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# Promoting Reconciliation Through the Satisfaction of the Emotional Needs of Victimized and Perpetrating Group Members: The Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation

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*Guided by the Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation, we hypothesized that being a member of a victimized group would be associated with a threat to the status and power of one's ingroup, whereas being a member of a perpetrating group would threaten the image of the ingroup as moral and socially acceptable. A social exchange interaction through which victims feel empowered by their perpetrators and perpetrators feel accepted by their victims was thus predicted to enhance the parties' willingness to reconcile. Supporting the predictions across two experiments, members of the perpetrator group (Jews in Study 1 and Germans in Study 2) showed greater willingness to reconcile when they received a message of acceptance, rather than empowerment, from a member of the victimized group. Members of the victimized group (Arabs in Study 1 and Jews in Study 2) demonstrated the opposite effect. Applied and theoretical implications of these results are discussed.*

**Keywords:** *intergroup reconciliation; emotional needs; victims; perpetrators; empowerment; acceptance*

Just as the absence of illness is not necessarily a sign of good health, the termination of a conflict between groups is not equivalent to healing their relations. Kelman (2008) has recently distinguished between, on

the one hand, conflict settlement and conflict resolution, which involve the cessation of conflict and the establishment of a pragmatic partnership between groups, and on the other hand, reconciliation. Reconciliation requires a fundamental change in psychological identities producing "mutual acceptance by members of formerly hostile groups of each other" that "must include a changed psychological orientation towards the other" (Staub, Pearlman, Gubin, & Hagengimana, 2005, p. 301).

The concept of reconciliation is relatively new to the field of intergroup relations (Nadler, Malloy, & Fisher, 2008), and the current empirical evidence is limited. For this reason, it can be useful to "borrow" insights gained through research on interpersonal reconciliation (e.g.,

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McCullough et al., 1998) and apply them to the intergroup level. Yet group processes can be fundamentally different than processes operating at the interpersonal level. Evidence on the interindividual-intergroup discontinuity effect (Insko, Kirchner, Pinter, Efav, & Wildschut, 2005) suggests that relations between groups tend to be more competitive and less cooperative than relations between individuals, and interventions that promote cooperation between individuals are often ineffective for producing cooperation between groups. For example, directly relevant to the current work, whereas individual apologies were found to promote forgiveness, group apologies did not (Philpot & Hornsey, 2008).

The main goal of the present research was to investigate the processes underlying intergroup reconciliation by examining the applicability of the principles of an interpersonal model, the Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008). The Needs-Based Model proposes that successful reconciliation requires that the different emotional needs of victims and perpetrators both be satisfied. According to the model, victims suffer a basic psychological threat to their identity as powerful actors: They generally experience feelings of powerlessness, loss of control (Herman, 1992), and loss of status and honor (Scheff, 1994). In contrast, perpetrators experience a threat to their identity as moral actors: They generally suffer from moral inferiority (Exline & Baumeister, 2000) and are concerned about being rejected from the moral community to which they belong (Tavuchis, 1991). Within the Needs-Based Model, the dimensions threatened for victims' and perpetrators' identities generally represent social power (the sense of being an autonomous, influential, and esteemed social actor, who is treated justly and whose rights and identity are being respected) and acceptance (the sense of being an acceptable and moral social actor, who is not innately cruel and deserves sympathy and understanding).

The differential threat to victims' and perpetrators' identities arouses corresponding motivations. Victims are motivated to restore their sense of power. A unilateral way to achieve this goal would be to take revenge on their perpetrators (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008). A bilateral way would be to pursue the perpetrators' acknowledgement of their responsibility for causing the injustice, which returns control to victims who may determine whether to cancel the moral "debt" (Minow, 1998). For this reason, victims view issues of justice and historical responsibility as essential to reconciliation (Rouhana, 2004). In addition, perpetrators' expressions of recognition of their victims' achievement and capabilities may restore their status and esteem and thus serve as another form of empowerment (Shnabel, Nadler, Canetti-Nisim, & Ullrich, 2008).

Perpetrators, instead, are motivated to remove the threat to their moral image. A unilateral way to reduce this threat would be to deny the painful consequences of their actions and/or their responsibility for having caused them (Schönbach, 1990). A bilateral way would be to seek forgiveness, empathy for their emotional distress, and understanding of the circumstances that compelled them to act in a socially unacceptable way (Nadler & Liviatan, 2006), or social connections with the victim (e.g., forming friendships). Such responses restore perpetrators' moral image, help them feel "rehumanized" (Staub et al., 2005, p. 328), and affirms them as acceptable social actors despite their transgressions.

Supporting the model, Shnabel and Nadler (2008), who examined various kinds of interpersonal victimization episodes (e.g., an event in which one employee discovered that his or her attractive job in an organization was taken by a fellow worker), found that victims suffered a threat to their sense of power and experienced an enhanced need for power, whereas perpetrators suffered a threat to their moral image and experienced an enhanced need for acceptance. In addition, receiving a message of empowerment from their perpetrators increased victims' willingness to reconcile more than receiving a message of acceptance; the opposite pattern was evident for perpetrators, whose willingness to reconcile was higher following a message of acceptance compared to empowerment from their victims.

The main goal of the present research was to extend the Needs-Based Model from the interpersonal to the intergroup level and offer new insights into the dynamics of intergroup reconciliation. Previous theorizing has stressed the importance of internal changes that the parties involved in a conflict should undergo in order to promote reconciliation. Such internal changes may include the removal of the negation of the other as a core element in one's own group identity (Kelman, 2008) or the acknowledgment of the interdependence between one's ingroup and its adversarial outgroup (Kelman, 1999). The Needs-Based Model complements and extends this view by focusing on the interaction between the adversaries (i.e., the exchange of messages between the involved groups) and on the ways in which this interaction may satisfy the basic emotional needs of victims and perpetrators for empowerment and acceptance and thus facilitate reconciliation.

In two studies, we tested the model's main tenet that members of victimized groups would express a greater willingness to reconcile following a message of empowerment from their perpetrators compared to a message of acceptance, whereas members of perpetrating groups would express a greater willingness to reconcile following a message of acceptance from their victims than following a message of empowerment. Both studies

involved historical transgressions so that, unlike previous research on the Needs-Based Model, participants were not personally victimized or responsible for transgressions. Rather, their role as victims or perpetrators was determined by their group affiliation.

Study 1 tested the hypotheses in the context of the relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel, referring to a specific episode in which Arabs were victimized by Jews; Study 2 replicated Study 1 in the context of the relations between Germans and Jews, referring to the events that took place during the Second World War and the Holocaust. Thus, members of the same group (i.e., Jews) were placed in the social role of perpetrators in Study 1 and of victims in Study 2. This complementary aspect of Studies 1 and 2 helps to rule out alternative explanations relating to the unique characteristics of the involved groups.

## STUDY 1

Study 1 was an experiment designed to test the research hypotheses with Israeli-Jewish and Israeli-Arab samples in the context of the 1956 Kefar Kasem killings, in which 43 Israeli-Arab civilians were killed by the Israeli-Jewish border patrol. Although within the general context of Jewish-Arab relations both sides often perceive themselves to be the real victims of the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007), we predicted that within the context of the killings Jews would perceive themselves as the perpetrators whereas Arabs would perceive themselves as the victims.

After indicating their group affiliation (i.e., Jews or Arabs), participants were exposed to two types of quotations, allegedly made by representatives of their outgroup. Participants were told that the quotations conveyed the main messages of speeches held by two Jewish (for Arab participants) or two Arab (for Jewish participants) representatives in an assembly held on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Kefar Kasem killings. The central message conveyed in one speech was the empowerment of participants' ingroup and in the other was the acceptance of the ingroup. The message of empowerment acknowledged participants' ingroup's right for power and self-determination; the message of acceptance conveyed empathy toward participants' ingroup and its emotions and a call for their social acceptance.

We predicted that Arabs, when relating to their victimization in the killings, would perceive themselves as weak, and as a consequence, their willingness to reconcile would be greater following a message of empowerment compared to acceptance from a Jewish representative. Jews, in contrast, were predicted to perceive themselves as morally inferior because of the killings, and thus their

willingness to reconcile would be greater following a message of acceptance compared to empowerment from an Arab representative.

### Method

**Participants.** Participants were recruited by e-mail through snowball sampling to complete a Web-based questionnaire. The final sample included 62 Israeli Jews and 60 Israeli Arabs (79 women, 40 men, 3 did not report their gender; mean age = 33 years). Not included in this sample were 10 participants who did not report their group affiliation or who did not define themselves as either Jewish or Arab.

**Design and procedure.** The study had a  $2 \times 2$  design with 1 between-subjects factor (Social Role of the Ingroup: victims [Arabs] vs. perpetrators [Jews]) and 1 within-subjects factor (Type of Message from the Outgroup: empowerment vs. acceptance). We employed an experimental paradigm that had been successfully used before in a similar context (Nadler & Liviatan, 2006). Participants were told that the study involved responses to the media and that they would be randomly assigned to one of three experimental conditions that depict identical social messages through different media channels (video, audio, and text). Participants were first asked to indicate, among other demographic questions, their group affiliation (i.e., "Arab," "Jew," or "Other").

Following this, we administered questions to evaluate the validity of our assumption that Arab and Jewish participants would feel threat to different dimensions in their group's identity. We hypothesized that Arabs in Israel, the victim in the context of the experimental scenario, would perceive a threat to their group's sense of power, whereas Jews in Israel, the perpetrator in the context of the experimental scenario, would perceive a threat to their group's moral image. To evaluate these dimensions, participants had to evaluate (a) "the influence that the Kefar Kasem killings had on [your ingroup]'s moral image (i.e., the extent to which [your ingroup] is perceived as moral by other nations in the world)" on a 5-point scale ranging from *had a very negative influence* to *had a very positive influence*; and (b) "the influence that the Kefar Kasem killings had on [your ingroup]'s sense of power" on a 5-point scale ranging from *it made the [ingroup] feel much stronger* to *it made the [ingroup] feel much weaker*.

Then, to strengthen our cover story, participants were asked to choose one of three identical buttons to continue the experiment. Supposedly, each of the buttons led to a different media channel; in fact, all participants were assigned to a "text condition." All participants were asked to read two short excerpts allegedly summarizing

the main messages of two speeches held by representatives of the participants' outgroup on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Kefar Kasem killings. The Empowerment message was:

When we [participants' outgroup] discuss harsh and painful events such as the one in Kefar Kasem, we should acknowledge the right of [participants' ingroup] in Israel to be independent and to determine their own fate and future; it is important for us to remember that [participants' ingroup] in Israel have the right to live in respect and with their heads up, and to feel strong and proud in their homeland.

The Acceptance message was:

When we [participants' outgroup] discuss harsh and painful events such as the one in Kefar Kasem, we should understand and accept our brothers the [participants' ingroup]; it is important for us to remember that it is not easy for [participants' ingroup] in Israel to deal with their emotions following the killings and to live with the bloody past and present of our country, and like us they suffered, and are still suffering, an enormous pain.

These two messages were presented side by side, counterbalancing the order across participants. Then, participants were presented with each of the quotations sequentially (in counterbalanced order) and asked their responses in a series of questions about each.

To assess perceptions of empowerment conveyed in each message, participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale (ranging from *not at all* to *very much*) the degree to which each of the following statements would reflect the main idea that the speaker (i.e., the outgroup's representative) had intended to convey to participants' ingroup: (a) [your ingroup, Arabs or Jews] have the right to be strong, (b) [your ingroup] deserve to be self-dependent, (c) we acknowledge [your ingroup's] need to be influential, (d) [your ingroup] should be proud of its nationality. For each of the two messages (empowerment and acceptance), ratings for the four items were averaged to obtain a single measure of perceived empowerment, thus creating two variables: Perceived Empowerment in the Message of Empowerment (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .79$ ) and Perceived Empowerment in the Message of Acceptance (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .89$ ).

To assess perceptions of acceptance conveyed in each message, participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale (ranging from *not at all* to *very much*) the degree to which each of the following statements would reflect the main idea that the speaker (i.e., the outgroup's representative) had intended to convey to participants' ingroup: (a) we accept [your ingroup]; (b) we

understand [your ingroup's] emotions; (c) [your ingroup members] are human beings just like us; (d) we feel empathy toward [your ingroup]. For each message, ratings for the four items were averaged to obtain a single measure of Perceived Acceptance, thus creating two variables: Perceived Acceptance in the Message of Empowerment (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .82$ ) and Perceived Acceptance in the Message of Acceptance (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .86$ ).

*Willingness to Reconcile.* Modeled after Shnabel and Nadler (2008), 10 items measured participants' willingness to reconcile with the outgroup. On a 5-point scale (ranging from *not at all* to *very much*) participants had to indicate the extent to which the message: (a) increases your willingness to act for promoting reconciliation between the nations, (b) increases your willingness to express good will toward the [outgroup], (c) creates a better image of the [outgroup] in your eyes, (d) makes you feel optimistic regarding the future relations between [ingroup] and [outgroup], (e) attests to the [outgroup's] good intentions, (f) increases the proximity between [ingroup] and [outgroup], (g) makes you perceive the [outgroup] as human beings just like the [ingroup], (h) increases your willingness to learn more about the [outgroup's] culture, (i) decreases the tension between [ingroup] and [outgroup], (j) improves the atmosphere between [ingroup] and [outgroup]. For each message, ratings for the ten items were averaged to obtain a single measure of willingness to reconcile, thus creating two variables: willingness to reconcile following a message of empowerment (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .94$ ) and willingness to reconcile following a message of acceptance (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .95$ ).

## Results

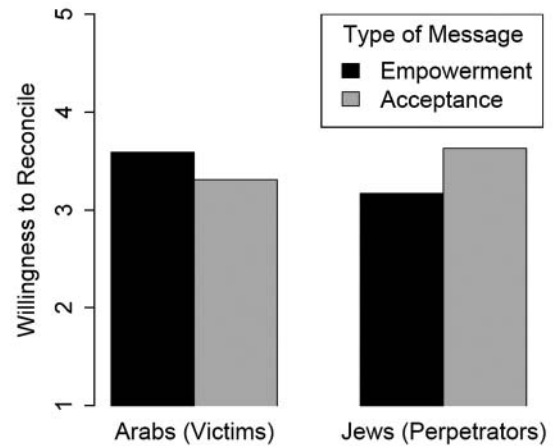
*Preliminary analyses of Social Role.* In order to evaluate our assumption that in the context of the Kefar Kasem killings, Arabs would respond as victims and Jews as perpetrators, we tested the differential identity threats associated with victims and perpetrators. Consistent with our assumption, a 2 (Social Role: perpetrators [Jews] or victims [Arabs])  $\times$  2 (Dimension of Threat: Moral Image and Sense of Power) analysis of variance (ANOVA), with repeated measures on the second independent variable, revealed a Social Role  $\times$  Dimension interaction,  $F(1,117) = 62.52, p < .001, \eta^2 = .35$ . As expected, Jews' Moral Image was significantly lower than that of Arabs,  $M_s = 1.71$  versus  $3.28, t(120) = -7.89, p < .001, d = -1.43$ , and Arabs had a significantly lower Sense of Power than did Jews,  $M_s = 2.25$  versus  $3.02, t(117) = -3.53, p < .001, d = -.65$ .

*Manipulation checks of message content.* A 2 (Social Role: perpetrators [Jews] or victims [Arabs])  $\times$  2 (Message Content: Empowerment and Acceptance)  $\times$  2 (Rating Dimension: Perceived Empowerment and Acceptance) ANOVA, with repeated measures on the latter 2 independent variables, was performed to test the efficacy of the message manipulation. Supporting the intended manipulation of the interpretation of the message, a Message Content  $\times$  Rating Dimension interaction was obtained,  $F(1,118) = 130.69, p < .001, \eta^2 = .53$ . Because the perceptions of empowerment and acceptance were separate dimensions measured with different scales, our analytic contrasts focused on differences within each dimension. Ratings of Perceived Empowerment were higher for the Empowerment message than for the Acceptance message,  $M_s = 4.11$  versus  $2.81, t(119) = 10.72, p < .001, d = .98$ , and ratings of Acceptance were higher for the Acceptance message than for the Empowerment message,  $M_s = 3.83$  versus  $3.29, t(119) = 5.87, p < .001, d = .54$ .

*Willingness to reconcile.* A 2 (Social Role: perpetrators [Jews] or victims [Arabs])  $\times$  2 (Message Content: Empowerment and Acceptance) ANOVA, with repeated measures on the latter variable, was conducted to test the effects of these independent variables on group members' willingness to reconcile. There were no significant main effects but, as predicted, a significant Social Role  $\times$  Message Content interaction was obtained,  $F(1,118) = 15.38, p < .001, \eta^2 = .12$  (See Figure 1). Planned comparisons revealed that, as anticipated, Arabs' willingness to reconcile was greater following a message of empowerment than acceptance,  $M_s = 3.59$  versus  $3.31, t(59) = 1.99, p < .051, d = .26$ , whereas Jews' willingness to reconcile was greater following a message of acceptance than empowerment,  $M_s = 3.63$  versus  $3.17, t(59) = 3.64, p < .001, d = .47$ .

## DISCUSSION

Supportive of the Needs-Based Model, the results of Study 1 demonstrate that the satisfaction of different needs of perpetrators and victims is critical for motivating reconciliation between groups. Messages of empowerment and acceptance from a member of the other group had different effects on willingness for intergroup reconciliation for Arabs, for whom the context of considering events of the Kefar Kasem killings emphasized a threat to their sense of power, and for Jews, for whom the same context aroused feelings of threat to their moral image. Specifically, Arabs had a greater willingness to reconcile following a message of empowerment from the perpetrating group's representatives (i.e., Jews)



**Figure 1** Willingness to Reconcile Following Messages of Empowerment and Acceptance Among Victims (Arabs) and Perpetrators (Jews) of the Kefar Kasem killings.

than following a message of acceptance, whereas Jews had a greater willingness to reconcile following a message of acceptance from the victimized group's representatives (i.e., Arabs) than following a message of empowerment.

It should be noted that the relations between Arabs and Jews are characterized by mutual dehumanization and zero-sum perceptions of intergroup relations (Bar-Tal, 2007). Under such circumstances, any positive gesture made by the outgroup is relatively unexpected and may be perceived as highly conciliatory as it is likely to be judged in the context of negative mutual gestures. Nevertheless, both Arab and Jewish participants reliably differentiated between two highly positive messages, and their pattern of responses was entirely consistent with the Needs-Based Model's predictions.

These findings strengthen the validity of the model in the context of intergroup relations and underscore the reciprocal nature of reconciliation processes: Indeed, the social roles of perpetrator and victims imply fundamental power differences and therefore the common view is that perpetrators are responsible for rectifying the impaired relations by attending to their victims' needs (Shnabel et al., 2008). Yet, perpetrators, too, have needs that may be satisfied by their victims, and consequently both victims and perpetrators have the ability—albeit in different ways—to promote intergroup reconciliation.

Despite the general support for the model, it should be acknowledged that although we consider the use of meaningful real-world groups and identities a particular strength of the present study, a potential drawback of this approach is that we cannot completely rule out alternative explanations. For example, it is possible that

differential cultural values of Jews and Arabs rather than their perpetrator or victim status, respectively, are responsible for the obtained effects. Furthermore, although Study 1 made reference to a historical intergroup transgression, the conflict between Israeli Arabs and Jews is still ongoing, and existing power differences alone might explain the findings. These alternative explanations can be rendered less plausible by studying Jewish participants in the opposite social role (i.e., victims) and comparing their responses to a different outgroup. Therefore, in Study 2 we conceptually replicated Study 1 in the context of the Holocaust during the Second World War. Participants in the experiment were Jews and Germans, representing the victimized and the perpetrating groups, respectively. If, as hypothesized by the Needs-Based Model, social role is the critical factor influencing differential effects to messages of empowerment and acceptance, then Jewish participants in Study 2 would be expected to respond in ways similar to Arabs in Study 1. If, however, cultural differences account for the results of Study 1, Jewish participants in Studies 1 and 2 would be expected to show similar effects.

## STUDY 2

Study 2 conceptually replicated Study 1 in the context of the Second World War, in which Jews were victimized by Germans. Relating to this historical conflict, the goals of Study 2 were to (a) demonstrate the generalizability of our findings by testing the same hypotheses in a different context of intergroup transgression than that employed in Study 1, and (b) rule out the alternative explanations for the findings of Study 1 attributable to cultural values that are specific to the groups examined in Study 1 or to the existing power differences between them.

We predicted that within the context of the Second World War, Germans would perceive themselves as the perpetrators and suffer from a threat to their moral image, whereas Jews would perceive themselves as the victims and suffer from a threatened sense of power. Consequently, our main prediction was that Germans' willingness to reconcile would be higher following a message of acceptance compared to empowerment from a Jewish representative. In contrast, Jews' willingness to reconcile was expected to be higher following a message of empowerment compared to acceptance from a German representative.

### Method

*Participants.* As in Study 1, participants in Germany and Israel were recruited by e-mail through snowball sampling. Only German participants who were non-Jewish

and Jewish participants who were non-German were included for analysis in the study; two Jewish-German participants were excluded. The final sample of participants consisted of 56 Germans and 65 Israeli-Jews (81 women, 40 men; mean age = 30 years).

*Design and procedure.* In general, the experimental design and procedure matched the one used in Study 1 except for the following changes: (a) For participants in Germany, the questionnaire was in German, and for participants in Israel, it was in Hebrew; (b) participants were told that the quotations to which they were exposed conveyed the main messages of speeches held by two outgroup representatives (i.e., Germans or Jews) at a public conference that focused on the issue of past and present German-Jewish relations; and (c) the content of the messages was adjusted to the German-Jewish context. The Acceptance message was:

We, the [participants' outgroup], should accept the [participants' ingroup] and remember that we are all human beings. We should understand that it is not easy for the [participants' ingroup] to live with the past and that the [participants' ingroup] had suffered great pain under the Nazi-regime.

The Empowerment message was:

We, the [participants' outgroup], should cherish the contribution of the [participants' ingroup] to humanity and western culture in many fields of life. We should remember that nowadays, it is the [participants' ingroup's] right to be strong and proud in their country and have the power to determine their own fate.

Similarly to Study 1, as a check on the Social Role of the Ingroup, participants were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale the influence that the Second World War had on their ingroup's (a) moral image and (b) sense of power.

All the other measures were exactly the same as in Study 1: Perceived Empowerment in the Message of Empowerment (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .68$ ), Perceived Empowerment in the Message of Acceptance (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .81$ ), Perceived Acceptance in the Message of Empowerment (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .75$ ), Perceived Acceptance in the Message of Acceptance (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .82$ ), and Willingness to Reconcile following a message of empowerment (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .91$ ) and following a message of acceptance (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .94$ ).

### Results

*Preliminary analyses of Social Role.* It was hypothesized in this context, which emphasized "past and present German-Jewish relations," Jews would respond as victims and Germans as perpetrators. Consistent with

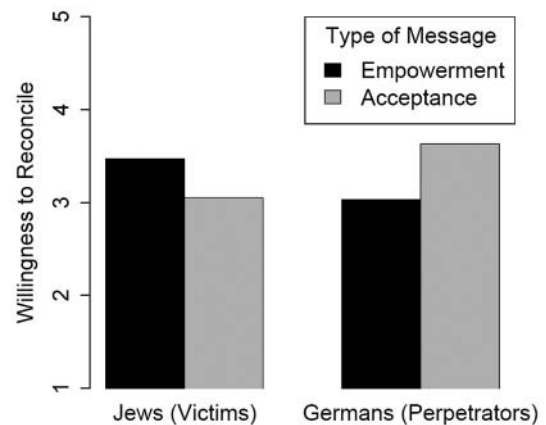
the assumed identity threats associated with the different social roles, a 2 (Social Role of the Participants' Ingroup: perpetrators [Germans] or victims [Jews])  $\times$  2 (Dimension of Threat: Moral Image and Sense of Power) ANOVA, with repeated measures on the second independent variable, revealed a Social Role  $\times$  Dimension interaction,  $F(1,116) = 25.19, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18$ . As expected, Germans' Moral Image was significantly lower than that of Jews,  $M_s = 2.48$  versus  $3.57, t(118) = -5.31, p < .001, d = -.97$ , and Jews had a marginally significant lower Sense of Power than did Germans,  $M_s = 1.84$  versus  $2.25, t(117) = -1.87, p < .065, d = -.34$ .

*Manipulation checks of message content.* The 2 (Social Role: perpetrators [Germans] and victims [Jews])  $\times$  2 (Message Content: Empowerment and Acceptance)  $\times$  Rating Dimension (Perceived Empowerment and Acceptance) ANOVA, with repeated measures on the last two independent variables, demonstrated the expected Message Content  $\times$  Rating Dimension interaction,  $F(1,119) = 192.14, p < .001, \eta^2 = .62$ . Ratings of perceived empowerment were higher for the empowerment message than for the acceptance message,  $M_s = 3.89$  versus  $2.30, t(120) = 14.74, p < .001, d = 1.34$ . Conversely, ratings of perceived acceptance were higher for the acceptance message than for the empowerment message,  $M_s = 3.71$  versus  $2.87, t(120) = 7.67, p < .001, d = .70$ .

*Willingness to Reconcile.* As in Study 1, a 2 (Social Role: perpetrators [Germans] or victims [Jews])  $\times$  2 (Message Content: Empowerment and Acceptance) ANOVA, with repeated measures on the latter variable, was performed to test the effects of these independent variables on group members' Willingness to Reconcile. No significant main effects were obtained, but, as expected, a significant Social Role  $\times$  Message Content interaction was revealed,  $F(1,119) = 28.13, p < .001, \eta^2 = .19$ . Figure 2 presents the means of willingness to reconcile following messages of empowerment and acceptance for both groups. As predicted, Jews' Willingness to Reconcile was greater following a message of empowerment than acceptance,  $M_s = 3.47$  versus  $3.05, t(64) = 2.97, p < .005, d = .37$ . In contrast, Germans' Willingness to Reconcile was greater following a message of acceptance than empowerment,  $M_s = 3.63$  versus  $3.03, t(55) = 4.77, p < .001, d = .64$ .<sup>3</sup>

### Discussion

In general, the results of Study 2 replicate the findings of Study 1 regarding the factors that influence the willingness of groups in different social roles (i.e., victims vs. perpetrators) to reconcile. In line with the predictions of the Needs-Based Model, Study 2 demonstrated



**Figure 2** Willingness to Reconcile Following Messages of Empowerment and Acceptance Among Victims (Jews) and Perpetrators (Germans) of the Holocaust.

that victims and perpetrators suffer from different threats to their identities and show a different pattern of responses to conciliatory messages conveyed by representatives of the other group. Specifically, Jewish participants experienced a threat to their sense of power (consistent with their group's victim role in the context of the experiment). Accordingly, they had a higher willingness to reconcile following a message of empowerment from a German representative than following a message of acceptance. In contrast, German participants experienced a threat to their moral image (consistent with their groups' perpetrator role in the context of the experiment). Accordingly, they had a greater willingness to reconcile following a message of acceptance from a Jewish representative than following a message of empowerment. Again, these findings point to the potential mutual contribution of both victimized and perpetrating groups to the improvement of intergroup relations.

### GENERAL DISCUSSION

In line with the Needs-Based Model (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008), which previously considered only interpersonal transgressions, the present research supports the hypothesis that victimized group members experience a threat over their ingroup's sense of power and respond more positively to a message of empowerment than to a message of acceptance from the perpetrating group, whereas members of perpetrator groups experience a threat over their ingroup's moral image and respond more positively to a message of acceptance than to a message of empowerment from the victimized group. Although both messages of acceptance

and empowerment are highly positive, particularly in the contexts of intergroup conflict, group members reliably differentiated between them in a way that is consistent with the predictions of the Needs-Based Model. The current research thus extends previous work on the Needs-Based Model by demonstrating that the basic principles outlined in the model apply to intergroup reconciliation even when participants were not personally involved in the original intergroup transgression and complements previous research on intergroup reconciliation (Kelman, 2008) by underscoring the reciprocal nature of reconciliation and revealing how both victimized and perpetrating groups can contribute in their interaction to the promotion of reconciliation.

The generalizability of our findings for intergroup reconciliation processes is underscored by the different contexts of victimization episodes in which the hypotheses were tested—the Kfar Kassem killings (Study 1) and the Holocaust (Study 2)—which differ on several dimensions, such as whether the victimization is a part of an ongoing or historical conflict, whether meaningful power differences between the groups still exist in the present, and whether the groups involved share a common identity (i.e., the Israeli identity for Arabs and Jews). In addition, the fact that the responses of members of the same group—Israeli Jews—varied systematically, and as predicted, by the group's social role within each context shows the robustness of the effects and helps to rule out alternative explanations relating to pre-existing differences between the groups (e.g., differences in cultural values).

The support provided by the present research for the hypothesized extension of the Needs-Based Model from interpersonal transgression to intergroup relations suggests a number of promising new avenues for future research. Future work, for example, might build upon the present findings by exploring more proximal mediators of willingness for reconciliation. That is, messages of acceptance for members of perpetrator groups and messages of empowerment for members of victimized groups may both operate to increase willingness to reconcile by relieving feelings of intergroup threat. Intergroup threat is a critical impediment to positive intergroup relations (Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006). Acceptance signals that members of the perpetrator group have repaid their "moral debt" and thus removes substantial threat to their collective esteem; empowerment of members of victimized groups increases their experienced and actual efficacy and sense of control. Thus, additional research on this topic might consider additional measures, such as intergroup threat and anxiety, to illuminate more comprehensively the psychological processes that further mediate how messages of acceptance and empowerment can facilitate more harmonious intergroup relations.

Another possibly fruitful direction would be to examine the different ways messages can convey social empowerment and acceptance. Based on the Resource Theory (Foa & Foa, 1980), the concepts of empowerment and acceptance are broadly defined. For example, the empowerment of a group may be achieved through expressions of responsibility for causing it injustice (Minow, 1998), acknowledgement of its rights for self-determination, praise for its achievements, or respect to its culture and values (see Shnabel et al., 2008). Similarly, the acceptance of a group may be manifested through expressions of empathy, sympathy, and understanding of its perspective (Nadler & Liviatan, 2006), validation of its emotions, or willingness for economic or cultural cooperation with it (Shnabel et al., 2008). The understanding that empowerment and acceptance are basic psychological resources that may be manifested in many different ways makes the Needs-Based Model parsimonious and applicable to many different contexts. Yet, it remains for future research to determine the effectiveness of different manifestations of empowerment and acceptance in different contexts.

The literature on the role of third parties in negotiation and conflict resolution suggests another direction for research on this topic. That literature demonstrates that the involvement of a third party generally facilitates a quicker and more effective process of conflict settlement and resolution (Rubin, 1980). However, given the particular needs of members of perpetrator and victimized groups from the perspective of the Needs-Based Model, the effectiveness of third parties for supplying messages of acceptance and empowerment may be more limited in achieving reconciliation. According to Resources Theory (Foa & Foa, 1980), some of the resources that are exchanged in social interactions are more fungible and can more easily be supplied by different sources. For example, money and sources of money (e.g., a bank teller) are highly fungible, whereas love and its sources (e.g., a romantic partner) are not. Because Resources Theory suggests that acceptance and empowerment, the resources at the heart of the Needs-Based Model, are not generally fungible, it is possible that third parties may be unable to restore the impaired dimensions of the other groups' identities. Based on similar logic, empowering or accepting messages conveyed by an ingroup member (e.g., a political leader trying to remove the threat posed to his/her ingroup's sense of power or moral image) may also be unlikely to achieve this goal. In other words, it is likely that only the members of the relevant outgroup themselves can convey the messages necessary to satisfy each other's emotional resources in a manner that successfully promotes reconciliation. Research on the source of the different messages can thus offer further tests of the Needs-Based Model and contribute to its theoretical refinement.



Another intriguing direction for future research would be testing the Needs-Based Model's validity for the relations between disadvantaged and advantaged groups within society. Although the concepts of "disadvantaged" and "advantaged" groups are not identical to those of "victims" and "perpetrators," there are nevertheless similarities to support the assumption that the emotional needs of disadvantaged and advantaged groups' members correspond to those of victims and perpetrators: First, in many cases the disadvantaged group's suffering from lower status in the present (e.g., Blacks or Native Americans in the United States) is caused, at least in part, by the historical actions by the advantaged group. Second, theorizing suggests that inequality between social groups intrinsically entails a relationship in which one group expropriates resources from another (Jackman, 1994). Third, when interacting with each other, disadvantaged group members have the goal of being respected (i.e., a form of empowerment in terms of the Needs-Based Model), whereas advantaged group members have the goal of being liked (i.e., a form of acceptance; Shelton, Richeson, & Vorauer, 2006). These findings were obtained in the context of interpersonal interracial interactions, yet similar motivations for gaining respect and liking may operate at the collective level.

Future research might also productively examine the moderating effects of ingroup identification on the processes described by the Needs-Based Model. In the present research, supplementary analyses in both Studies 1 and 2 (reported in footnotes 2 and 3) revealed no systematic effects for ingroup identification. The failure to obtain significant results may be methodological (i.e., restricted range due to a ceiling effect) or more theoretically substantive. We note that different theoretical perspectives may suggest different outcomes. Based on self-categorization theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), one would generally expect that high identifiers consider their group's fate as more personally important and experience group-based emotions to a greater extent (Smith, Seger, & Mackie, 2007). Thus, when the responses of perpetrator groups are considered, more highly identified group members would be expected to experience a particularly enhanced need for acceptance and thus be especially influenced in their willingness to reconcile by a message of acceptance from the other group. However, research on the phenomenon of collective guilt (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998) has shown that high identifiers are more likely to react defensively when confronted with their ingroup's wrongdoing, tending to deny its perpetrating role. From this perspective, then, members of the perpetrator group who are high in ingroup identification may be particularly likely to experience a reduced need for acceptance compared to

low identifiers. These contradicting effects may have cancelled each other in the present research.

To the extent that these different processes may be operating simultaneously, additional research might directly investigate the potentially separate effects of two distinct aspects of ingroup identification, attachment and glorification (Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2004).<sup>4</sup> For instance, whereas stronger identification in the form of attachment to the perpetrator group may relate to more prototypical responses and therefore greater responsiveness to a message of acceptance from the other group, stronger identification in terms of glorification may relate to greater denial of ingroup transgression, leading them to be less affected by a message of acceptance. This more differentiated perspective on ingroup identification has the potential to offer additional insights for extending the Needs-Based Model to understand intergroup relations.

In conclusion, understanding the factors that help to repair relationships between victimized and perpetrating groups has both theoretical and practical implications for the fields of conflict resolution and reconciliation. First, the focus of the current research on the emotional motivations underlying reconciliation processes follows an extended period during which these motivations were neglected in favor of more instrumental concerns (e.g., maximization of outcomes; Rusbult & Van Lange, 1996). Our findings suggest that, in addition to focusing on the instrumental aspects of the conflict, it is important that the different emotional needs of the involved parties be addressed, too.

Second, it is valuable to consider the unique as well as the common needs of members of different groups. With respect to common needs, increasing trust (e.g., Maoz & Bar-On, 2002), encouraging mutual expressions of empathy (e.g., Staub et al., 2005), and addressing the basic need for security (Kelman, 2004) can increase motivations for reconciliation among members of both perpetrator and victimized groups. For example, ancillary analyses (reported in footnotes 2 and 3) revealed that, in both studies of the present research, participants who had greater levels of trust in the outgroup were more willing to reconcile, regardless of their social role or the type of message received from the representative of the other group. Nevertheless, the present research also suggests that there are benefits, over and above the effects of these general influences, of meeting the unique emotional needs of victims and perpetrators. Therefore, interventions that stress one element (e.g., encouragement of mutual acceptance) but neglect the other (e.g., discussing historical injustice, which may empower the victims) may leave the needs of one group at least partially unsatisfied and reduce the likelihood of genuine and enduring reconciliation.

## NOTES

1. The inconsistencies in degrees of freedom for the 2 *t*-tests stem from 3 missing values obtained for the Sense of Power but not for the Moral Image measurement. The same reason (i.e., missing values) is responsible for other apparent inconsistencies in degrees of freedom.

2. Supplementary analyses included additional measures that were available for each participant and revealed that, overall, participants who reported greater trust in the outgroup and who perceived having positive relations with the outgroup as more important for the well being of their ingroup had greater willingness to reconcile with the other group. Ingroup identification had no main or moderating effects. The Social Role  $\times$  Message Content effect on willingness to reconcile, the result of primary interest, remained significant when simultaneously considering these other variables. Details of these measures and analyses are available from the first author.

3. As in Study 1, supplementary analyses revealed that greater trust in the outgroup and greater importance of positive relations with the outgroup predicted greater willingness to reconcile with the other group, whereas there were no significant effects associate with level of ingroup identification. The Social Role  $\times$  Message Content interaction for willingness to reconcile again remained significant even when these predictors were considered simultaneously.

4. We measured ingroup identification as a unitary construct using 5 items from established identification scales (Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995; Mael & Ashforth, 1992): (a) I identify with the [ingroup]; (b) When I talk about the [ingroup], I usually say "we" rather than "they"; (c) When someone praises the [ingroup], it feels like a personal compliment; (d) When a story in the media criticizes the [ingroup], I feel embarrassed; (e) I feel strong ties with the [ingroup].

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