Reconciliation: Definitions and Processes

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The Presentation

• (I) Reconciliation: The Concept

• (II) Our work: The Need Based Model

• (III) Dilemmas:
  – Radical Forgiveness
  – False Reconciliation
(I) Definition: A Problem of Conceptual Stretching

– “... no one seems to know what it means...” (Gibson, 2006)
– “...no more than a fashionable buzzword...” (Hermann, 2004).
– “... it is easy to be overwhelmed by the heterogeneity of the concept...” (Meierhenrich, 2008).
(I) Reconciliation: The history of the concept

• Early meaning: Restoring “union” with church
  1539: Restoration of sacred use of church property
  1625: A person’s union with the church
  But also an Interpersonal meaning:

Also: Reconcile in harmony after estrangement

*Common to all definitions: Mending broken relationships (with God, church or other people)*
(I) Reconciliation: What is it?

• Early scientific research: Primate behavior (de Waal, 2000; Silk, 2002). Evolutionary function of reconciliation.

• In Intergroup Relations:
  – Post-conflict
  – Goes beyond settling conflicting interests
  – Emotional (e.g., feeling of trust in other, friendship, social closeness) and Identity-related (e.g., apology, forgiveness) processes.
  – Intends a different and sustainable harmonious future
# Emphases in Definitions of Intergroup Reconciliation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Structural Emphasis</th>
<th>Relational Emphasis</th>
<th>Socio-Emotional (identity) Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WHY CONFLICT ?</strong></td>
<td>Structural violence <em>(unequal social structure)</em></td>
<td>Distrust; Negative feelings/perception of adversary</td>
<td>Threats to psych identities of each party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BETWEEN?</strong></td>
<td><em>Advantaged and Disadvantaged</em></td>
<td><em>Adversaries</em></td>
<td><em>Victims and Perpetrators</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECONCILIATION: Goal ?</strong></td>
<td>Redistribution of Power, Equality</td>
<td>Trust; Better feelings and perceptions of other</td>
<td>Secure Identities-No threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How ?</strong></td>
<td>Political changes; Structural changes</td>
<td>Contact, dialogue</td>
<td>Apology-forgiveness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II: The Need Based Model- A Socio-Emotional Emphasis

• Instrumental vs. Socio-Emotional (Nadler, 2002)

• The need based model: Socio-Emotional Reconciliation

  Definition of Socio-Emotional Reconciliation:

  The removal of emotional barriers that are associated with threats to victims’ and perpetrators identity and which sustain conflict
(II) Key Assumptions

• Different threats to identity produce different needs:
  – Victims: To their identity as powerful and self-controlling actors. They experience need for power
  – Perpetrators: To their moral-image. Experience a need for acceptance and re-admission to the moral community;

• These needs can be met unilaterally or bi-laterally
(II) Unilateral Fulfillment of Needs: Maintains conflict

- Victim’s need for empowerment:
  - Taking revenge

- Perpetrator’s need for ‘moral adequacy’
  - Psychological distancing
    - From the act: “It’s nothing”
    - Responsibility for the act: “They brought it on themselves”
    - From the victim (lack of empathy): In extreme case dehumanization of the victim.
(II) Satisfaction of Needs as a Social Exchange: The Apology-Forgiveness Cycle

• Bi-lateral Satisfaction of needs increases RECONCILIATION

  – Apology (assuming responsibility): Gives power to the victim

  – Forgiveness: Gives acceptance to the perpetrator

  “The victim becomes the gatekeeper to what the outcast desires: Readmission into the human community” (Gobodo-Madikizela, 2003).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Victim</th>
<th>Perpetrator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impaired Emotional Resources:</td>
<td>sense of power (power)</td>
<td>moral image (love)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Sought from Partner:</td>
<td>empowerment (justice)</td>
<td>(liking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acceptance</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restore Balance by:</td>
<td>restored sense of power</td>
<td>moral image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>restored public</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resulting in:</td>
<td>increased willingness to reconcile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1:** *The Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008).*
Empirical Evidence

Interpersonal level (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008):

(a) Perpetrators = Need for **Acceptance** > **Power**

(b) Victims = Need for **Power** > **Acceptance**

(c) For perpetrators and victims messages of acceptance and empowerment increased willingness for reconciliation, respectively.

(d) Readiness to reconcile: Mediated by feelings of acceptance and empowerment.

• Intergroup level
Study 3: Willingness to reconcile as affected by messages of empowerment and acceptance (Shnabel & Nadler, JPSP, 2008).

- Participants in the victim/perpetrator condition received a message of empowerment/acceptance/control and their willingness to reconcile was then measured. (2 X 3 between participants experiment).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>VICTIM</th>
<th></th>
<th>PERPETRATOR</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empower</td>
<td>Accept</td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Empower</td>
<td>Accept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“Victimhood” and “Perpetration: Context and Psychological construal

• The malleability of victim/perpetrator: Context and Construal
  – Context: (Shnabel, Nadler, Ulrich & Dovidio, 2009):
    • Jews: Victims in context of German-Jewish
      – More willing to reconcile after empowerment
    • Jews: Perpetrators in Context of Arab-Jewish
      – More willing to reconcile after acceptance

• Psychological construal in Liberia: (Mazziotta, Gausel, Feuchte & Nadler, 2010)
The Intergroup Level
(Shnabel, Nadler, Ulrich & Dovidio, PSPB, 2009)

1. Willingness to reconcile – Study 1 (A X B, p<.01)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Arabs (victims)</th>
<th>Jews (perpetrators)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Study 2: Relations between Germans and Jews (A X B, p<.01)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jews (victims)</th>
<th>Germans (perpetrators)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>3.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extension to Structural Violence (Nadler & Shnabel, in press).

• Advantaged need Acceptance - Disadvantaged Need Empowerment

• Depends of Perceived security of status relations:
  – With “real groups” and “minimal groups”: When status relations were viewed as illegitimate: Higher level of needs (Siem, von Oetinger & Nadler, 2010).

• Satisfaction of need increase reconciliation between advantaged and disadvantaged?
  – Initial evidence: Yes.
  – Reconciliation means willingness of advantaged to lose power.
False Reconciliation: *The Constructive Value of Resentment*

- Forgiveness/Reconciliation: Religious/Therapeutic.
- Jean Amery: Unwillingness to forgive- Neither pathological nor immoral
  - Resentment an important tool against cheap reconciliation
  - The pressure to forsake resentment: Experienced as indifference and humiliation
  - Resentment expresses the victim’s feelings of worth and care for his/her human rights
A condition for forgiveness: “Negative Possession of Identity”

• Genuine Reconciliation:
  – PAST WRONGODINGS BECOME **NEGATIVE POSSESSIONS OF IDENTITY**

  – Examples: present German-Jewish relations; Possibility for reconciled Israeli-Jews/Israeli-Arabs

A possession of negative identity makes the “Separation of Self” between “Perpetrator self” and the “Genuine self” (Goffman) possible.
Conclusions

• Reconciliation: A multifaceted concept
• Socio-emotional reconciliation predicated on addressing the psychological needs of both parties
• The value of resentment and importance of “negative possession of identity” to prevent false reconciliations.