dual conflicts tend to engage in competitive victimhood (Noor, Brown, González, Manzi, & Lewis, 2008; Noor, Brown, & Prentice, 2008). That is, they tend to perceive themselves to be the "real" victims of the conflict and may retaliate against the outgroup to "get even" (Noor, Shnabel, Halabi, & Nadler, 2012).

To examine our predictions, we conducted a study (SimanTov-Nachlieli & Shnabel, 2014, Study 2) in which Israeli Jewish participants were randomly assigned to one of three different roles: "pure" victims, "pure" perpetrators and "duals". Participants assigned to the victim role were asked to recall and write about two incidents in which their ingroup was victimised by Palestinians (e.g. the Passover massacre of 2002 in which 30 unarmed Israeli civilians were killed by a suicide bomber). Participants assigned to the perpetrator role were instructed to recall and write about two incidents in which their ingroup victimised Palestinians (e.g. the 1994 Cave of the Patriarchs massacre, in which 29 unarmed Palestinian civilians were killed by an Israeli settler who opened fire inside a Mosque). Finally,

participants assigned to the dual role were instructed to recall and write about one incident of victimisation and one of perpetration.

As expected, compared with a neutral midpoint, pure victims expressed a heightened need for agency (i.e. a wish for "a stronger Israel"), which translated into more antisocial, vengeful tendencies against Palestinians (e.g. support for the use of unrestricted force against even the slightest act of terrorism). Pure perpetrators expressed a heightened need for morality (i.e. a wish for "a more moral Israel"), which translated into more prosocial helping tendencies towards Palestinians (e.g. support for providing humanitarian aid to Gaza). As for duals, even though they expressed heightened needs for *both* agency and morality, in terms of anti- and pro-behavioural tendencies they resembled victims—revealing heightened vengeful tendencies against Palestinians (similar to those found among victims) and no change in helping tendencies towards Palestinians (as opposed to those found among perpetrators). Thus, the motivation of duals to restore their agency influenced their behavioural tendencies more than their motivation to restore morality. This pattern of prioritisation of agency restoration over morality restoration, which was replicated in other contexts (e.g. in Liberia; Mazziotta, Feuchte, Gausel, & Nadler, 2014), was termed *the primacy of agency effect*.

The primacy of agency effect offers a somewhat pessimistic conclusion regarding the behavioural tendencies of duals, suggesting that intergroup helping cannot be expected if the ingroup's agency is threatened. However, in line with the general logic of the needs-based model, we reasoned that restoring the agentic identity of duals—thus addressing their most pressing identity-related need—may promote intergroup prosociality. Our next step was therefore to find a strategy to restore the sense of ingroup agency of duals in a constructive manner (i.e. rather than by destructive acts such as vengeance).

Here, the relatively recent extension of the self-affirmation theory (Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Steele, 1988) to the group level (e.g. Sherman, Kinias, Major, Kim, & Prenovost, 2007) seemed highly relevant. According to the self-affirmation theory, an affirmation of the self (e.g. through short writing exercises in which one affirms one's core values; McQueen & Klein, 2006) can protect the self against various psychological threats. Applying this theorising to the group level, research into group affirmation has consistently found that the negative effects of a threat to social identity on group members' attributions, performance, motivation, attitudes and behaviour can be alleviated by affirming positive aspects of their ingroup's identity (Craig, DeHart, Richeson, & Fiedorowicz, 2012; Derks, Scheepers, Van Laar, & Ellemers, 2011; Derks, Van Laar, & Ellemers, 2006, 2007, 2009; Gunn & Wilson, 2011; Miron, Branscombe, & Biernat, 2010; Sherman et al., 2007).

Importantly, although earlier theorising suggested that threats in one domain might be addressed through self-affirmation of another, unrelated domain (Steele, 1988), recent research has found that the effectiveness of self-affirmation interventions may depend on the "match" between the type of threat and the content of the affirmation. To illustrate, self-affirmation exercises successfully mitigated threats of social rejection only when participants focused on social belonging themes (Knowles, Lucas, Molden, Gardner, & Dean, 2010; see also Shnabel, Purdie-Vaughns, Cook,

Garcia, & Cohen, 2013). Moreover, in the contexts of interpersonal conflicts, reassuring the morality of perpetrators by affirming the specific values breached by the transgression (but not other, unrelated values) increased their conciliatory tendencies towards their victims (Woodyatt & Wenzel, 2014).

Applying Woodyatt and Wenzel's (2014) logic to contexts of dual intergroup conflict, we (SimanTov-Nachlieli, Shnabel, Aydin, & Ullrich, in press) theorised that to effectively promote prosocial tendencies in such conflicts, group affirmation interventions must target the identity dimension whose impairment has the most critical influence on the behavioural tendencies of the group members—that is, their agency. To test this theorising, we (SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., in press) conducted a series of studies that examined the effects of agency affirmation on the prosocial tendencies of the group members towards outgroups with which their ingroup is involved in a dual conflict. We expected that agency affirmation, that is, reminding and reassuring group members of their ingroup's competence and self-determination would satisfy their pressing need for restoration of their agentic identity. This, in turn, was expected to increase their prosociality and helpfulness towards the conflicting outgroup. We next describe this set of studies in detail.

Promoting Prosociality in Dual Conflicts Through Agency Affirmation Interventions

Our first study had two interrelated goals. The first was to integrate our theorising about the primacy of agency with seemingly contradictory research pointing to the "primacy of morality" in intergroup relations, that is, findings that morality was perceived by group members to be the most important dimension in the identity of their ingroup, affecting their pride in and distancing from their ingroup more than any other dimension (Leach, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2007). Here, we theorised that although morality should receive primacy in non-conflictual contexts (i.e. in line with Leach et al.'s argument), agency should receive primacy in conflictual contexts, which poses an acute threat to this particular dimension of groups' identities. The second goal was to test whether, following the affirmation of their agency, group members would no longer prioritise agentic over morality goals when relating to the conflicting outgroup (i.e. to examine whether they would show a balanced tendency to pursue both types of goals following an agency affirmation).

To measure the participants' need prioritising, we (SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., in press, Study 1) used the circumplex scales of intergroup goals (CSIG; Locke, 2014)—a well-established measure of the agentic and communal (i.e. moral–social) goals of the group members, which was validated in a series of studies using diverse intergroup contexts (see Locke, 2014). The CSIG organises intergroup goals within one conceptual circle-shaped space. Each point within this conceptual space can be specified as a weighted mixture of *agentic goals* (such that points in the upper half of the circle denote goals associated with competence, self-determination and power, whereas points in the lower half of the circle denote goals associated with

submissiveness, helplessness and passivity) and *communal goals* (such that points in the right-hand side of the circle denote goals associated with warmth, morality and solidarity, whereas points in the left-hand side of the circle denote goals associated with coldness, wariness and detachment). To the extent that the circumplex structure of the goals is statistically validated, it is possible to calculate two overall vector scores: representing the needs of the group members for agency and communion. Practically, the CSIG includes items such as "when my [ingroup's] representatives or leaders interact with representatives or leaders of [an outgroup], it is important to me that"…"we are assertive" (an item representing high agentic and average communal goals), "we show we can be tough" (high agentic and low communal goals), "we do whatever is in our best interest" (average agentic and low communal goals), "they stay out of our business" (low agentic and low communal goals), "we avoid conflict" (low agentic and average communal goals), "we are cooperative" (low agentic and high communal goals), "we show concern for their welfare" (average agentic and high communal goals), and "they respect what we have to say" (high agentic and high communal goals).

The participants in our study were 135 Swiss citizens who voted in favour of an initiative to restrict immigration to Switzerland in the February 2014 referendum, which led to Switzerland breaching an existing treaty with the EU. In response to this referendum, the EU imposed various sanctions against Switzerland, such as exclusion from student exchange and research programs. Because of these events, Swiss people who supported the initiative may be viewed as members of a group involved in a dual conflict, because on the one hand they transgressed against the EU (their vote had led to the breaching of an existing treaty with the EU), but on the other hand they were disadvantaged by the EU's sanctions and viewed them as an illegitimate interference with the Swiss democratic system.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: a control/no-conflict condition, a conflict condition, and a conflict-with-agency-affirmation condition. In the no-conflict condition, participants were not reminded of the conflict with the EU, and simply completed the CSIG while referring to other countries in general (i.e. "when Swiss representatives or leaders interact with representatives or leaders of *other countries* it is important to me that…"). In the two conflict conditions, following a reminder of the basic facts of the conflict, participants completed the CSIG while referring to the EU (i.e. "when Swiss representatives or leaders interact with representatives or leaders of *the EU* it is important to me that…"). However, participants assigned to the conflict-with-agency-affirmation condition were also asked—before they completed the CSIG—to think about situations that confirm the "common view" of the Swiss as being strong, successful and highly developed, and to write about a situation in which Switzerland shows at least one of those characteristics. We predicted that participants in the no-conflict condition would prioritise their moral–social (communal) goals over their agentic intergroup goals, but that the reverse pattern would emerge in the conflict condition, in which agentic goals would be prioritised over moral–social goals. We also predicted, however, that participants in the conflict-with-agency-affirmation condition would no longer prioritise their agentic goals over their moral–social goals.

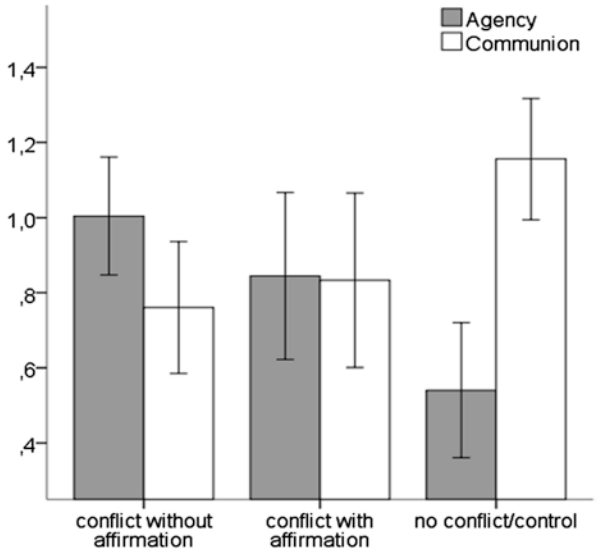

Fig. 14.1 Swiss participants' The agentic versus moral–social (communal) goals of Swiss participants in the no-conflict, conflict, and conflict-with-agency-affirmation conditions

The results, presented in Fig. 14.1, supported our predictions.

Consistent with the "primacy of morality" effect (Leach et al., 2007), when referring to "other countries" in general (i.e. in the no-conflict condition) Swiss participants prioritised their prosocial, communal goals over their agentic intergroup goals. However, in line with the "primacy of agency" effect (SimanTov-Nachlieli & Shnabel, 2014), when referring to the EU (i.e. in the conflict condition) Swiss participants prioritised their agentic goals over their moral–social goals. This pattern disappeared, however, in the conflict-with-agency-affirmation condition, in which Swiss participants showed similar levels of agentic and moral–social goals. Taken together, these findings suggest that in the absence of conflict, intergroup helping can be expected to be relatively high, as group members prioritise their communal intergroup goals and wish to preserve harmonious relations with other groups (see also Pittinsky, Rosenthal, and Montoya's (2010) notion of allophilia; i.e. intergroup liking). In the presence of conflict, however, intergroup helping may drop sharply, because group members are preoccupied with their need to secure their identity as agentic social actors. Optimistically, affirming the identity of the group members as being agentic may increase their willingness to help outgroup members, despite the conflict.

The second study in our research programme (SimanTov-Nachlieli, 2016) was aimed at extending the first one in three ways. First, it examined the effects of agency affirmation on the behaviour of group members rather than on their intended intergroup goals. Second, it was aimed at demonstrating that the "active ingredient" in this affirmation is the restoration of the positive, agentic identity of the group members per se, regardless of their relative status compared with the conflicting outgroup. That is, our goal was to show that even an affirmation of agency that does

not relate to the status hierarchy or "power balance" between the groups would be sufficient to promote prosocial tendencies—consistent with the tenet of the needs-based model that such tendencies among conflicting parties may be promoted through the restoration of their positive identities (Shnabel et al., 2009). Finally, it was aimed at ruling out positive mood, which has been consistently shown to increase prosocial behaviour (e.g. Carlson, Charlin, & Miller, 1988; Isen, 1999), as an alternative explanation.

We tested our theorising using a "minimal groups" paradigm (Tajfel, 1970; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). Eighty-five undergraduate students participated in this study. Following their assignment to minimal groups, participants conducted a task in which both their ingroup and their outgroup allocated valuable resources to the two groups. Using a procedure developed by SimanTov-Nachlieli and Shnabel (2014), they were then led to believe that members of both groups behaved unfairly, allocating substantially more resources to their ingroup than to their outgroup. Next, participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions: a control/no-affirmation condition; an agency-affirmation condition, in which they read a short text that reassured them of the agency of their ingroup with no reference to the outgroup; and a status-affirmation condition, in which participants read a text that reassured them of superiority of their ingroup compared with the outgroup. As our outcome variables, we measured participants' mood (using a short version of the positive and negative affect schedule; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) and prosocial behaviour towards their outgroup. Specifically, participants were given an opportunity to donate some of their final payoff for participation in the study to a member of their outgroup.

In addition, participants were given the opportunity to donate some of their payoff to a non-related third-party—a student who was a member of neither the ingroup nor the conflicting outgroup. We reasoned that if the effect of agency affirmation was driven by the proposed change in need-prioritising, it should increase prosocial tendencies solely towards the other conflicting party—giving less prioritising to agentic goals following the affirmation of the ingroup's agentic identity (as found in Study 1). By contrast, if the effect of agency affirmation was driven by positive mood, it should lead to a generalised tendency to act prosocially (i.e. even to non-related parties). Hence, including this measure allowed us to further pit the proposed explanation against positive mood as an alternative one.

The results supported our theorising. Group members whose ingroup's agency was affirmed behaved in a more prosocial manner towards members of the conflicting outgroup, regardless of whether the affirmation focused only on the agency of the ingroup or on its relative superiority compared with the conflicting outgroup. The fact that the effect emerged not only for the status-affirmation condition but also for the agency-affirmation condition supports our theorising that conflicting parties are concerned about the restoration of their positive agentic identity, rather than about their superiority over the outgroup. Hence, we argue that the relative status of the affirming group members was effective because it restored their agentic identity (similar to the agency affirmation that did not include an intergroup comparison), and not because it reassured the higher status or dominance of their

ingroup. Theoretically, our argument is consistent with the view of agency as reflecting the "experience of oneself as the agent of one's own actions – and not of others' actions" (David, Newen, & Vogeleya, 2008, p. 523). Finally, our results persisted, even when controlling for the mood of the group members (which, in fact, was not influenced by the experimental condition). Moreover, neither the agency affirmation nor the status affirmation affected prosociality towards a non-related third party. These results provide further support to our theorising that identity restoration processes, rather than mood effects, are responsible for the changes in the prosocial tendencies of the group members. With regard to prosociality, this means that helping emerges when the ingroup's agency, which is impaired because of the involvement in the conflict, is restored. It also means that agency affirmation can effectively promote helping only towards a conflicting outgroup, not towards non-involved parties (yet in the latter case, it may be expected to be relatively high anyway, as the results of our first study imply).

The goal of the next study in our research programme (SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., in press, Study 2) was to extend our conclusions regarding the effectiveness of agency affirmation to a context of an intractable conflict; specifically, the one between Israeli Jews and Palestinians (Bar-Tal, 2007). A second goal was to demonstrate that it was indeed critical to affirm the *agentic* identity of the ingroup; namely, to show that not just any positive affirmation can "do the trick." For this purpose, we pitted the agency affirmation against a corresponding affirmation of the morality of the participants' ingroup (i.e. reassurance of the ingroup's moral conduct and values). The prediction derived from the literature on social labelling (e.g. Kraut, 1973) would be that the latter type of affirmation, which labels the ingroup as moral, should activate the self-perception of the group members as being moral people, and lead to prosocial behaviour that is consistent with this label. As opposed to this prediction, however, we theorised that because conflicting parties are primarily concerned about the restoration of agency (i.e. because of the primacy of agency effect), only agency affirmation, but not morality affirmation, would increase the prosociality of group members towards their conflicting outgroup.

We recruited 145 Israeli Jewish participants. Note that many Israeli Jews view their ingroup as the "real" victims of the conflict and engage in competitive victimhood with the Palestinians (Shnabel & Noor, 2012). Hence, despite the power asymmetry between Israeli Jews and Palestinians (e.g. Palestinians are subjected to Israeli occupation in the West Bank), the conflict may be viewed as dual. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions. In the agency-affirmation condition they were exposed to a text, allegedly taken from a recent government position paper, which affirmed Israel's agentic identity (e.g. "Israel is considered one of the strongest nations in the world…Israel has proved its resiliency in many domains: it ranks first in terms of economic viability and crisis resilience…Seven Israelis won the Nobel Prize…"). The morality-affirmation condition exposed participants to a text affirming Israel's moral identity ("Israel is considered one of the most moral nations in the world.…Israel is known worldwide for sending teams to aid countries facing natural disasters…its actions are guided by values such as 'thou shalt love thy brother as thyself'"). The control condition included no

additional text. After ensuring that both affirmations were equally positive, participants were given the opportunity to donate real money (provided by the researchers) to pro- and anti-Palestinian organisations.

As expected, compared with the control condition, Israeli Jews in the agency-affirmation condition donated more money to the pro-Palestinian organisation and less money to the anti-Palestinian organisation. By contrast, in line with our theorising and opposite to the prediction derived from the literature on social labelling (e.g. Kraut, 1973), the morality affirmation failed to exert any positive effects (i.e. participants' donations in this condition did not differ from those in the control condition).

The effectiveness of agency affirmation was replicated in a series of subsequent studies that also pointed to the mechanism through which this intervention exerted its positive effects. One study was conducted among 67 Israeli Jews during the fighting in Gaza, who were assigned either to an agency-affirmation condition or a control condition. Consistent with the changes in the relative prioritising of needs observed in the Swiss context, we found that Israeli Jews whose agency was affirmed showed increased readiness to relinquish some power for the sake of morality (e.g. "Israel should restrain its operations in Gaza in order to be fair with the Palestinians"), leading, in turn, to higher prosocial tendencies towards Palestinians (see SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., in press).

Another study (SimanTov-Nachlieli, Shnabel, & Halabi, 2016) recruited both Israeli Jews ($n = 104$) and West Bank Palestinians ($n = 60$) and assigned them either to a control condition or to an agency-affirmation condition (the text for Israelis was similar to that described earlier; excerpts from the text for Palestinians were: "The Palestinian people are known worldwide for their resiliency and inner strength. The Palestinian nation is strong and cohesive, standing firmly in the face of many challenges…"). In addition, although morality *affirmation* has not been found to be very effective (see SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., in press, Study 2), under certain circumstances moral *threats* may promote prosocial tendencies (e.g. Dovidio et al., 2006). Therefore, participants were assigned either to a condition in which they read a text that threatened their ingroup's morality or to a no-threat/control condition. Although the exposure to a moral threat failed to affect prosocial tendencies, the agency affirmation increased Jews' and Palestinians' readiness to relinquish the use of power and violence for the sake of morality, which in turn increased prosocial tendencies (e.g. readiness to aid the outgroup in the case of a natural disaster).

Together, these studies suggest that conflicting group members might become relatively unresponsive to moral considerations not because they simply do not care about morality (i.e. as they perceive the outgroup to be completely outside the "scope of justice"; Clayton & Opotow, 2003), but rather because they are preoccupied with their agency-related needs. Indeed, members of groups involved in an intractable conflict often feel entitled to behave aggressively towards their outgroup (Klar, Schori-Eyal, & Klar, 2013) and their conflict-related attitudes are rigid and resistant to change (Bar-Tal & Halperin, 2011). Nevertheless, once the agency of their ingroup was affirmed, both Palestinians and Israeli Jews became more attentive to moral considerations, even at the cost of giving up the (mis)use of power. This in turn, reduced their vengeful, antisocial tendencies and increased their

prosocial tendencies towards the conflicting outgroup. Expressed differently, agency is necessary to stimulate intergroup helping, and once reassured, it can promote helping across group boundaries, even in contexts of prolonged, violent conflicts such as the one between Israelis and Palestinians.

The goal of the last study in our research program (SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., in press, Study 3) was to test the generalisability of our conclusions. In particular, building on the findings obtained in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, we concluded that agency affirmation allows conflicting group members to give more attention to moral considerations, which are deprioritised as long as they are preoccupied with their highly pressing agency-related needs. However, in the context of intractable conflicts such as the one between Palestinians and Israelis, the trade-off between agency and morality is particularly salient (Klar et al., 2013). To illustrate, Israel's attacks on Gaza may prove its control and power superiority but impair its moral image, whereas restraint may bolster Israel's moral image but be viewed as eroding its strength and deterrence; a similar "damned if you do, damned if you don't" trap characterises the Palestinians' (in)actions. It was therefore important to test whether agency affirmation would exert its positive effect on prosocial behaviour through a similar mechanism—willingness to give up some power (e.g. relinquish control over disputed resources) for the sake of morality (i.e. being fair with the outgroup)—even in contexts in which this trade-off between power and morality is less salient.

For this purpose, we used the context of the intra-societal conflict between (Jewish) Israeli leftists (i.e. "the peace camp") and rightists (i.e. "the national camp"). This conflict has always been a prominent feature of Israel's political landscape (Waxman, 2008) and has involved mutual transgressions (e.g. the 1948 killing of 16 rightist fighters of Altalena; the 1995 assassination of the leftist Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin). Despite the conflict between the groups on issues such as the purpose and future of the Jewish state and Zionism (Waxman, 2008), leftists and rightists do share a strong sense of common national and religious identity and an underlying core of beliefs and values (Herman & Yuchtman-Yaar, 2002). We therefore reasoned that the trade-off between power and morality in the context of this intra-societal conflict is indeed less salient than in the context of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

Participants in this study were 200 Israeli Jewish leftists and rightists (47.5% rightists, 52.5% leftists), who were randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions. In the agency-affirmation condition, participants read a text that affirmed the agency of their ingroup (excerpts from this text are: "For many years, since the establishment of Israel, the [right/left] held political power and made a vital contribution in shaping the character and image of the Israeli society […] the [right/left] camp showed its resilience over the years and it is still influential today"). The text in the morality-affirmation condition affirmed the moral conduct and values of the participants' ingroup (e.g.: "The [right/left] has led a policy of concern for the weaker, marginalised sectors within the Israeli society [...] among [rightists/leftists] there exists a particularly high rate of volunteers contributing their time and energy to promoting important societal goals such as [concern for the needy and strengthening Jewish tradition/concern for human rights and strengthening intergroup equality]"). The control condition included no text. Following the manipulation,

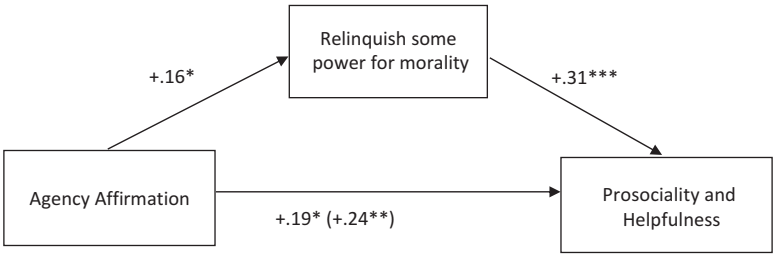

Fig. 14.2 The effects of agency affirmation on the prosociality of Israeli rightists and leftists towards the opposing political camp. Standardised regression coefficients (betas) are presented. For the path between agency affirmation and prosociality, the coefficients shown inside versus outside the parentheses represent the total and direct effects respectively. Coefficients with *one, two* or *three asterisks* indicate the significance levels of the beta weights of $p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.00$, respectively. Bootstrapping analysis (1000 re-samples) revealed that the indirect effect was significant, $B = 0.08$, SE = 0.04, 95% CI [0.011, 0.176]. (*B* stands for the point estimate of the indirect effect and SE for a bootstrap estimate of the standard error of the indirect effect)

participants indicated their willingness to relinquish some power for the sake of morality (e.g. "Even at the cost of giving up some power my ingroup must be fair with the other political camp".). We also measured prosociality towards the outgroup, using self-report scales, donation behaviour, and behaviour in an allocation task (i.e. an investment game adapted from Halevy, Bornstein, & Sagiv, 2008).

The results were consistent with those of the other studies. Among both leftists and rightists (there was no interaction between political orientation and experimental condition), agency affirmation led to greater prosociality towards the conflicting ideological camp, and this effect was mediated by increased readiness to relinquish some power for the sake of morality. Figure 14.2 presents the pattern of results.

In addition, consistent with our theorising and previous results, a morality affirmation had no positive effect on prosociality, suggesting once more that the particular content of the affirmation (i.e. the reassurance of the ingroup's agency) was critical for its effectiveness. These findings suggest that the conclusions regarding the effectiveness of agency affirmation and the mechanism leading to it can be generalised to conflictual contexts in which the members of the conflicting groups share a sense of common identity and the trade-off between power and morality is not particularly salient. In other words, intergroup helping can also be facilitated by agency affirmation in contexts of intra-societal conflicts.

Implications, Future Directions and Conclusions

The present chapter reviewed a series of studies that consistently demonstrated that agency affirmation—reminding members of conflicting groups of their ingroup's competence and ability to achieve its goals—increased their prosociality and helpfulness towards an outgroup. The positive effect of agency affirmation on prosociality

was mediated by the greater prioritisation of moral goals by the group members, that is, by an increased willingness to relinquish some power for the sake of being moral with the outgroup. Underscoring the robustness of this effect, the positive influence of agency affirmation was observed in various contexts of intergroup conflict (e.g. violent and non-violent, inter- and intra-societal), and for various types of prosocial outcomes, including intergroup goals such as concern for the welfare of the outgroup, self-reported helping tendencies such as support for providing the outgroup humanitarian aid, and behaviour such as donating money for causes that benefit the outgroup.

Supporting our theorising that these effects were driven by identity restoration processes, an alternative explanation (e.g. mood effects) was ruled out, and the effectiveness of the affirmation did not depend on whether or not the ingroup's superiority over the conflicting outgroup was reassured. Finally, even though both identity dimensions (i.e. agency and morality) are impaired because of the conflict, members of conflicting groups are primarily concerned with restoring their agency (i.e. the primacy of agency effect; SimanTov-Nachlieli & Shnabel, 2014). Accordingly, neither a morality affirmation (SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., in press) nor a moral threat (SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., 2016) effectively increased intergroup prosociality.

Our findings support the argument for the needs-based model that restoring the positive identities of group members that are impaired because of the conflict is critical for promoting prosocial tendencies across group boundaries (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008). However, previous work within the model's framework (e.g. Shnabel et al., 2009; Shnabel, Ullrich et al., 2013) focused on strategies of identity restoration through an exchange of messages between the conflicting groups or their representatives (e.g. messages from Jordanians on behalf of the Palestinians, Harth & Shnabel, 2015). For example, Shnabel and colleagues (Shnabel, Nadler, Canetti-Nisim, & Ullrich, 2008) pointed to empowering messages, such as apologies by the perpetrator group (Blatz et al., 2009; Tavuchis, 1991), as a means of restoring the victim group's agentic identity. A major limitation of this approach, if one wishes to put it into practice, is that conflicting parties, who fear that their gesture will not be reciprocated or even be used against them, are often reluctant to take the risk involved in conveying such messages (e.g. Leunissen, De Cremer, & Reinders Folmer, 2012). This reluctance may be particularly pronounced in contexts of dual conflicts, such as those examined here, in which each group views itself as the one deserving an apology from the other group (see Shnabel & Noor, 2012).

The advantage of the approach put forward in the present chapter is that agency affirmation does not require an exchange of messages, or even a direct dialogue between the conflicting parties. This is important, because direct intergroup communication is often sorely missing in intergroup conflicts (e.g. Rouhana & Bar-Tal, 1998). Another advantage of this approach is that such affirmations are likely to be experienced by group members as emotionally pleasant, as opposed to strategies that directly attempt to elicit empathy towards the conflicting outgroup, which lead to defensive responses and even backfire under certain circumstances (e.g. Bruneau & Saxe, 2012). Taken together, the studies presented here point to the potential benefits of using group affirmation strategies in promoting intergroup helping in contexts of dual conflicts.

Of course, future research should explore the boundary conditions of our conclusions. For example, perhaps in extreme cases of dehumanisation, when the outgroup is perceived to be outside the scope of morality (Janoff-Bulman & Werther, 2008) agency affirmation may have detrimental consequences, in line with the notion that "power corrupts" (e.g. Rummel, 1994). Future research may further explore the nature of the prosocial tendencies observed among group members whose agency was affirmed. That is, whether prosociality reflects a genuine concern for the outgroup or strategic attempts for impression management should be studied (see Halabi & Nadler, 2017, and van Leeuwen, 2017, for further discussion on various motives in intergroup helping). Given that group members did not show increased prosociality towards a non-related third party in the minimal group study allows, to our mind, the possibility of strategic impression management to be ruled out. This is because helping a non-involved third party could serve as an easy means of impression management, even without benefitting the conflicting outgroup. Yet participants did not pursue this option, providing evidence against explanations of impression management.

In conclusion, the research presented in this chapter allows us to come to the optimistic conclusion that restoring the positive agentic identity of the conflicting group members can contribute to replacing the vicious cycle of mutual transgressions with mutual prosociality and helpfulness. Having said this, we do not propose agency affirmation to be a panacea under all circumstances. Our humble contribution is to shed light on the importance of *internal processes* of identity restoration (which are not directly related to the outgroup or the relations with it) in promoting helping behaviour—even across the boundaries of conflicting groups.

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