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A Needs-Based Level of Construal: Members of Perceived Victim and Perpetrator Groups Prefer to Represent Transgressions at Different Levels of Abstraction

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Informed by the needs-based model of reconciliation, we hypothesized that members of perceived perpetrator groups would prefer more abstract representations of historical or present transgressions than members of perceived victim groups. Six lab experiments (total $N = 2,363$; preregistered) and one study that examined the language used in Twitter posts (1,496 tweets; preregistered) supported this hypothesis across different intergroup contexts: the Holocaust (Jews and Germans), the war in Ukraine (Ukrainian and Russian official news agencies), and the massacres in Kafr Qasim and Ma'ale Akrabim (Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel). This effect was topic-specific (Study 1), ruling out cultural differences as an alternative explanation. Random assignment of participants to a context in which their in-group was the perpetrator or victim strengthened causal inference (Jewish Israelis in Study 3). Moreover, the different representation preferences were associated with perceived perpetrator (victim) group members' need to restore their in-group's moral (agentic) identity (Studies 3 and 4), and affirming these identity dimensions reduced the discrepancy in the representation preferences of members of perceived victim and perpetrator group (Study 5). Yielding evidence for important downstream consequences, members of perceived perpetrator and victim groups were readier to reconcile with out-group members who shared (vs. did not share) their representation preferences (Study 6), which was associated with need satisfaction (Study 7). Practical implications are discussed pertaining to the representation of transgressions in real-life contexts such as history books, memorials, museums, or news reports.

Keywords: the needs-based model, intergroup transgressions, reconciliation, abstraction level, collective victimhood

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> Priceless objects provide the visitor with a personal experience with the past. One cannot view Harriet Tubman's shawl, Nat Turner's Bible, the small shackles made for the fragile ankles of a child, or a slave cabin without contemplating the individuals who owned or encountered such objects. Such powerful artifacts bring to life the stories of inhumanity and terror, and of resistance, resilience and survival. (text retrieved from the Smithsonian's exhibition Freedom and Slavery; https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/exhibitions/slavery-and-freedom)

When commemorating historical atrocities, or when discussing contemporary events of mass violence, history books, and news reports can present statistics and factual information that focus on "the bigger picture" (e.g., number of casualties, geopolitical, and economic factors leading to the eruption of violence), and memorials or museums can convey and focus on abstract notions related to war, violence, human suffering, or the need to put them to an end. For example, the reconciliation sculptures, identical bronze statues depicting two characters kneeling and hugging which are placed in Belfast, Coventry, Hiroshima, and Berlin, signify the reunion of nations that had been fighting.

Alternatively, history books, news reports, and memorials or museums can focus on concrete details and personal testimonies.

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For example, as illustrated in the epigraph, the Smithsonian's exhibition Freedom and Slavery exposes visitors to concrete objects such as shackles made for children's ankles with the goal of bringing the individual experiences of victims of slavery to life. Similarly, the "Stolpersteine" (stumbling stones) placed in almost every German city or the Children's Peace monument in Hiroshima brings the stories of individual victims to the fore. In the context of an ongoing (rather than a historical) conflict, the Ukrinform (Ukrainian national news agency) has published a diary-like report presenting detailed descriptions of life under permanent shelling in the city of Mariupol (Sukhorukova, 2022).

The purpose of the present research was to examine whether preferences for the abstraction level at which the atrocity is represented vary systematically based on whether one's group is perceived as the victim or the perpetrator of that specific atrocity. Note that we use the terms "perceived victim group" and "perceived perpetrator group" in relation to a specific transgression, and do not mean it as a permanent characteristic of any group. For example, Protestants in Northern Ireland may be perceived as members of the perpetrator group in the context of "bloody Sunday" and of the victim group in the context of "bloody Friday."

Previous research on the systematic differences between how members of perceived victim and perpetrator groups prefer to represent the transgressions revealed that members of perceived victim groups prefer more negative representations as compared to members of perceived perpetrator groups. These include whether responsibility for the harm is placed on the perpetrator group as a whole or on a deviant subgroup of individuals who are atypical of the group (e.g., the Nazi party, rather than the general German population; Dresler-Hawke, 2005) as well as the terminology used to refer to the transgressions. For example, members of perceived victim groups might refer to collective violence as "ethnic cleansing," whereas members of the perceived perpetrator group might refer to the same event as "intercommunal warfare" (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2019).

To extend our understanding of the discrepancies between perceived victim and perpetrator groups' representation preferences, the present research examined another way in which they diverge: whether abstract or concrete representations of the events are preferred. Because abstraction is a process of information reduction that captures "the invariant central characteristics of a thing" (Burgoon et al., 2013, p. 502), more abstract representations of an atrocity would be less specific, detailed, vivid, and imageable than concrete representations of the same event (Strack et al., 1985). Notably, abstract representations are not necessarily less negative than concrete representations. For example, the suffering of an individual victim is not less severe than the suffering of thousands of victims, and defining the Rwandan genocide as "a crime against humanity" does not imply less severity than defining it as "a crime against the Tutsi" (a particular, concrete group; see Vollhardt, 2013). Nevertheless, we hypothesized that members of perceived perpetrator groups would prefer more abstract representations of the transgression than members of perceived victim groups.

Members of Perceived Victim and Perpetrator Groups Have Different Identity Needs

Informed by the theoretical framework of the needs-based model of reconciliation (Shnabel et al., 2023), the divergent representation preferences of members of perceived victim and perpetrator groups were theorized to stem from their different identity-related needs. According to theorizing about the "big two," there are two fundamental identity dimensions—the moral–social and the agency dimensions—along which social targets are perceived and judged (e.g., Abele & Wojciszke, 2013). Building on this theorizing, the needs-based model of reconciliation argues that when reminded of the transgression members of perceived historical or present perpetrator groups experience a threat to their group's moral identity, whereas members of perceived historical or present victim groups experience a threat to their group's agentic identity. Because group members are generally motivated to maintain a positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), the experience of these identity threats arouses different motivational states: Members of perceived present or historical perpetrator groups experience a heightened need for moral and social *acceptance* (i.e., wish to restore their positive moral identity and feel reaccepted to the community from which they feel potentially excluded because of their in-group's deeds), whereas members of perceived present or historical victim groups experience a heightened need for *empowerment* (i.e., wish to restore their agentic identity).

Perceived perpetrator group members' heightened need to restore their in-group's moral identity can translate into either defensive attempts to protect their group's moral image (e.g., by moral disengagement, Bandura, 1999) or genuine remorse and efforts to improve their in-group's moral conduct and even gain the perceived victim group's forgiveness (Hässler et al., 2019; see also Allpress et al., 2014, for defensive [reputational] vs. nondefensive moral shame). As for members of perceived victim groups, besides taking vengeance, a major way through which their heightened need to restore their sense of agency can be addressed is by having the perceived perpetrator group acknowledge the perceived victim group's suffering and injustice and express guilt and remorse. Such acknowledgment creates a "moral debt" (Minow, 1998) that only the perceived victim group can cancel, thus returning control to its hands. Perceived perpetrator group members' acknowledgment of the perceived victim group's suffering also facilitates measures, such as restorative policies, which empower the perceived victim group by providing its members resources to determine their own outcomes and allowing their voices to be heard.

The divergent needs of perceived victim and perpetrator group members, which have been established in various contexts of intergroup transgressions (Aydin et al., 2019), become particularly pronounced when facing members of the out-group.

Illustrating this, a study by Bergsieker et al. (2010) examined the divergent needs of Black and White American participants during interracial interactions, shaped by the history of slavery and enduring racism against Black Americans in the United States. The findings revealed that Black Americans' wish to be respected and reassure their agentic identity and Whites' wish to be liked and reassure their moral identity were more pronounced in interracial than in intraracial interactions. In another study, Swiss citizens who felt victimized by European Union sanctions imposed on their country (following a referendum limiting immigration to Switzerland) showed a heightened need for agency vis-à-vis the European Union, but not vis-à-vis other groups (SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., 2018). But why should the different needs of perceived perpetrator and victim group members translate into divergent representation preferences of the transgression? We

suggest that, through several mechanisms, abstract representations serve perceived perpetrator group members' need for morality, while concrete representations serve perceived victim group members' need for agency.

The Need for Morality and the Preference for Abstract Representations

Regarding members of perceived historical perpetrator groups, previous research revealed that they may attempt to defend their group's moral image through temporal distancing. This may be achieved by arguing that it is time to leave the past behind (Imhoff et al., 2013) and depicting the transgression as having taken place in the more remote, even ancient, history (Peetz et al., 2010). Supporting the possibility that such temporal distancing serves to protect the moral image of members of perceived historical perpetrator groups is the finding that when the threat to their in-group's moral identity was alleviated, members of a perceived historical perpetrator group viewed the transgressions as temporally closer. Specifically, when referring to the Holocaust, affirming German participants' in-group's moral identity through reminding them of Germany's reparation attempts (e.g., in erecting hundreds of memorials to keep the memory of the victims alive) resulted in their perception of the Holocaust as closer in time to the present; affirmed German participants also reported greater willingness to amendments as compared to participants whose in-group's moral identity was not affirmed (Peetz et al., 2010). According to construal level theory, abstract representations, which are more general and less detailed, produce a sense of psychological distance from an event in time, space, social distance, and hypotheticality (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Therefore, we argue that like temporal distancing, abstract representations of the transgression can also serve the goal of defending the in-group's moral image in the face of past or present wrongdoings.

Second, abstract representations can lead to the perception of transgression as more common and less unique. For example, describing the victimization of Native Canadians as something that humans did to humans, rather than as something that Caucasian Canadians did to Native Canadians (the latter being a more concrete representation, because it refers to particular victim and perpetrator groups) increased participants' perceived pervasiveness of intergroup harm, which led to the assignment of less collective guilt to the perpetrator group (Wohl & Branscombe, 2005). In the same vein, using human categorization (rather than particular group categories) reduced White Australians' empathy toward the victims of the Stolen Generations (the forceful removal of Indigenous Australian children from their families), thereby increasing their expectation for forgiveness (Greenaway et al., 2012).

Finally, abstract representations may facilitate perceived perpetrators' attempts to defend their in-group's moral identity by diverting attention from historical transgressions and their contemporary implications. For example, compared to Black-majority schools in the United States, White-majority schools were found to use more abstract representations of Black History Month, focusing on larger issues of cultural diversity rather than specifically on "Black history," thereby diverting attention away from the historical victimization and discrimination of Black people in America (Salter & Adams, 2016). We therefore predicted that perceived perpetrator group members' defensive need to protect their group's moral image should associate with a stronger preference for abstract representations of the group's wrongdoing—as opposed to their genuine, nondefensive wish to improve their in-group's moral conduct, which should associate with a weaker preference for abstract representations.

The Need for Agency and the Preference for Concrete Representations

Our hypothesis that perceived victim group members' need for agency should translate into a preference for concrete representations of the transgression might seem, at first glance, counterintuitive. When a transgression is described and thought of in concrete terms, dwelling on the details, it is experienced as if it is relived, evoking stronger emotional reactions (Strack et al., 1985; Wenzel & Coughlin, 2020). One could imagine, thus, that exposure to detailed descriptions of the victims' suffering, such as through listening to personal testimonies of survivors, would lead perceived victim group members to feel vulnerable and helpless. Nevertheless, several lines of theorizing and research led us to predict that perceived victim group members would experience such concrete representations as empowering vis-à-vis the perceived perpetrator group; that is, when knowing that members of the perceived perpetrator group are also exposed to these representations.

First, to be absolved of responsibility, perceived historical perpetrator groups may undermine the reliability of the perceived victim group's accusations (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2019). Concrete representations are considered more evidential and judged as more likely to be true than abstract representations (Hansen & Wänke, 2010) and may therefore promote perceived perpetrator group members' acknowledgment of the wrongdoings. Second, concrete descriptions are imagined more vividly than abstract descriptions (Hansen & Wänke, 2010). Therefore, when using more concrete terms to describe the transgression (e.g., "Armenians were shot, stabbed and beaten to death by Ottoman soldiers" vs. "Armenians were murdered by the Ottomans"), the victims' suffering can be imagined more vividly. As a result, concrete representations can encourage members of perceived historical perpetrator groups to acknowledge collective victimization at a higher level (Twali et al., 2020). That is, to move beyond a factual acknowledgment of the wrongdoings to an empathic acknowledgment of the suffering experienced by victims—which is empowering to the perceived victim group (Shnabel et al., 2023).

Third, perceived victim group members tend to draw a direct link between historical victimization and present-day conditions. For example, Black Americans view the history of slavery as more relevant to current interracial relations than White Americans do (Ditlmann et al., 2017). As concrete representations reduce perceived temporal distance (Trope & Liberman, 2010), they bring historic transgressions psychologically closer to the "here and now," emphasizing that the perceived perpetrator group's responsibility to atone for the past still lingers. Finally, concrete representations may address perceived victim group members' need for agency, which encompasses their need to voice their suffering (Bruneau & Saxe, 2012), because they include detailed information that emphasizes the victims' suffering (whereas information reduction is a critical component of abstraction, Shapira et al., 2012). To illustrate, statistics concerning the number of men, women, and children killed in massacre lack information about how exactly they were killed, which can be found in a survivor's testimony describing a specific

child who was shot from zero range. Moreover, reverberating the notion that "a single death is a tragedy, but a million deaths is a statistic" (see also "the identifiable victim" effect; Lee & Feeley, 2016)—concrete, detailed, vivid representations of the transgression are likely to elicit perceived perpetrator group members' guilt more than abstract, general, remote representations. Perceived perpetrator group members' experience of guilt, in turn, should lead to their acknowledgment of the injustice caused by their in-group and taking steps toward restoration (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2011)—which is empowering the perceived victim group. Based on these reasons, we predicted that perceived victim group members' wish to restore their sense of agency (i.e., need for empowerment) would be associated with a stronger preference to expose perceived perpetrator group members to concrete representations.

Reducing the Discrepancy in Preferences Through Identity Affirmation

We further theorized that, if perceived perpetrator and victim group members' divergent representation preferences indeed stem from their different identity needs, then addressing these needs should lead to weaker preferences for concrete (abstract) representations among members of the perceived victim (perpetrator) groups. Regarding members of perceived perpetrator groups, in interracial dyads discussing the legacy of slavery in the United States, White participants were readier to engage with Black history in response to messages conveying moral acceptance by Black participants (Ditlmann et al., 2017). Moreover, affirming Germans' moral identity through reminding them of the atonement efforts made by their in-group reduced their moral defensiveness and made them perceive the Holocaust as temporally closer to the present (Peetz et al., 2010). We hypothesized that affirming a perceived perpetrator group's moral identity should similarly attenuate its members' preference for abstract representations of the transgression. Applying the same logic to the perceived victim group, we hypothesized that affirming its agentic identity (which could be achieved through empowering messages from the perceived perpetrator group; Shnabel et al., 2009, or agency affirmation exercises; SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., 2018) should attenuate its members' preference for concrete representations of the transgression. In sum, we hypothesized that removing the threats posed to perceived victim and perpetrator group members' social identities should decrease the discrepancy between their representation preferences.

Discrepancy in Representation Preferences May Hinder Reconciliation

Research on groups' narratives (i.e., interpretational perspectives through which group members perceive the reality; Hammack & Pilecki, 2012) tells us that reconciliation is hindered when members of conflicting groups hold discrepant narratives of the historical transgression(s) (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2019). We theorized that the discrepancy in perceived perpetrator and victim group members' representation preferences might have a similar effect, such that group members would show lower readiness to reconcile with out-group members whose preferences do not align with their own. We reasoned that perceived perpetrator group members would perceive perceived victim group members who prefer more concrete representations of the transgression, which are more vivid and evoke stronger emotional responses (e.g., Wenzel & Coughlin, 2020), as more condemning of the perpetrator group than perceived victim group members who prefer more abstract representations. Because group members' perception that their in-group is morally condemned by out-group members is associated with a more negative attitude toward this out-group (Hässler et al., 2022), we hypothesized that members of perceived perpetrator groups would show a lower willingness to reconcile with perceived victim group members who prefer concrete (vs. abstract) representations of the transgression.

As for perceived victim group members, because abstract representations are associated with greater psychological distance (Trope & Liberman, 2010) and emotional detachment (Wenzel & Coughlin, 2020), we reasoned that they would perceive perceived perpetrator group members who prefer more abstract (vs. concrete) representations of the transgression as less willing to engage with the harm caused to the victim group. Perceived perpetrator group members' willingness to engage with the harm caused by their in-group is empowering to the perceived victim group (see Ditlmann et al., 2017), and perceived victim group members' perception that members of their out-group are willing to engage with their suffering opens them up to reconciliation (see Bruneau & Saxe, 2012). Therefore, we hypothesized that perceived members of victim groups would show greater willingness to reconcile with perceived perpetrator group members who prefer concrete (vs. abstract) representations of the transgression.

The Present Research

The present research was designed to test six hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Members of perceived perpetrator groups would prefer more abstract representations of the transgression than members of perceived victim groups.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived victim group members' preference for concrete representations would be associated with their need for agency.

Hypothesis 3a: Perceived perpetrator group members' preference for abstract representation would be associated with their defensive need for moral identity.

Hypothesis 3b: Perceived perpetrator group members' preference for abstract representation would be associated negatively with their nondefensive need to improve their moral identity (indicating that their wish for genuine moral improvement associates with a greater "tolerance" for concrete representations that threaten their in-group's moral reputation).

Hypothesis 4: A message from an out-group representative that affirms the perceived perpetrator (victim) group's moral (agentic) identity would result in perceived perpetrator (victim) group members' weaker preference for abstract (concrete) representations of the transgression; therefore, the discrepancy in representation preferences would be smaller among members

of perceived perpetrator and victim groups whose identity was affirmed (vs. not affirmed).

Hypothesis 5: Members of perceived perpetrator (victim) groups would be more willing to reconcile with members of perceived victim (perpetrator) groups who prefer abstract rather than concrete (concrete rather than abstract) representations of the transgression.

Hypothesis 6: Perceived perpetrator (victim) group members' greater willingness to reconcile with out-group members who prefer abstract rather than concrete (concrete rather than abstract) representations of the transgression would be associated with their perceptions of these out-group members as less morally condemning (more empowering) of their in-group.

The hypotheses were tested in seven studies. Hypothesis 1 was tested in Studies 1 and 4 (Germans and Jews referring to the Holocaust), Study 2 (Ukrainian and Russian official news agencies referring to the war in Ukraine), and Study 3 (Israeli Arabs and Jews referring either to the Kafr Qasim or the Ma'ale Akrabim massacre). In addition, Study 1 ruled out cultural differences as an alternative explanation, Study 2 strengthened ecological validity by utilizing a real-life setting, and Study 3 strengthened causal inference by randomly assigning Jewish participants either to the "perpetrator" or "victim" condition (through referring to a historical transgression in which their in-group either victimized or was victimized by Arabs). Hypotheses 2 and 3b were tested in Study 3, Hypothesis 3a was tested in Study 4, and Hypothesis 4 was tested in Study 5 (among Israeli Arabs and Jews). Hypothesis 5 was tested in Study 6 (among German and Jewish participants), which also ruled out cultural differences as an alternative explanation. Finally, Hypotheses 5 and 6 were tested in Study 7 (among Israeli Arab and Jewish participants).

To establish construct validity, in line with Burgoon et al.'s (2013) recommendation, the studies used diverse operationalizations of abstraction level. The first was examining group members' preference for verbal versus pictorial stimuli (e.g., the word "machetes" vs. a picture of machetes). This operationalization is based on Rim et al.'s (2015) argument that verbal representations of things are more abstract than visual representations of the same things. Words provide a symbolic representation of things that transcend a specific context, whereas pictures provide a vivid and detailed representation of specific things at specific times and places.

The second operationalization was evaluating the concreteness level of group members' language, based on the distinction between abstract "language-based" words and concrete "experience-based" words (Vigliocco et al., 2004). Language-based words (e.g., "constituent") are used primarily in text and discourse and are more easily explained by language, whereas experience-based words are primarily acquired through direct experience and are more easily explained by pointing to them (e.g., "fire") or demonstrating them (e.g., "to shot").

As a third operationalization, we examined group members' preference for general facts versus personal testimonies. General facts, such as statistics about historical events, are more abstract, because they encompass the experience of many people while capturing the invariant central characteristics of these events. By contrast, a single person's experiences (e.g., personal testimonies of individuals who lived through historical events) are more concrete, because they focus on idiosyncratic characteristics of these events (Burgoon et al., 2013). Finally, a fourth operationalization of abstraction was through the level of categorization. Mass killings and violence can be categorized either as crimes against humanity or as crimes against a particular group (Vollhardt, 2013). The first categorization can be conceptualized as more abstract, because it refers to a more inclusive and broader social category, whereas the second categorization is more concrete, because it focuses on the distinct social identity of the victim group (Burgoon et al., 2013).

Together, the present set of studies was designed to test, using different contexts and operationalizations, whether (a) there are systematic differences in the abstraction level at which members of perceived victim and perpetrator groups prefer to represent the transgression, (b) these discrepant preferences are associated with different identity needs, and hence addressing these needs can attenuate the discrepancy in preferences, and (c) group members are readier to reconcile with out-group members whose representation preferences are similar to those of their in-group.

Transparency and Openness

The studies were approved by the institutional review board of a large Israeli university. We report how we determined our sample sizes, all data exclusions (if any), all manipulations, and all measures in the studies. Studies 1, 3, and 5–7 were preregistered, and Studies 2 and 4 are registered reports approved in principle before data collection. The preregistrations, registered reports, sensitivity analyses (revealing that in all studies the observed effects exceeded the minimum detectable effect sizes given the recruited sample sizes), data files, and full protocols for all studies including pilot studies and two conceptual replication studies can be accessed through the Open Science Framework (OSF: https://osf.io/9drbe/?view_only=79f711d171a048c5b8449144f089a662; Pesin Michael et al., 2024).

Study 1

The goal of Study 1 was to examine the preferences for the abstraction level at which the transgression is represented among members of perceived historical perpetrator and victim groups. Because group members' divergent identity needs are heightened in intergroup interactions (e.g., Bergsieker et al., 2010), we theorized that perceived victim and perpetrator group members' different representation preferences would be especially pronounced vis-à-vis the out-group, namely, in contexts of communication directed at the out-group (vs. vis-à-vis fellow in-group members). Thus, Study 1 tested the prediction that when members of perceived historical perpetrator and victim groups choose the type of representations (abstract vs. concrete) that should be presented to out-group (vs. in-group) members, members of the perceived historical perpetrator group would choose more abstract representations of the transgression than members of the perceived victim group.

Participants were Germans and (Israeli) Jews referring to the Holocaust. Although over the years Germany has expressed official acknowledgment of moral responsibility for the Holocaust (Wohl et al., 2006), Germans and Jews differ in their attitudes toward its remembrance. Germans are higher in the desire for historical closure (i.e., to "move on") than Jews (Imhoff et al., 2017). Furthermore, 66% of Germans are angry that the crimes of the Holocaust are still held against their group (Hagemann & Nathanson, 2015). By

contrast, the Holocaust serves as a core feature of Jews' identity (Klar et al., 2013), and 98% of Jews consider its remembrance to be a guiding principle of their lives (Arian & Keisser-Sugarmen, 2012).

German and Jewish participants were presented with pairs of Holocaust-related stimuli. These stimuli represented the same content in either picture (a more concrete representation) or text (a more abstract representation), for example, a picture of a Nazi swastika flag versus the text "Nazi swastika flag." For each pair of stimuli, participants had to decide which stimulus (the abstract or the concrete one) should be sent to their out-group to stir a discussion about the Holocaust. The other stimulus was said to be sent to the participants' in-group. We predicted that the number of abstract Holocaust representations that German participants would send to their out-group (i.e., Jews) would be higher than the number of abstract representations that Jewish participants would send to the out-group (i.e., Germans).

Study 1 also aimed to rule out two alternative explanations for the predicted effect. One alternative explanation can be preexisting cultural differences in abstract thinking that are unrelated to the German and Jewish groups' historical roles as perpetrators and victims. For example, Germans may send more abstract Holocaust representation to Jews than the other way around simply, because they have a general preference for abstraction (that may be manifested, e.g., in artistic expression; Hoffmann, 1994), which they wish to share with members of other groups. To rule out this explanation, participants were also presented with pairs of abstract and concrete stimuli related to a neutral topic; namely, studies (e.g., campus and student life). If the "cultural differences" explanation is true, then the effect observed for the Holocaust representations should also be observed for the studies representations. However, if our theorizing is correct, then the predicted effect should be stronger for the Holocaust than for the studies' representations.

A second alternative explanation has to do with the possibility that concrete representations of the transgression may raise stronger emotional responses than abstract representations (Strack et al., 1985; Wenzel & Coughlin, 2020). For example, a picture of children in the Ghetto may elicit more negative feelings than the text "children in the Ghetto." If so, it could be the case that, as members of the historical victim group, Jewish participants would choose to send concrete Holocaust representations to German students simply due to their wish to "take vengeance" on the historical perpetrator group by sending unpleasant stimuli to its members. To rule out this "negativity" explanation, participants were also presented with pairs of stimuli related to the Rwandan genocide. If the negativity explanation was true, then the expected effect should be observed for the Rwandan genocide representations as well (i.e., Jews would send more concrete, unpleasant stimuli to Germans than the other way around). However, if our theorizing was correct, then the predicted effect should be stronger for the Holocaust than the Rwandan genocide representations. That is, Jews would send more concrete Holocaust representations to Germans (than the other way around) not simply because they want to expose them to unpleasant stimuli, but rather because they want to remind them of their moral debt to the Jews—a purpose for which the concrete representations of the Rwandan genocide are irrelevant.

Study 1 had a 2 (group [Germans, Jews]) × 3 (topic [studies, Holocaust, Rwandan genocide]) mixed design. We expected a Group × Topic interaction, such that (a) Germans would send more abstract representations to their out-group than Jews in the Holocaust condition, and (b) this simple effect to be smaller, eliminated, or even reversed in the studies and the Rwandan genocide conditions.

Method

Participants

We recruited 289 Germans and 345 (Israeli) Jews through social media in exchange for a raffle draw. Based on the exclusion criteria specified in the preregistration, in the analysis of the German sample, we excluded participants with a Jewish or Muslim background, whose native language was not German, with a migration background, who participated in a pilot study,[1] who failed the instructional manipulation check (IMC; Oppenheimer et al., 2009) or who reported technical problems (e.g., failure to upload the pictures). Of the Jewish sample, we excluded participants who were not Jewish, whose native language was not Hebrew, or who failed the IMC. Our final sample included 242 Germans (203 women, 33 men, six who chose "other/prefer not to report") and 325 Jews (237 women, 88 men).

All German participants (M_{age} = 25.5, SD = 7.8, range = 18–69) were native speakers of German who were born in Germany and whose parents were also born in Germany. All Jewish participants (M_{age} = 25.8, SD = 6.5, range = 19–73) were native speakers of Hebrew and 94.2% of them were born in Israel (the rest were born in Europe or America). Most of the participants were students (85.1% of the German sample and 81.5% of the Jewish sample).

Procedure

The online study was completed in German (by German participants) and Hebrew (by Jewish participants). As a cover story, participants were informed that the study was designed to select materials whose purpose was to stir up the discussion about various topics in an exchange program between German students from Goethe University Frankfurt and Jewish students from Tel Aviv University. Constituting the experimental manipulation, the topic conditions included the Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide[2] (a context of mass violence in which participants' identities as historic perpetrators or victims were not salient), and studies (a control, neutral topic). Topics were manipulated within participants, in a counterbalanced order.

Within each topic condition, participants were presented with 11 pairs of a picture and a word (displayed in English) that represented the same content. For example, a picture of crematorium versus the word "crematorium" in the Holocaust condition, a picture of machetes versus the word "machetes" in the Rwandan genocide condition, and a picture of textbooks versus the word "textbooks" in the studies' condition; these items are available on the OSF (https://osf.io/9drbe/?view_only=79f711d171a048c5b8449144f089a662); example items are available on the OSF (https://osf.io/9drbe/?vie

[1] The pilots for Studies 1 and 5 were not preregistered and had exploratory purposes (e.g., estimating the effect size). The pilot for Study 1 (n = 202 Germans and n = 185 Jews) supported Hypothesis 1 (see OSF at https://osf.io/9drbe/?view_only=79f711d171a048c5b8449144f089a662).

[2] Since the knowledge of young participants about the Rwandan Genocide might be limited, the study included background information about it (see protocol for Study 1 on the OSF at https://osf.io/9drbe/?view_only=79f711d171a048c5b8449144f089a662 for the full text).

w_only=79f711d171a048c5b8449144f089a662). Beware that the images might be unsettling. For each pair, participants had to choose which stimulus—the picture or the word—should be displayed on presentation slides to be projected in meetings of out-group students, where they would allegedly discuss the different topics in preparation for the exchange program. The other stimulus was said to be sent to the participants' in-group. The number of words (i.e., verbal stimuli) that participants chose to present to out-group students served to assess their *preference for abstract representations*. Additional variables that were collected for exploratory purposes are reported in the preregistration document. Upon completion, participants reported their demographics and were thanked and debriefed.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents means, standard deviations, and correlations between the preference for abstract representations in the three topic conditions for the German and Jewish samples. A repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) tested the effects of group (Germans, Jews) and topic (Holocaust, Rwandan genocide, studies) on the preference for abstract representations. The analysis revealed significant main effects for group, $F(1, 565) = 10.76$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, such that Germans had a stronger preference for abstract representations than Jews, and for topic, $F(1.98, 1{,}121.70) = 8.49$, $p < .001$, Huynh–Feldt, $\eta_p^2 = .02$, such that participants sent more abstract representations to their out-group in the studies than in the Holocaust ($p < .001$) and (marginally) in the Rwandan genocide ($p = .051$) conditions, which did not significantly differ from each other ($p = .22$). As expected, these effects were qualified by the predicted interaction, $F(1.98, 1{,}121.70) = 101.80$, $p < .001$, Huynh–Feldt, $\eta_p^2 = .15$.

To interpret this interaction, presented in Figure 1, we performed independent t tests. As expected, German participants showed a stronger preference for abstract representations than Jewish participants in the Holocaust condition, $t(565) = 9.97$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.85$. In the studies condition, by contrast, Jews showed a stronger preference for abstract representations than Germans, $t(565) = 8.59$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.73$. This disordinal interaction allows ruling out cultural differences (such that, regardless of the topic, Germans have a general preference for more abstract representations of objects than Jews) as an alternative explanation.

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between the Variables of Study 1 Among Germans and Jews

Variable	*M* (*SD*)				
	German	Jew	1	2	3
1. Holocaust	6.5 (2.3)	4.4 (2.6)	—	.04	.23**
2. Rwandan genocide	6.1 (2.3)	5.3 (2.2)	.11*	—	.19**
3. Studies	5.2 (2.2)	6.8 (2.2)	.00	.09	—

Note. Means represent the number of abstract stimuli participants sent to the out-group. Correlations for German participants ($n = 242$) are reported above the diagonal, and for Jewish participants ($n = 325$), below the diagonal.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

In the Rwandan genocide condition, German participants had a stronger preference for abstract representations than Jewish participants, $t(565) = 3.84$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.33$. Thus, German participants generally preferred more abstract representations of genocides than Jews. Nevertheless, our theorizing suggested that these differential preferences should be especially pronounced in the Holocaust condition. To test this possibility, we conducted additional repeated-measures ANOVA with group (Germans, Jews) and topic (Holocaust, Rwandan genocide) on the preference for abstract representations. A significant interaction effect emerged, $F(1, 565) = 25.40$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, such that German participants' greater preference for abstract representations as compared to Jewish participants was stronger in the Holocaust than in the Rwandan genocide condition.

In sum, the results fully supported Study 1's predictions: Members of the perceived historical perpetrator group preferred to send more abstract representations to members of the perceived historical victim group than the other way around, and this effect was most pronounced for representations related to the historical transgression.

Study 2: Registered Report

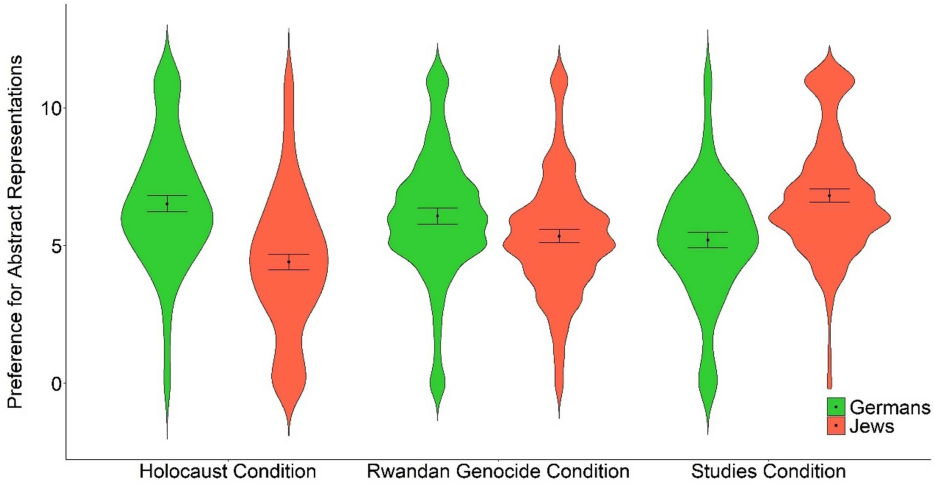
Study 2 had two goals: testing Hypothesis 1 with another operationalization of preference for abstraction level and examining the generalizability of our conclusions to a more naturalistic setting. In Study 1, group members' preference for abstract representations was measured within a controlled and artificial setting, which does not simulate real-life behavior. Doing so strengthens internal validity (i.e., allows to establish causality), yet ecological validity is compromised (Cialdini, 2009). To address this limitation, Study 2 examined the preference for abstraction level by analyzing the natural language used by perceived perpetrator and victim group members when discussing a transgression on social media. Specifically, we examined the language used by Ukrainian and Russian official news agencies when reporting about the war in Ukraine on Twitter (currently rebranded as X). Since Russian forces began their full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Russia has faced allegations of perpetrating war crimes in Ukraine. These include massacres and deliberate missile strikes targeting civilian infrastructure such as residences, hospitals, and educational institutions, as documented by Amnesty International (2022). We predicted that the official Russian news agency, the Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union (TASS), would use more abstract language, which is associated with increased psychological distance (Snefjella & Kuperman, 2015), as compared to the official Ukrainian news agency, Ukrinform, who would use more concrete language, which establishes greater credibility (Hansen & Wänke, 2010).

Method

Using the Python package *tweepy* and the Twitter Application Programming Interface, we collected tweets from the official Twitter accounts in English of TASS and Ukrinform. The search terms were locations or geographical regions within Ukraine that suffered civilian casualties due to Russian attacks, such as Bucha, where Russian military forces massacred hundreds of civilians in March 2022; Kramatorsk, where 63 civilians were killed by a missile attack on its railway station in April 2022; and Kremenchuk, where 21

Figure 1

Violin Plots of the Preference for Abstract Representations as a Function of Topic and Group Identity



Note. $N_{Germans} = 242$; $N_{Jews} = 325$. Points represent means, error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, and the width of density plots represents the frequency of observations. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

civilians were killed when a missile struck a shopping mall in June 2022.

The data collection period spanned from February 24, 2022, to August 28, 2022, which encapsulates the initial 6 months of the ongoing war during which Russia is reported to have committed significant violations of human rights in Ukraine (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2023). We collected 235 tweets from the official Twitter account of TASS and 1,268 tweets from the official account of Ukrinform. Using an independent coder who was not aware of the study's purpose, we excluded four tweets published by TASS and three tweets published by Ukrinform that were unrelated to the war, such as a Ukrinform report about a plane crash in the city of Zaporizhia (Ukraine). The final sample included 231 tweets posted by TASS and 1,265 tweets posted by Ukrinform. To assess the tweets' language concreteness, we used a computational algorithm based on concreteness ratings for a vast lexicon of approximately 40,000 English words, as established by Brysbaert et al. (2014). Using the full text of each tweet, the algorithm evaluates the concreteness level of each word by referencing Brysbaert et al.'s lexicon, assigning a concreteness score ranging from 1 (*higher abstraction level*) to 5 (*higher concreteness level*), and computing the mean concreteness score for each tweet. For example, the tweet "Russian invasion update: Russians fire on apartment block in #Kherson city" posted by Ukrinform received a high concreteness score ($M = 4.2$; evaluating the concreteness level of the words: "apartment," "block," "city," "fire," "invasion," and "update"). By contrast, the tweet "Kherson region intends to accede to Russia soon, becoming its constituent" posted by TASS received a low concreteness score ($M = 2.5$; evaluating the concreteness level of the words: "becoming," "constituent," "region," and "soon").

Results and Discussion

As expected, a linear regression model using news agencies to predict language concreteness revealed that Ukrinform ($M = 3.4$, $SD = 0.6$) used more concrete language than TASS ($M = 3.2$, $SD = 0.4$), $b = 0.19$, $SE = .04$, $t(1,494) = 4.55$, $p > .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$. An additional, preregistered robustness test (e.g., controlling for the total number of words) supported our prediction and is reported in the Supplemental Materials. These results demonstrate that our conclusions can be generalized to real-life settings.

Conceptual Replication

The results of Study 2 were conceptually replicated in a different context using tweets of Black and White members of Congress about George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man who was murdered during an arrest by a White Minneapolis police officer (Hill et al., 2020). As expected, Black Congress members used more concrete language than White Congress members. An example of a tweet with a high concreteness score ($M = 3.8$) is the one posted by William Lacy Clay (a Black Congress member): "Minneapolis ex-officer who knelt on George Floyd's neck is in state custody," whereas an example of a tweet with a low concreteness score ($M = 1.8$) is the one posted by Marsha Blackburn (a White Congress member): "What happened to George Floyd is appalling and justice must be served" (see Supplemental Study 2b). These findings further bolster the generalizability of our conclusions.

Study 3

Study 3 had three goals. The first was to test Hypothesis 1 in a different context and to strengthen causal inference by randomly

assigning Jewish Israelis to either the "victim" or "perpetrator" condition. We referred either to the 1954 Ma'ale Akrabim massacre, in which Jews were victimized by Arabs, or the 1956 Kafr Qasim massacre, in which Arabs were victimized by Jews. Both massacres took place about 70 years ago and involved killing unarmed civilians (see Harth & Shnabel, 2015). These two massacres occurred as part of the larger Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Notably, there is no single narrative of the conflict acceptable to both Israelis and Palestinians, as each side developed its own narrative to account for the past, present, and future of the conflict. In doing so, the in-group's positive self-image is protected while the other's rights, history, and culture are delegitimized (Daoudi & Barakat, 2013). For example, while the Palestinian narrative portrays Zionism as a colonialist movement, the Israeli narrative portrays it as a national movement for Jewish self-determination. Discussing these narratives is beyond the scope of the present research. Interested readers are kindly referred to the dual narrative project, led by the Palestinian social psychologist Sami Adwan and the Israeli social psychologist Dan Bar-On. As part of this project, Palestinian and Israeli history teachers developed a joint school textbook that presents the Palestinian and Israeli narratives of the milestones of the conflict side by -side (see Adwan & Bar-On, 2004).

Note that the purpose of the present research is not to provide an account of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Rather, it aims to provide a general theoretical account of how group members prefer to represent historical transgressions. To achieve this goal, we used the social contexts available to us. Because social identities are fluid and influenced by the social context (Reicher, 2004), we reasoned that by focusing on specific historical massacres in which the roles of victims and perpetrators are clear-cut and clearly distinguishable, we can induce participants belonging to these groups with a sense of either victimization or perpetration—which allowed us to test our theorizing.

Jewish participants were randomly assigned to read about either the Ma'ale Akrabim massacre (perceived as victims' condition) or the Kafr Qasim massacre (perceived as perpetrators' condition). Additional Arab participants were all assigned to read about the Kafr Qasim massacre (perceived as victims' condition).[3] Thus, Study 3 had a three-cell design (condition [Jews as perceived victims, Jews as perceived perpetrators, Arabs as perceived victims]). For the conditions referring to the Kafr Qasim massacre (Jews perceived as perpetrators and Arabs perceived as victims), we expected Jews to prefer more abstract representations of the transgression than Arabs. While the advantage of conducting the abovementioned comparisons is that Jews and Arabs referred to the exact same information, a disadvantage is that any observed group differences could be attributed to preexisting cultural differences in abstract thinking. To rule out this possibility, we also compared Jewish participants in the Ma'ale Akrabim massacre (perceived as victims) and Kafr Qasim massacre (perceived as perpetrators) conditions. We expected Jews in the Kafr Qasim condition to prefer more abstract representations of the transgression than Jews in the Ma'ale Akrabim condition.

The second goal of Study 3 was to extend generalizability by employing different operationalizations of preference for abstraction level, using two tasks in which participants had to design promos for a television (TV) documentary about the massacre. In the first task, the promos included both a picture and a text representing the same content (e.g., victims' dead bodies). Participants indicated whether they preferred a poster with a large picture and a small text (a more concrete representation) or a small picture and a large text (a more abstract representation). In the second task, the promos included descriptions of both a personal testimony (e.g., describing how a specific victim was murdered) and general, statistical facts about the massacre (e.g., mentioning the number of casualties in the massacre). Participants indicated whether they preferred a promo in which the concrete representation (the description of the particular case) is large, whereas the abstract representation (the general facts) is small or the other way around. These tasks were based on Amit et al.'s (2013) procedure, in which participants' preference for abstraction level was assessed by asking them to select the relative size of abstract versus concrete stimuli.

The third goal of Study 3 was to examine the link between-group members' preferences for level of abstraction and their identity needs as specified by the needs-based model (Hypotheses 2 and 3b). For this purpose, we measured participants' needs for agency and morality. For the conditions referring to the Kafr Qasim massacre (Jews perceived as perpetrators and Arabs perceived as victims), we expected to conceptually replicate previous findings within the model's framework, such that Arabs' need for agency would be higher than that of Jews. We further expected that Arabs' need for agency would be associated with a stronger preference for concrete representations. Note that we refer to the "preference for concrete representations" to ease the intuitive understanding of our prediction; another way to put it would be that we expected a negative correlation between Arabs' need for agency and their preference for abstract representations. Finally, we expected Jews to have a higher need for agency in the Ma'ale Akrabim (victim) than in the Kafr Qasim (perpetrator) condition, and Jews' need for agency in the Ma'ale Akrabim (victim) condition to be associated with a stronger preference for concrete representations of the transgression.

As for the need for morality, previous research (see Allpress et al., 2014) has distinguished between *a defensive need for morality*, that is, the experience of image shame and the resulting wish to protect the in-group's moral reputation, and *a nondefensive need for morality*, namely, the experience of essence shame and the resulting wish to improve the in-group's moral conduct. Both the defensive and nondefensive needs for morality were found to be higher among members of perpetrator than victim groups (Hässler et al., 2019). Nevertheless, perpetrator group members' defensive need for morality was associated with a *negative* orientation toward the out-group, whereas the nondefensive need for morality was associated with a *positive* orientation (Allpress et al., 2014). In Study 3, we measured participants' nondefensive need for morality (e.g., experience of guilt and wish for moral improvement). For the conditions referring to the Kafr Qasim massacre (Jews perceived as perpetrators; Arabs perceived as victims), we predicted this need to be higher among Jews than among Arabs (consistent with Hässler et al., 2019). We further predicted that Jews' nondefensive need for morality would be associated with a weaker preference for abstract representations. Put differently, Jews with a stronger nondefensive

[3] Ideally, Arab participants should have been randomly assigned either to the perpetrator or to the victim condition (as Jewish participants were). However, because of the difficulty in recruiting Arab participants, to ensure a sufficient number of participants per condition, all Arab participants were assigned to the same condition. We decided to assign them to the Kafr Qasim massacre (Arabs perceived as victims) condition, because this historical context was previously validated as evoking Arabs identity as perceived victims (Shnabel et al., 2009).

need for morality were expected to "tolerate" more concrete representations of the Kafr Qasim massacre than Jews with lower levels of this need. Finally, we expected Jews to have a higher (nondefensive) need for morality in the Kafr Qasim (perpetrator) than the Ma'ale Akrabim (victim) condition. Jews' nondefensive need for morality in the Kafr Qasim (perpetrator) condition was expected to associate with a weaker preference for abstract representations.

Method

Participants

We recruited 343 Jewish and 106 Arab participants through the subject pool of a large Israeli university and ads on social media. The participants volunteered to complete an online experiment in exchange for course credit or a raffle draw. Based on the exclusion criteria specified in the preregistration, in the analysis of the Jewish sample participants whose nationality was not Israeli or who failed the IMC were not included in the analysis. In the Arab sample, Druze participants[4] or participants who failed the IMC were not included in the analysis. Our final sample included 163 Jews in the Ma'ale Akrabim (victim) condition (120 women, 43 men; M_{age} = 25.5, SD = 5.4, range = 18–50), 167 Jews in the Kafr Qasim (perpetrator) condition (134 women, 33 men; M_{age} = 25.5, SD = 5.5, range = 18–51), and 84 Arabs in the Kafr Qasim (victim) condition (65 women, 18 men, one "other/prefer not to report"; M_{age} = 25.9, SD = 10.1, range = 18–58).

Procedure

The study was completed in Hebrew by Jewish participants and in Arabic by Arab participants. Jewish participants were randomly assigned either to the victim or the perpetrator condition. Arab participants were assigned to the victim condition. In all three conditions, participants read a short informative text about the historical transgression and watched a 2-min video with survivors' testimonies describing what happened in the massacre from their point of view.

Next, participants completed measures of their *identity needs* (adapted from Hässler et al., 2019). Using 6-point scales (1 = *not at all* to 6 = *very much*), six items assessed participants' need for agency (e.g., "I wish my group had more control over its destiny," α = .94). Three additional items assessed their nondefensive need for morality (e.g., "I wish my group would act more morally," α = .89).

Participants' *preference for abstract representations* was assessed through two tasks in which they had to decide how to design promos for a TV documentary about the massacre, to be broadcasted on a channel directed at members of the out-group. In the first task, participants were presented with seven promos. For each promo, they had to decide whether it should include a large text and a small picture (presenting the same content; e.g., victims' dead bodies)—or the other way around. In the second task, participants were presented with three promos. For each promo, they had to decide between a large text presenting a factual (e.g., clinical, statistical, or historical) description of a phenomenon and a small text presenting a personal testimony describing a particular case of this phenomenon—or the other way around; example items are available on the OSF (https://osf.io/9drbe/?view_only=79f711d171a048c5b8449144f089a662). Beware that the images might be unsettling. We calculated participants' preference for abstract representations as the number of the abstract promos they chose; that is, promos with large texts/small pictures or large factual/small testimonial descriptions (the two measures were positively correlated, r = .35, p < .001), potentially ranging from 0 to 10.

Results and Discussion

Table 2 presents means, standard deviations, and correlations between the identity needs and the preference for abstract representations for Jews and Arabs in the Kafr Qasim condition (Jews perceived as perpetrators; Arabs perceived as victims), as well as for Jews in the Ma'ale Akrabim condition (Arabs perceived as perpetrators; Jews perceived as victims). To test the differences in identity needs, we conducted a one-way ANOVA with planned contrasts. As expected, Jews in the victim condition had a higher need for agency than Jews in the perpetrator condition, $t(411) = 14.29$, $p < .001$, d = 1.57. Similarly, Arabs in the victim condition had a higher need for agency than Jews in the perpetrator condition, $t(411) = 16.41$, $p < .001$, $d = 2.20$. Also, Jews in the perpetrator condition had a higher (nondefensive) need for morality than both Jews, $t(411)$ = 13.06, $p < .001$, $d = 1.44$, and Arabs, $t(411) = 13.57$, $p < .001$, d = 1.82, in the victim conditions.[5]

Preference for Abstract Representations

As expected, Jews in the perpetrator condition had a stronger preference for abstract representations than both Jews, $t(411)$ = 4.21, $p < .001$, $d = 0.46$, and Arabs, $t(411) = 3.24$, $p = .001$, d = 0.43, in the victim conditions. In the victim conditions, as expected, Jews' need for agency was associated with the preference for more concrete (less abstract) representations, whereas their need for morality was not associated with their representation preference. Similar patterns were observed for Arabs.

In the perpetrator condition, as expected, Jews' nondefensive need for morality (i.e., the wish to act more morally) was associated with a weaker preference for abstract representations. Interestingly, Jews' need for agency in this condition was associated with a stronger preference for abstract representations. Although this finding was not directly predicted, it is consistent with previous findings (Hässler et al., 2019) that majority group members' need for agency is associated with their defensive motivation to protect their

[4] Although Israeli Druze are ethnically Arab, similar to members of the victim group, Israeli Druze men also serve in the Israel Defense Forces, including in the border patrol involved in the Kafr Qasim massacre. This involvement complicates their categorization as belonging to either the victim or the perpetrator group. Given this ambiguity, Druze participants were excluded from this study.

[5] Testing the differences in identity needs between Jews and Arabs in the victim condition revealed that Arabs had a higher need for agency than Jews, $t(245) = 5.11$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.69$, who in turn had higher need for morality, $t(245) = 2.54$, $p = .01$, $d = 0.34$. A possible explanation is that in the broader context of Israeli society, Jews are the majority whereas Arabs are the minority (see Hässler et al., 2019, for the finding that the identity needs of minority and majority group members correspond to those of victims and perpetrators). Notably, the difference in preference for abstract representations among Jews and Arabs in the victim conditions was not significant, $t(245) = 0.24$, $p = .81$.

Table 2
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between the Variables of Study 3

Variable	*M* (*SD*)					
	Jews in the perpetrator condition	Arabs in the victim condition	Jews in the victim condition	1	2	3
1. Need for agency	2.9 (1.3)	5.4 (0.9)	4.7 (1.1)	—	−.38**	.24*
2. Need for morality	4.8 (1.0)	2.6 (1.4)	3.1 (1.3)	−.16/−.29**	—	−.34**
3. Preference for abstract representations	3.0 (2.4)	2.1 (2.2)	2.1 (1.8)	−.44**/−.31**	.19/.12	—

Note. Correlations for Jews in the perceived perpetrator (Kafr Qasim) condition (n = 167) are reported above the diagonal, correlations for Arabs in the perceived victim (Kafr Qasim) condition (n = 84) are reported below the diagonal left to the slash, and correlations for Jews in the perceived victim (Ma'ale Akrabim) condition (n = 163) are reported below the diagonal right to the slash.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

in-group's moral reputation (which, in the present study, should be reflected in a preference for more abstract representations).

In sum, the findings of Study 4 fully supported our predictions about the differences in representation preferences of members of perceived victim and perpetrator groups, and how these preferences correlate with their needs for agency and morality. A limitation of Study 3 is that Arab participants were not randomly assigned to either the victim or perpetrator conditions; instead, all Arab participants were assigned to the victim condition. This limitation raises the possibility that Hypothesis 1 may not generalize to Arab participants, as they may not exhibit a stronger preference for abstract representations had they been assigned to the perpetrator condition. As a minority within Israeli society, Arabs face threats to their sense of control; the experience of control threat may lead them to identify with (rather than defensively reject) the agentic role of perpetrators as a strategy to restore control (Fritsche, 2022). Thus, our findings may not generalize to contexts in which members of the perceived perpetrator group are also a minority group within society. This possibility, however, awaits empirical testing.

Conceptual Replication

The results of Study 3 were conceptually replicated among omnivores and ethical vegans referring to the suffering of the animals used in the food industry. As expected, (a) omnivores had a stronger preference for abstract representations than vegans, and (b) vegans' need for agency associated with a preference for more concrete representations. Unexpectedly, the predicted negative association between omnivores' nondefensive need for morality and their preference for abstract representations failed to reach conventional standards of significance (p = .057; for a full report, see Supplemental Study 3b).

Study 4: Registered Report

Study 4 had two goals. The first was to test Hypothesis 1, while operationalizing the preference for abstraction level in yet another way, level of categorization. Thus, participants had to choose between representations of a historical genocide either as a crime against a particular group (a more concrete representation) or as a crime against humanity (a more abstract representation; see Wohl & Branscombe, 2005, for a similar operationalization). The second goal was to examine whether perceived perpetrator group members' *defensive* need for morality predicts a greater preference for abstract representation of the transgression (Hypothesis 3a).

A limitation of Study 3 is that it measured only group members' *nondefensive* need for morality (wish to improve their in-group's behavior). Our finding that this need consistently predicted greater "tolerance" for concrete representations is consistent with our theorizing, yet it cannot account for the main effect of in-group's role (victim vs. perpetrator) on representation preference. Put differently, demonstrating that higher levels of a nondefensive need for morality are associated with perceived perpetrator group members' *lower* preference for abstract representations does not explain why *overall* members of the perceived perpetrator group show a *higher* preference for abstract representations than members of the perceived victim group. To explain this main effect, it is critical to show that (a) the defensive need for morality (wish to protect the in-group's moral reputation) is higher among members of the perceived perpetrator than the perceived victim group, and (b) higher levels of the defensive need for morality are associated with perceived perpetrator group members' *stronger* preference for abstract representations.

Using the context of the Holocaust, Study 4 tested the predictions that compared to Jews, Germans would have (a) a stronger preference for representations of the Holocaust as a crime against humanity (rather than the Jewish people) and (b) a higher defensive need for morality. In addition, (c) Germans' defensive need for morality would be associated with a stronger preference for abstract representations.

Method

Participants

We recruited 274 Germans (206 women, 65 men; three chose "other/prefer not to report") and 312 (Israeli) Jews (168 women, 144 men).[6] Participants were recruited through commercial survey companies in Germany and Israel. All participants met the inclusion

[6] Study 4 was conducted between November 16 and December 10, 2023, during the Israel–Hamas war. Alleviating the concern that the war affected the results, a pilot study (N = 202; see also Footnote 2) conducted before the war found a similar pattern of results (see materials on OSF: https://osf.io/9drbe/?view_only=79f711d171a048c5b8449144f089a662). Specifically, compared to Jews, Germans preferred more abstract representations, $t(200) = 9.88$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.41$, and had a higher defensive need for morality, $t(316.8) = 9.99$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.05$. Moreover, Germans' defensive need for morality was associated with their preference for more abstract representations, $r = .20$, $p = .03$.

criteria (see preregistration). All German participants (M_{age} = 24.2, SD = 3.7, range = 18–34) were native speakers of German, who were born in Germany and whose parents were also born in Germany. As for religious background, they reported growing up in a Christian (60.95%) or an atheist (39.5%) household. None of the German participants identified as Jewish or Muslim or reported growing up in such households. Most Jewish participants (M_{age} = 26.2, SD = 4.5, range = 18–56) were born in Israel (89.7%) and the rest in Europe, the United States, or North Africa. All participants were students, majoring in various fields (e.g., psychology, biology).

Procedure

The study was conducted online and completed in German (by German participants) and Hebrew (by Jewish participants). As a cover story, participants were informed that the study's purpose was to develop an educational activity for International Holocaust Remembrance Day. This activity was designed for German students studying at the University of Frankfurt and for Jewish students studying at Tel Aviv University. Next, to evoke participants' identity needs, they were presented with a brief description of the November Pogrom (a large-scale pogrom against Jews, which was carried out across the Reich on November 9, 1938). Then, participants completed measures of their *identity needs* (adapted from Hässler et al., 2019): Using a 6-point scale, three items assessed participants' need for agency (e.g., wish for power and self-determination, α = .96), three items assessed their nondefensive need for morality (e.g., wish to improve the in-group's moral conduct, α = .94),[7] and four additional items assessed participants' defensive need for morality (e.g., wish that the in-group's moral behavior would be acknowledged and appreciated, α = .82).

Finally, three items assessed participants' representation preferences by asking them to decide which type of framing the facilitators of the educational activity should utilize. German participants chose the framing for the activity at Tel Aviv, and Jewish participants, for the activity at Frankfurt. Example items include "The Holocaust as a crime against the *Jewish people [vs. humanity]*" and "millions of *Jews [vs. human beings]* were systematically murdered in the Nazi extermination camps." The scale ranged from 1 = *certainly the first framing* to 6 = *certainly the second framing*. Participants' preference for abstract representations was calculated as the average of these items, α = .70. Upon completion, participants reported their demographics, and whether they encountered technical problems during the study.

Results and Discussion

Table 3 presents means, standard deviations, and correlations between the study's variables for the Jewish and German samples. As expected, Jews had a higher need for agency than Germans, $t(424.39) = 33.31$, $p < .001$, $d = 2.85$, who in turn had a higher defensive, $t(540.89) = 14.47$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.17$, as well as nondefensive, $t(462.59) = 34.38$, $p < .001$, $d = 2.92$, need for morality.

Preference for Abstract Representations

As predicted, Germans had a stronger preference for abstract representations than Jews, $t(582.87) = 15.14$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.25$. Also, Germans' defensive need for morality was associated with a stronger preference for abstract representations. Unexpectedly, Germans' nondefensive need for morality was not associated with a weaker preference for more abstract representations. Finally, Germans' need for agency was not significantly associated with their representation preference. As for Jewish participants, as expected, their need for agency was associated with a preference for less abstract (more concrete) representations. Jews' defensive and nondefensive needs for morality were not associated with their representation preference.

These results generally support our theorizing, revealing that the defensive need for morality was higher among members of the perceived perpetrator group and predicted their greater preference for abstract representations. Notably, the latter finding can rule out an alternative explanation for perceived perpetrator group members' preference to expose members of perceived victim groups to abstract (rather than concrete) representations: This preference could reflect perceived perpetrator group members' motivation not to hurt perceived victim group members' feelings, by refraining from exposing them to emotionally intense representations of the transgression. While such motivation is theoretically possible, it cannot explain the observed association between perceived perpetrator group members' defensive need for morality and preference for abstract representations.

Study 5

Studies 3 and 4 provided correlational evidence for the link between group members' needs and their representation preferences. The goal of Study 5 was to strengthen causal inference through testing Hypothesis 4; that is, by examining whether messages from out-group representatives that address group members' identity needs would result in a weaker discrepancy between the representation preferences of members of the perceived victim and perpetrator groups. According to the needs-based model (Shnabel et al., 2023), accepting (empowering) messages from representatives of the perceived victim (perpetrator) group can satisfy perceived perpetrator (victim) group members' need to restore their moral (agentic) identity. Previous research revealed that receiving accepting and empowering messages from out-group representatives resulted in perceived perpetrator and victim group members' greater willingness to reconcile with the out-group (Shnabel et al., 2009); Study 5 tested the prediction that such messages would decrease the disparity between their representation preferences.

Participants of Study 5 were Israeli Jews and Arabs referring to the 1956 Kafr Qasim massacre, in which Arabs were victimized by Jews. They were randomly assigned to either the control (no-affirmation) or the identity affirmation condition, in which Jewish participants received an accepting message and Arab participants received an empowering message from a representative of their out-group. Thus, Study 5 had a 2 (group [Jews, Arabs]) × 2 (condition [identity affirmation, control]) design. We expected that Jews' (Arabs') preference for abstract (concrete) representations of the transgression would be weaker in the identity affirmation than in the control condition, resulting in a two-way interaction, such that the disparity in representation preferences between the groups

[7] Although not the primary goal of Study 4, measuring participants' need for agency and nondefensive need for morality allowed us to conceptually replicate the findings reported in Study 3.

Table 3
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between the Variables of Study 4 Among Jews and Germans

Variable	*M* (*SD*)					
	Jew	German	1	2	3	4
1. Defensive need for morality	1.5 (1.5)	3.0 (1.0)	—	.47***	.04	.03
2. Nondefensive need for morality	0.6 (0.7)	3.1 (1.0)	−.15*	—	−.11*	.01
3. Need for agency	4.6 (0.7)	1.8 (1.2)	.36**	−.06	—	−.19***
4. Preference for abstract representations	2.6 (1.2)	4.0 (1.1)	.18**	−.04	−.001	—

Note. Correlations for Jews (n = 312) are reported above the diagonal, and for Germans (n = 274), below the diagonal.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

would be smaller in the identity affirmation as compared to the control condition.

Method

Participants

Participants were 101 Jews (51 men, 48 women, two "other/prefer not to report"; M_{age} = 30.5, SD = 8.9, range = 18–76) and 114 Arabs (64 women, 48 men, two "other/prefer not to report"; M_{age} = 29.6, SD = 9.2, range = 19–66), who were recruited through snowball sampling and ads in the social media for voluntary participation in an online experiment. All participants met the inclusion criteria (see preregistration). About half of the participants (49.5% of the Jewish sample; 43.0% of the Arab sample) were students majoring in various fields (e.g., psychology, economics), the rest were employed in various occupations.

Procedure

The study was completed in Hebrew × Jewish participants and in Arabic × Arab participants. Participants were exposed to Study 3's materials (a short text and a 2-min video) about the Kafr Qasim massacre, in which Arabs were victimized by Jews, and then assigned to either the identity affirmation or the control condition. In both conditions, participants were asked to read a short excerpt that allegedly summarized the main message of a speech held by the out-group's representative at a conference commemorating the massacre:

> The relations between Jews and Arab citizens of Israel have known ups and downs. The Kafr Qasim massacre is one of the worst times in the relations, as were the events during the protests of October 2000 and May 2021.

In the control condition, the text ended at this point. In the identity affirmation condition, it was followed by a message of moral acceptance for Jewish participants (e.g., "we should understand and accept our Jewish brothers … it is not easy for Jews in Israel to deal with their emotions following the killings") and a message of empowerment for Arab participants (e.g., "we should acknowledge the right of the Arabs in Israel to be independent and to determine their own fate and future"). The messages were adjusted from previous research (Shnabel et al., 2009; Study 1).

Manipulation checks verified that participants understood the content of the messages as intended. Four items examined the extent to which Jewish participants understood the message as accepting (e.g., "To what extent does the message reflect the idea that the Arabs should accept the Jews?") using a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very much*); α = .91. Correspondingly, four 5-point scale items examined the extent to which Arab participants understood the message as empowering (e.g., "To what extent does the message reflect the idea that the Arabs have the right for self-determination?"); α = .92.

Next, using Study 3's materials, we assessed participants' *preference for abstract representations* through two tasks of choosing promos for a TV documentary about the massacre. In the first task, participants chose between three large-texts-small-pictures versus small-texts-large-pictures promos. In the second task, they chose between three large-factual descriptions-small-personal testimonies versus small-factual descriptions-large-personal testimonies promos. The two measures were positively correlated (r = .51, $p < .001$). Responses to the six pairs of promos were averaged with higher scores indicating a greater preference for abstract representations. Additional variables, collected for exploratory purposes, are reported in the preregistration document. Upon completion, participants reported their demographics, indicated whether they encountered technical problems, and were then thanked and debriefed.

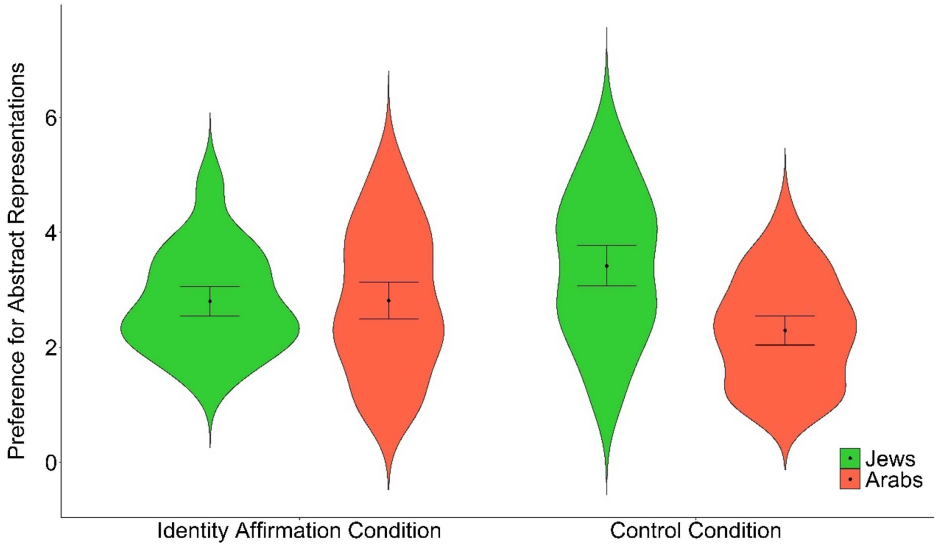
Results and Discussion

For the manipulation checks, we conducted two independent samples t tests. As intended, Jews perceived the message from the Arab representative to be more accepting in the identity affirmation (M = 3.6, SD = 0.9) than in the control condition (M = 2.3, SD = 0.9), $t(99)$ = 7.17, $p < .001$, d = 1.43. Correspondingly, Arabs perceived the message from the Jewish representative to be more empowering in the identity affirmation (M = 3.3, SD = 0.9) than in the control condition (M = 2.1, SD = 1.1), $t(112)$ = 5.85, $p < .001$, d = 1.10.

Next, we tested the effects of group and condition on preference for abstract representations using a two-way ANOVA. A significant main effect for group, $F(1, 211)$ = 13.58, $p < .001$, η_p^2 = .06, revealed that Jews (M = 3.1, SD = 0.1) preferred more abstract representations than Arabs (M = 2.6, SD = 0.1). The effect of condition was not significant, $F(1, 211)$ = 0.08, p = .78, η_p^2 = .01. Importantly, the expected Group × Condition interaction was significant, $F(1, 211)$ = 14.12, $p < .001$, η_p^2 = .06.

We interpreted this interaction, presented in Figure 2, using pairwise comparisons with the Bonferroni correction. Replicating Study 3's results, in the control condition, Jews (M = 3.4, SD = 1.3)

Figure 2
Violin Plots of the Preference for Abstract Representations in Study 5



Note. $N_{Jews} = 101$; $N_{Arabs} = 114$. Points represent means, error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, and the width of density plots represents the frequency of observations. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

preferred more abstract representations than Arabs ($M = 2.3$, $SD = 0.9$), $p < .001$, $F(1, 211) = 27.70$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$. In the identity affirmation condition, by contrast, there was no difference in the representation preferences of Jews ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 0.9$) and Arabs ($M = 2.8$, $SD = 1.2$), $F(1, 211) = 0.03$, $p = .96$. As another way to interpret this interaction, we found that Jews' preference for abstract representations was lower in the identity affirmation (vs. control) condition, $F(1, 211) = 7.82$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .04$, whereas Arabs' preference for concrete representations was lower in the identity affirmation (vs. control) condition, $F(1, 211) = 6.30$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$. Thus, members of both groups became more moderate in their preferences when their identity was affirmed.

Taken together, Studies 1–5 supported our theorizing that members of perceived perpetrator groups prefer more abstract representations of intergroup transgressions than members of perceived victim groups and that these differential representation preferences arise from their respective needs for morality and agency. As the next step in our research, Studies 6–7 examined the consequences for reconciliation of group members' exposure to representations, chosen by out-group members, that either address these needs or not. Both studies tested whether members of perceived perpetrator (victim) groups would express a greater willingness to reconcile with members of perceived victim (perpetrator) groups who chose abstract (concrete) rather than concrete (abstract) representations of the historic transgression (Hypothesis 5). To rule out cultural differences as an alternative explanation, Study 6 tested whether these effects are unique to the context in which the victim–perpetrator dyad is salient. Study 7 tested whether the expected effects on reconciliation are related to group members' perceptions of the representations chosen by out-group members as conveying moral acceptance or empowerment (Hypothesis 6).

Study 6

Study 6 tested Hypothesis 5 among Germans and (Israeli) Jews. Participants were exposed to either abstract or concrete Holocaust representations, which were allegedly selected by students who belong to their out-group. We expected Germans' willingness to reconcile with Jewish students who chose abstract (vs. concrete) representations to be higher than Jews' willingness to reconcile with German students who chose abstract (vs. concrete) representations. This is because the choice of abstract representations by Jewish students may signal to the German participants that these students are more accepting of their in-group than the students who chose concrete representations. Likewise, the choice of concrete representations by German students may signal to the Jewish participants that these students are willing to empower their in-group more than the students who chose abstract representations.

To examine whether this predicted effect was unique to the Holocaust context, participants also indicated their willingness to reconcile with out-group members who allegedly chose either abstract or concrete representations of the neutral context of studies, and of the Rwandan genocide. The purpose of the studies condition was to rule out preexisting cultural differences as an alternative explanation. To the extent that Germans have a greater preference for abstraction than Jews, their greater willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose abstract Holocaust representations may simply reflect the general human tendency to like others who are similar to us (e.g., Montoya et al., 2008). If this was indeed the case, the predicted effect should have been observed in the studies context as well.

The purpose of the Rwandan genocide condition was to rule out as an alternative explanation preexisting cultural differences specifically in terms of preferences for the representation of

historical transgressions. In Germany, the general approach toward educating the public about genocides is that information should be conveyed using a tone of neutral objectivity, appealing to one's rationality rather than emotions (Yair, 2014). Adopting this educational approach can serve as an alternative explanation to the expected effect that Germans would show greater willingness to reconcile with Jewish students who chose abstract (vs. concrete) Holocaust representations. If this alternative explanation was true, then the predicted effect should have been observed in the Rwandan genocide context as well.

In sum, Study 6 had a 2 (group [Germans, Jews]) × 3 (topic [Holocaust, studies, Rwandan genocide]) mixed design. We expected a Group × Topic interaction such that in the Holocaust condition Germans' willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose abstract representations would be higher than that of Jews. In the other topic conditions, this gap was expected to be smaller or even reversed.

Method

Participants

We recruited 237 Germans and 201 (Israeli) Jews through social media in exchange for a raffle draw. Based on the exclusion criteria specified in the preregistration, in the analysis of the German sample participants with a migration background, a Jewish or Muslim background, and/or who failed the IMC were not included. After excluding participants based on the criteria specified in the preregistration (e.g., failure in the IMC), our final sample included 200 Germans (172 women, 27 men, one "other/prefer not to report") and 173 Jews (122 women, 50 men, one "other/prefer not to report"); the majority of whom (86%) were students. All German participants (M_{age} = 23.2, SD = 4.2, range = 19–60) were native speakers of German, who were born in Germany and whose parents were also born in Germany. All Jewish participants (M_{age} = 26.3, SD = 5.9, range = 18–54) were native speakers of Hebrew, and 93.1% of them were born in Israel (the rest were born in Europe or in North or South America).

Procedure

The study was conducted online and completed in German (by German participants) and Hebrew (by Jewish participants). As a cover story, participants were informed that German and Jewish students from different cities in Germany and Israel selected stimuli intended to stir up discussions about various topics in intergroup dialogues within German–Israeli youth exchange programs. The three topic conditions were manipulated within participants. Within each topic condition, participants were presented with four pairs of a picture and a word (previously used in Study 1) said to be selected by out-group members from two cities. Out-group members from City A (e.g., the Israeli city Nahariya) allegedly chose the pictures, whereas out-group members from City B (e.g., the Israeli city Hadera) allegedly chose the words; see examples of the stimuli allegedly selected by Jewish students from different cities on the OSF (https://osf.io/9drbe/?view_only=79f711d171a048c5b84491 44f089a662). Beware that the images might be unsettling. To avoid spillover effects between the topic conditions, different cities (of similar size and centrality) were used in each topic condition. The presentation of the selected materials on the screen (e.g., pictures on the right and words on the left) and the groups that allegedly chose each representation (e.g., whether students from Hadera chose the pictorial stimuli and students from Nahariya chose the verbal stimuli or the other way around) were counterbalanced.

Participants' *willingness to reconcile with the out-group that chose abstract representations* was assessed using three items that examined participants' positive orientation toward the out-group members (e.g., "With students of which city would you prefer to meet?") on a 6-point scale (ranging from 1 = *definitely city A* to 6 = *definitely city B*). Items were averaged such that higher scores indicated a higher willingness to reconcile with the out-group members who chose the abstract representations; $\alpha_{Holocaust}$ = .89, $\alpha_{Rwandan\ genocide}$ = .84, $\alpha_{Studies}$ = .83. Additional variables, collected for exploratory purposes, can be found in the preregistration. Upon completion, participants reported their demographics, indicated whether they encountered technical problems, and were thanked and debriefed.

Results and Discussion

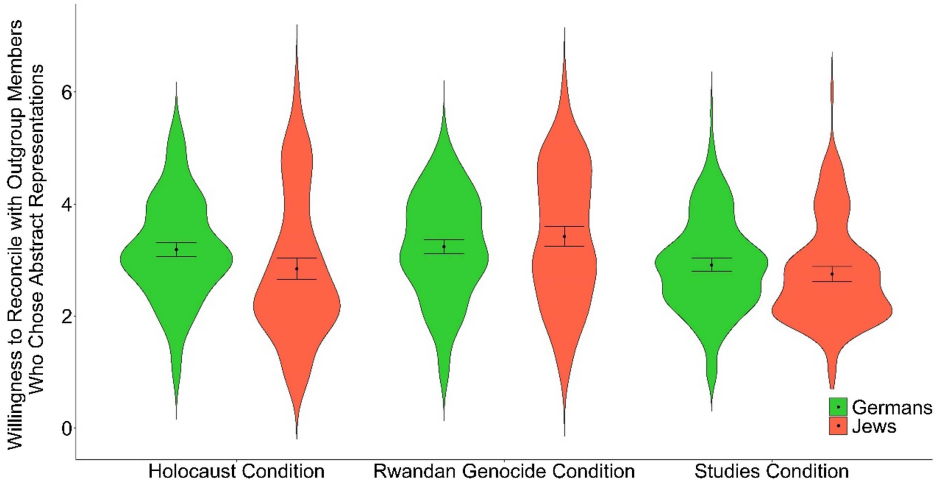
Repeated-measures ANOVA tested the effects of group (Germans, Jews) and topic (Holocaust, Rwandan genocide, Studies) on willingness to reconcile with the out-group members who chose abstract representations. The analysis revealed a significant main effect for topic, $F(1.89, 669.70) = 29.30$, $p < .001$, Huynh–Feldt, $\eta_p^2 = .07$. Overall, participants' willingness to reconcile with the out-group who chose abstract representations was higher in the Rwandan genocide than in the Holocaust ($p < .001$) and in the studies ($p < .001$) conditions, and in the Holocaust condition more than in the studies condition ($p = .03$). The effect of group was not significant, $F(1, 371) = 2.28$, $p = .13$, $\eta_p^2 < .01$, indicating that, beyond the topic condition, Germans and Jews did not significantly differ in their willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose abstract representations.

The Group × Topic interaction was significant, $F(1.89, 669.70) = 8.28$, $p < .001$, Huynh–Feldt, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. To interpret this interaction, presented in Figure 3, we performed independent samples t tests. As expected, in the Holocaust condition, German participants' willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose abstract representations ($M_{Germans}$ = 3.2, SD = 0.9) was higher than that of Jewish participants (M_{Jews} = 2.8, SD = 1.3), $t(371) = 3.07$, $p = .002$, $d = 0.32$. The corresponding effect did not reach significance in either the Rwandan genocide condition, where it was descriptively reversed, $M_{Germans}$ = 3.2, SD = 0.9, M_{Jews} = 3.4, SD = 1.2; $t(371) = 1.81$, $p = .09$, $d = 0.17$, or the studies condition, $M_{Germans}$ = 2.9, SD = 0.8, M_{Jews} = 2.8, SD = 0.9; $t(371) = 3.07$, $p = .07$, $d = 0.19$.

These findings suggest that perceived historical perpetrator and victim group members' willingness to reconcile with members of their out-group is influenced by how the latter chooses to represent the transgression. Members of a perceived historical perpetrator group showed greater willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose abstract representations, which may raise less intense emotional responses and signal greater psychological distance, than members of a perceived historical victim group. This gap was not significant in contexts in which the victim–perpetrator dyad was not salient—allowing to rule out cultural differences as an alternative explanation.

Figure 3

Violin Plots of the Willingness to Reconcile With Out-Group Members Who Chose Abstract Representations in Study 6



Note. $N_{Germans} = 200$; $N_{Jews} = 173$. Points represent means, error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, and the width of density plots represents the frequency of observations. See the online article for the color version of this figure.

Study 7

Study 7 had three goals. The first was to extend generalizability by conceptually replicating Study 6's results in a different historical context, using different operationalizations. Participants of Study 7 were Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel, referring to the 1956 Kafr Qasim massacre, in which Arabs were victimized by Jews. They were asked to indicate their willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose either abstract or concrete representations of this transgression (e.g., posters stressing either factual descriptions or personal testimonies). We expected Jewish participants to express a greater willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose abstract (vs. concrete) representations of the massacre as compared to Arab participants.

The second goal of Study 7 was to (a) examine the effect of out-group members' choice of representations on group members' satisfaction of identity needs, that is, moral acceptance (empowerment) for members of the perceived perpetrator (victim) group, and (b) test the association between group members' satisfaction of these needs in response to the representations chosen by out-group members, and their willingness to reconcile with these out-group members (Hypothesis 6).

We expected perceived perpetrator group members to perceive the perceived victim group members who chose abstract representations of the transgression as more morally accepting (less condemning) of the perceived perpetrator group than perceived victim group members who chose concrete representations. This expectation is in line with the notion that abstract representations are associated with "a transformation of the victim's attitudes to those of forgiveness" (Wenzel & Coughlin, 2020, p. 3). The perception of perceived victim group members who chose abstract (concrete) representations as morally accepting (condemning) of participants' in-group was expected, in turn, to associate with a higher (lower) willingness to reconcile with them. As for perceived victim group members, we expected them to perceive the perceived perpetrator group members who chose abstract, as compared to concrete, representations of the transgression as less empowering of the perceived victim group. The perception of perceived perpetrator group members who chose abstract (concrete) representations as disempowering (empowering) participants' in-group, that is, as denying (acknowledging) the moral debt to the perceived victim group, was expected, in turn, to associate with a lower (higher) willingness to reconcile with them.

To test these predictions, Jewish and Arab participants were exposed to abstract and concrete representations of the Kafr Qasim massacre (Jews perceived as perpetrators; Arabs perceived as victims), allegedly selected by two different groups of out-group students. Jewish participants were asked which group of Arab students was more accepting (less condemning) of their in-group's morality. The scale's midpoint indicated that Arab students of both groups morally accepted (or condemned) the Jewish group to the same extent. We expected Jewish participants' scores to be significantly higher than the scale's midpoint—indicating that they perceived the Arab students who chose the *abstract* representations to be more accepting of the Jewish group's morality than the Arab students who chose concrete representations. We further expected Jewish participants' perception that the Arab students who chose the abstract representations were more accepting of their in-group to associate with greater willingness to reconcile with these students.

The Arab participants were asked to indicate which of the two groups of Jewish students was more empowering of their in-group. We expected Arab participants' scores to be significantly higher than the scale's midpoint, indicating that Arab participants perceived the Jews who chose the *concrete* representations to be more empowering of their in-group (e.g., acknowledging its rights and the moral debt owed to it) than the Jews who chose abstract

representations. We further expected that Arab participants' perception that the Jewish students who chose the concrete representations were more empowering of their in-group to associate with greater willingness to reconcile with these students.

In sum, Study 7 aimed to replicate Study 6's finding that the willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose abstract representations of a historical transgression would be higher among members of the perceived perpetrator than the perceived victim group. Extending Study 6, Study 7 also tested whether (a) perceived perpetrator (victim) group members would perceive the out-group members who chose abstract (concrete) representations as more morally accepting (empowering) of their in-group than out-group members who chose concrete (abstract) representations, and (b) perceived perpetrator (victim) group members' perception that out-group members who chose abstract (concrete) representations of the transgression accept (empower) their in-group would be associated with their greater willingness to reconcile with these out-group members.

Method

Participants

Through the subject pool of a large Israeli university and ads in social media, we recruited 130 Jews and 88 Arabs to complete an online experiment in exchange for course credit or a raffle draw. After exclusion of participants based on the criteria specified in the preregistration (e.g., failure in the IMC), our final sample included 128 Jews (88 women, 39 men, one "other/prefer not to report"; $M_{age} = 28.3$, $SD = 9.1$, range = 18–56) and 80 Arabs (66 women, 10 men, four "other/prefer not to report"; $M_{age} = 22.2$, $SD = 4.2$, range = 18–38). Most participants (78.8%) were students majoring in various fields (e.g., psychology, computer science).

Procedure

The study was completed in Hebrew (by Jews) and Arabic (by Arabs). Using the materials of Studies 3 and 5, participants were exposed to information about the 1956 Kafr Qasim massacre, in which Arabs were victimized by Jews. As a cover story, they were informed that out-group students from different colleges in Israel selected promos for a TV documentary about the massacre, to be broadcast on a channel directed at the out-group.

Then, participants were presented with the two series of promos used in Studies 3 and 5. The first series included three pairs of promos allegedly selected by out-group members from colleges in Haifa and Jerusalem (both are mixed cities, with a relatively large population of both Arab and Jewish students). One group of students allegedly chose promos presenting large pictures and small texts (concrete representations), whereas the other chose promos presenting large texts and small pictures (abstract representations). In the second series, participants were presented with three pairs of promos allegedly selected by out-group members from colleges in Western Galilee and Upper Galilee (again, both are mixed regions with both Arab and Jewish students). One group of students allegedly chose promos presenting large texts of personal testimonies and small texts of general factual descriptions (concrete representations), whereas the other chose promos presenting large texts of general factual descriptions and small texts of personal testimonies (abstract representations). We counterbalanced the order of the two series of promos, whether the concrete and abstract promos were presented on the screen's left or right side, and the groups that allegedly chose each representation (e.g., whether Haifa students chose the abstract promos and Jerusalem students chose the concrete promos, or the other way around).

Next, participants completed a measure of *need satisfaction*. For Jewish participants, we assessed their feeling of being morally accepted by the Arab students who chose abstract or concrete representations. Four items assessed Jewish participants' perceptions regarding one series of promos (e.g., "Which Arab students are more likely to accuse Israel of immoral behavior toward the Arabs?"; reversed), using a 6-point scale (1 = *definitely Haifa* to 6 = *definitely Jerusalem*). Additional four 6-point items, identical in content, assessed perceptions regarding the other series of promos (1 = *definitely Western Galilee* to 6 = *definitely Upper Galilee*). The eight items were averaged to compute Jewish participants' satisfaction of the need for moral acceptance by the Arab students who chose abstract (vs. concrete) representations; $\alpha = .78$. Higher scores indicated feeling more accepted by out-group members who chose abstract representations.

For Arab participants, we assessed their feeling of being empowered by the Jewish students who chose abstract or concrete representations. Three items assessed their perceptions regarding one series of promos (e.g., Which Jewish students are more likely to acknowledge the right of Arabs to be strong and proud of their homeland?), using a 6-point scale (1 = *definitely Haifa* to 6 = *definitely Jerusalem*). Three additional 6-point items, identical in content, assessed perceptions regarding the other series of promos (1 = *definitely Western Galilee* to 6 = *definitely Upper Galilee*). The six items were averaged to compute Arab participants' satisfaction of the need for empowerment by the Jewish students who chose concrete (vs. abstract) representations; $\alpha = .66$. To ease the intuitive understanding of our findings, we computed this variable such that higher scores indicated feeling more empowered by out-group members who chose *concrete* representations.

Next, all participants completed a three-item measure of *willingness to reconcile with the out-group who chose abstract (vs. concrete) representations* referring to the first series of promos (e.g., "Which group contributes more to improving the atmosphere between Arabs and Jews in Israel?"; adapted from Shnabel et al., 2009), on a 6-point scale (1 = *definitely Haifa* to 6 = *definitely Jerusalem*). Three additional 6-point items, identical in content, assessed participants' willingness to reconcile referring to the other series of promos (1 = *definitely Western Galilee* to 6 = *definitely Upper Galilee*). The six items were averaged to compute participants' willingness to reconcile with the out-group members who chose abstract (vs. concrete) representations; $\alpha = .81$.

Additional variables, collected for exploratory purposes, are reported in the preregistration document. Upon completion, participants reported their demographics and whether they encountered technical problems and were thanked and debriefed.

Results and Discussion

An independent samples *t* test revealed, consistent with Study 6, that Jews' willingness to reconcile with the out-group members who chose abstract representations ($M = 3.9$, $SD = 0.8$) was higher than that of Arabs ($M = 3.1$, $SD = 0.9$), $t(206) = 7.20$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.03$.

As for need satisfaction, in line with expectations, (a) Jews' feeling of being morally accepted by Arabs who chose abstract representations, $M = 4.1$, $SD = 0.7$, was higher than the scale's midpoint, $t(127) = 9.83$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.87$, and (b) Arabs' feeling of being empowered by Jews who chose concrete representations, $M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.8$, was higher than the scale's midpoint, $t(79) = 7.64$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.85$. These findings indicate that Jews felt more moral acceptance by the out-group members who chose abstract representations, whereas Arabs felt more empowered by the out-group members who chose concrete representations.

In terms of the associations between need satisfaction and willingness to reconcile, as expected (a) Jewish participants' feeling that the Arab students who chose the abstract representations morally accepted their in-group was associated with their greater willingness to reconcile with these Arab students ($r = .68$, $p < .001$), and (b) Arab participants' feeling that the Jewish students who chose the concrete representations were more willing to empower their in-group was associated with their greater willingness to reconcile with these Jewish students ($r = .37$, $p < .001$).

Together, Study 7's findings are consistent with our theorizing that perceived perpetrator (victim) group members' greater willingness to reconcile with out-group members who chose abstract (concrete) representations of the historical transgression stems from their belief that the out-group members who made this choice are willing to address their need to restore their moral (agentic) identity.

Robustness Checks

To test the robustness of the results, we controlled for political orientation and examined the results separately for each operationalization of abstraction level (general facts vs. personal testimony, text vs. picture). The robustness checks supported our conclusions (see the full report in the Supplemental Materials).

General Discussion

The aim of the present research was to extend the needs-based model by demonstrating how group members' divergent identity needs, which stem from their in-group's role as a victim or a perpetrator in a given context (Shnabel et al., 2023), translate into different preferences as to how to represent the transgression. Seven studies supported our theorizing that in the context of transgression-related communication with their out-group: (a) members of perceived historical or present perpetrator groups prefer more abstract representations of the transgression than members of perceived victim groups (Studies 1–4); (b) these representation preferences are associated with the needs for morality and agency among members of perceived perpetrator and victim groups, respectively (Studies 3 and 4); (c) messages from out-group representatives that affirm group members' moral or agentic identity can decrease the discrepancy between perceived perpetrator and victim group members' representation preferences (Study 5); (d) group members are more willing to reconcile with out-group members whose representation preferences are similar to those of their in-group, such that members of perceived perpetrator (victim) groups are more willing to reconcile with out-group members who prefer abstract (concrete) representations of the transgression (Studies 6 and 7); and (e) perceived perpetrator (victim) group members' willingness to reconcile with out-group members whose representation preferences are similar to those of their in-group is associated with their perception that these out-group members morally accept (are ready to empower) their in-group (Study 7).

Bolstering the generalizability of our conclusions, these findings were observed among diverse groups and contexts of intergroup conflict, including in lab experiments in which Jews and Germans referred to the Holocaust, and Jews and Arabs referred to transgressions within the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, and in a naturalistic setting in which Russian and Ukrainian official news agencies referred to the war in Ukraine (for additional contexts, see the two conceptual replications).

The differences in perceived perpetrator and victim group members' representation preferences were observed across four different operationalizations of abstraction: verbal versus pictorial stimuli, "language-based" versus "experience-based" words, general facts versus personal testimonies, and broad versus narrow categorization of the transgression. Using diverse operationalizations enabled us to abstract different types of information related to the transgression. Using verbal instead of pictorial representations abstracts visual information about the people or objects related to the transgression; for example, the word "machete" abstracts information about the specific machete depicted in the picture (such as its exact size and color). Using abstract instead of concrete language (e.g., "killed" instead of "stabbed to death several times") or referring to general facts instead of personal testimonies (e.g., mentioning the number of casualties in a massacre instead of describing how a specific victim was murdered) abstracts information about how exactly the atrocities were committed. And using a broader crime category to describe the transgression (e.g., framing the Holocaust as "a crime against humanity" instead of "a crime against Jews") abstracts information about the specific victim group.

Demonstrating consistent outcomes for diverse operationalizations increases our confidence that the observed effects were driven by the level of abstraction at which the transgressions were represented and were not artifacts of a particular operationalization. For example, members of a perceived victim group may prefer to expose members of the perceived perpetrator group to pictorial (rather than verbal) stimuli, because the medium of visual communication has a stronger impact on receivers than the medium of verbal communication: pictures induce greater engagement with the subject at hand (Li & Xie, 2020). This alternative explanation, however, cannot account for the differences in representation preferences observed for the operationalization of abstraction through level of categorization.

Relation to Other Theoretical Perspectives

Our findings are consistent with predictions that can be derived from the social distance theory of power (Magee & Smith, 2013). Based on the premise that psychological distance is associated with abstract thinking (Trope & Liberman, 2010), this theory proposes that high-power individuals, who experience more social distance from other people than low-power individuals, engage in more abstract mental representation (e.g., in tasks related to visual working memory; Hadar et al., 2020). Admittedly, the prediction that members of (relatively high power) perceived perpetrator groups would prefer more abstract representations of the transgression than members of (relatively low power) perceived victim groups can be directly derived from the social distance theory of power. This might seem,

at first glance, to render our theorizing, derived from the needs-based model, redundant.

Other findings of the present research, however, cannot be explained solely by the assumptions of the social distance theory of power. Our finding that perceived victim group members' preference for concrete representations was associated with their heightened need for empowerment cannot be derived from this theory, which does not assume that low-power individuals experience a heightened need for empowerment, or that low-power individuals' engagement in concrete mental representations has a motivational basis. The same is true for our finding that perceived perpetrator group members' preference for abstract representations was associated with their need to restore their moral identity: The social distance theory of power does not assume that high-power individuals experience a heightened need for moral acceptance. Moreover, this theory does not assume that high-power individuals' engagement in abstract mental representations is motivationally driven—a key conclusion of the present research.

Our findings are seemingly inconsistent with the linguistic intergroup bias literature (LIB, for a review, see Maass, 1999). A key finding in the LIB literature is that people use more abstract terms when describing the negative behaviors of out-group (vs. in-group) members (Maass et al., 1989). For example, when interpreting the same depiction of aggressive behavior, participants are more likely to describe an out-group member as "aggressive" (reflecting a general trait) and an in-group member as "hurting somebody" (reflecting a particular act). This subtle bias in language abstraction contributes to the transmission of negative stereotypes about the out-group, because the abstract terms imply inferences from a specific act to the actor's stable characteristics. In contrast, using concrete terms implies an isolated behavior not necessarily linked to the actor's enduring characteristics. Based on this logic, perceived victim group members should prefer more abstract representations of perpetrators' behavior than members of perceived perpetrator groups. However, evidence from the literature on linguistic abstraction suggests that in line with our theorizing (and inconsistent with the abovementioned finding by Maass et al., 1989) perceived victim group members prefer to represent perpetrators' behavior using more concrete terms than perceived perpetrator group members for several reasons. First, like abstract terms, concrete terms too can be used to make internal attributions of an actor's negative behavior. While abstract terms (such as "A is aggressive") imply that the behavior reflects an enduring and stable trait of the actor, concrete terms (such as "A hurt B") imply that the actor's actions were intentional (Fiedler & Krüger, 2014). Additionally, concrete terms enhance the credibility of information (Hansen & Wänke, 2010), indicating that information about an actor's behavior that is presented in concrete terms is more likely to be perceived as truth. Schmid and Fiedler's (1996) analysis of the closing speeches of the Nuremberg trials concerning four German Nazi generals is consistent with this possibility: Compared to defense attorneys, prosecutors used more concrete descriptions of the defendants' actions (i.e., preferring concrete descriptive active verbs such as "killing" and "deceiving" over abstract adjectives such as "cruel" and "dishonest"). Moreover, in the present research, we did not focus on representations of perpetrators' *behavior* as done in the LIB research (Maass, 1999), but rather on representations of the transgression as a whole, incorporating multiple aspects of it simultaneously. For example, in Study 1, we examined representations of victims, perpetrators, objects, and places related to the Holocaust. This difference between the present set of studies and the studies reported in the LIB literature can further account for the seeming discrepancy between the findings.

Research on "the appraisal gap" (Hornsey et al., 2017) provides another perspective on the differences in the representation preferences of members of perceived perpetrator and victim groups. This research reveals that when appraising a transgression committed by an individual or individuals (e.g., two Australian teenagers stabbing to death a victim of Indian nationality; an Australian woman screaming racist obscenities at an Indian man on a train), members of the group to which the perpetrator (vs. the victim) belongs are more likely to categorize the act as an interpersonal (vs. intergroup) transgression, because attributing the transgression to some "bad apples" (rather than considering it a wider social issue) alleviates the collective guilt felt by members of the group to which the perpetrator belongs. Thus, opposite to our prediction, it is members of the group to which the perceived victims (rather than perpetrators) belong who prefer to represent the transgressions more abstractly (i.e., subsuming the transgressions under the general category of racial violence). However, one fundamental difference between the contexts studied in the present research and those studied in the "appraisal gap" research can account for this seeming contradiction: Our research focuses on contexts in which the perpetrators (e.g., Nazi soldiers in Study 1, Arab terrorists in Study 3) act, or claim to act, as representatives of their groups. The "appraisal gap" research, by contrast, focused on contexts in which there is ambivalence regarding whether the perpetrators indeed represent their in-group. In such ambivalent contexts, group members can shift the blame away from their in-group by categorizing the transgression as interpersonal rather than intergroup in nature—which is not possible in the contexts studied in the present research. A potential boundary condition of our conclusions, thus, is that they may be limited to contexts in which the perpetrators unequivocally represent their in-group.

Our results are also relevant to Eyal and Liberman's (2012) theoretical perspective on moral judgments, derived from the premise that abstraction and psychological distance are cues for one another. According to this perspective, people are more likely to use values and moral principles, which are inherently abstract and general, when judging psychologically distant situations. Consequently, transgressions that are psychologically distant (e.g., happen in the far rather than near future, Eyal et al., 2008) should be judged more harshly than transgressions that are psychologically proximate. Applying that perspective to the present research would lead to the prediction that members of perceived victim groups, who wish the transgressions to be judged harshly, should prefer more abstract representations of these transgressions than members of perceived perpetrator groups. This prediction is opposite to ours. Eyal and Liberman's (2012) perspective, however, is based on experiments (by Eyal et al., 2008) that manipulated psychological distance rather than abstraction level. Studies that directly manipulated abstraction level revealed that participants induced with an abstract mindset judged the same transgressions less harshly than participants induced with a concrete mindset (Gong & Medin, 2012). To account for these findings, Žeželj and Jokić (2014) suggested that prompting participants to use concrete representations of an immoral act leads them to "represent it very concretely and vividly. This representation

could invoke strong emotional response … lead[ing] to harsher instead of leaner judgments" (p. 230).

Eyal et al. (2014), however, suggested that these findings can be alternatively explained by the specific manipulation of abstraction level used by Gong and Medin (2012); namely, the how-versus-why task (which is one of the most common operationalizations of abstraction level; Freitas et al., 2004). In this task, "why questions" are used to prompt an abstract mindset, whereas "how questions" prompt a concrete mindset. According to Eyal et al. (2014), participants induced with an abstract (vs. concrete) mindset judged moral transgressions less harshly, because the "why questions" prompted thinking about justifications for the transgressions. Future research should examine this reasoning empirically. We suggest, however, that Eyal et al.'s (2014) argument may be valid only when the transgression can be justified (e.g., as self-defense), but not in other cases. For example, the answer to the "why" question regarding the Armenian genocide ("the purpose of the genocide was to lay the ground for the more homogeneous nation-state that eventually became Turkey") does not necessarily prompt thinking about justifications for the genocide as compared to the answer to the "how" question (e.g., "Armenian women and children were loaded onto boats and drowned in the sea"). Consistent with our theorizing, we predict that even in contexts where the "why" questions do not prompt thinking about justifications, members of perpetrator groups would prefer more abstract representations than members of victim groups. For example, in discussions about the Armenian genocide, Turks (as compared to Armenians) would prefer to place greater emphasis on the reasons for the genocide than on the way it was conducted. Our prediction, however, also awaits an empirical test.

From a broader perspective, our findings extend current knowledge about the "filters" through which members of historically or presently conflicting groups construe and represent the same transgressions. These different "filters" have received scientific attention over the past two decades (for a review, see Bilali & Vollhardt, 2019), because of the growing understanding that they play a major role in blocking the path to reconciliation. Our findings suggest that the use of different filters and the resulting negative implications for reconciliation are not limited to contexts of disputes about the very facts (e.g., the Turks' denial of the Armenian genocide; Bilali, 2013). Rather, even when there is agreement over the culpability of the perceived perpetrator group, members of the perceived victim groups prefer to represent the transgression in ways that raise stronger emotional responses than members of the perceived perpetrator groups and these different preferences might serve as barriers to reconciliation.

Practical Implications

From a practical point of view, recognizing and understanding perceived perpetrator and victim group members' different representation preferences may reduce intergroup misunderstanding and miscommunication (see Demoulin et al., 2013) by encouraging the designing of memorials and museums, as well as educational interventions and intergroup dialogue groups, in ways that take these different preferences into account. For example, the epigraph opening this article suggests that the Smithsonian's exhibition Freedom and Slavery provides its visitors with very concrete representations of the slavery period in the United States (see Yair, 2014, for a similar educational approach for Holocaust education). The insights derived from our findings suggest that educational interventions held at this exhibition (e.g., of pupils visiting the museum) may benefit from including also abstract components, such as discussions about the political and economic legacy of slavery. Including such components may prevent members of the perceived perpetrator group (i.e., White Americans) from being emotionally overwhelmed by the moral condemnation of their in-group. Not overwhelming perceived perpetrator group members with blame may be important, because the feeling that one's in-group is morally condemned by the perceived victim group is associated with defensiveness and less willingness to support equality (Hässler et al., 2022).

Educational interventions may also try to increase group members' receptiveness to the out-group's preferred representations by applying identity affirmation strategies. Notably, even identity affirmation exercises that do not involve messages from the out-group (e.g., through self- or group-affirmation exercises) can increase group members' receptiveness to out-groups with which their in-group is (or was) in conflict (see SimanTov-Nachlieli et al., 2018).

Constraints on Generalizability and Future Research Directions

In line with Simons et al.'s (2017) recommendation to identify the boundary condition of reported effects, we acknowledge that our findings may not generalize to contexts in which the victimization of their in-group is not central to the victim group members' social identity, and who are therefore ready to leave the past behind. For example, young Dutch-speaking Belgians whose group, despite past victimization by French speakers, enjoys stable and secure conditions (Rimé et al., 2015) may not show a preference for concrete representations of historical transgressions against their in-group. This may be the case because young Dutch-speaking Belgians' need for acknowledgment of the injustice done to their in-group may be lower than that of members of the victim groups examined in the present research.

Additionally, our findings may not be generalized to contexts in which members of the perceived perpetrator group are proud of and seek to draw attention to their violent actions. In these contexts, perpetrators intentionally utilize concrete representations, whose vividness effectively attracts and holds people's attention (Nisbett & Ross, 1980) while instilling fear in them. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria or Hamas, for example, created and released videos demonstrating atrocities committed against their victims (e.g., throwing gay people from rooftops, mutilating men's and women's bodies).

In terms of future directions, there are several potential mechanisms through which more abstract representations may serve to address perceived perpetrator group members' need to defend their in-group's moral identity: Abstract representations increase psychological distancing from the transgression (Trope & Liberman, 2010), lead to the perception of transgression as more common and less unique (Wohl & Branscombe, 2005), and reduce empathy toward the victims (Greenaway et al., 2012). Concrete representations, on the other hand, may address perceived victim group members' need for agency (which encompasses their need to voice their suffering,

Bruneau & Saxe, 2012), because they include detailed information that increases the credibility of victims' accusations (Hansen & Wänke, 2010), and enhance the contemporary relevance of historical transgressions by bringing them psychologically closer to the present (Trope & Liberman, 2010). Future research may examine these different mechanisms to provide a more nuanced understanding of the processes through which the effect of abstraction level is exerted.

Conclusion

The road to reconciliation is rocky. Even when the perceived historical perpetrator group officially acknowledged its culpability, offered a public apology for the wrongdoing, and compensated the perceived victim group (e.g., the Canadian government's apology and compensation of the indigenous victims of the residential school system; Blatz et al., 2009)—members of the perceived historical victim and perpetrator groups are still likely to adopt fundamentally different narratives to interpret the events. For example, members of perceived historical perpetrator groups might interpret their in-group's public apology for committing the transgression as a conclusive end to the reconciliation process, whereas members of perceived historical victim groups may consider this gesture an essential first step toward beginning this process (see Wohl et al., 2011).

Social psychological research underscores that "divergent construals of collective violence pose one of the most challenging obstacles to conflict resolution and reconciliation" (Bilali & Vollhardt, 2019, p. 75). Similarly, civil society practitioners in organizations that focus on confronting history as an avenue for reconciliation recognize the central role of these divergent narratives in impeding social transformation, and therefore intervene to increase conflicting group members' ability to see multiple perspectives (Bilali & Mahmoud, 2017). We hope that the insights gained through the present research, which point to subtle gaps between members of perceived victim and perpetrator groups that need to be addressed in the process of social transformation, can be used by these practitioners in their important work.

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