Chapter 6

General Discussion
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As separatist conflicts are characterised as among the most violent (Walter, 2009) and intractable (Walter, 2002) types of intergroup conflict, establishing and maintaining a peace which overcomes frictions among the disputing parties is a pressing need. Efforts aimed at promoting reconciliation, however, require thorough investigation into the feelings and thoughts (i.e., the social-psychological perspectives) of both majority and separatist groups specific to the context of the conflict. To achieve this goal, the present dissertation offers four empirical chapters highlighting several aspects vital to understanding disputing groups’ capacity for reconciliation. In Chapter 2 we examined predictors and mediators of the majority’s support for reconciling with the separatist group. In Chapter 3 the same social-psychological mechanisms are investigated, but with a focus on the separatist group’s willingness to reconcile with the majority. In Chapter 4 we examined the effectiveness of a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings, as opposed to a reminder of ingroup rightdoings, in fostering reconciliatory tendencies among the majority. Chapter 5 extended Chapter 4 by framing ingroup wrongdoings in terms of violations of moral ideals or violations of moral obligations, and compared the effectiveness of each morality frame in promoting the majority’s support for reconciliation with the separatist group.

In this chapter, I offer an overview of the main empirical findings of the present dissertation, as well as the theoretical and practical implications of these findings. In conclusion, the present limitations and possible directions for future studies are discussed.

Overview of the empirical findings

The investigation outlined in Chapter 2 was inspired by a paucity of social-psychological research on majority groups’ thoughts and feelings regarding separatist conflicts and the potential for reconciliation. The relevant social-psychological studies tend to devote their attention to the perspectives of the separatist group (e.g., Abrams & Grant, 2012; Grant, Bennett, & Abrams, 2017; Martinovic, Verkuyten, & Weesie, 2011; Sindic & Reicher, 2009), neglecting more detailed examination of the majority (but see van Leeuwen & Mashuri, 2013). The goal of Chapter 2 was to fill this gap in the literature, exploring the reasons for why morality threat could be a facilitating factor in the majority’s support for reconciliation. Based on the premises of NBMR (Shnabel, Nadler, Canetti-Nisim, & Ullrich, 2008; Shnabel, Nadler, Ullrich, Dovidio, & Carmi, 2009), I predicted that morality threat could be conducive to the promotion of reconciliation amongst the majority due to its role in increasing this group’s needs for social acceptance and the restoration of its moral image. Supporting this hypothesis, the main result discussed in Chapter 2 was the demonstration that morality threat was found positively related to the needs for social acceptance and the restoration of moral image, and these compensatory needs were a positive predictor of the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes (i.e., intergroup trust, positive intergroup attitudes, and positive intergroup stereotypes; Studies 2.1 and 2.2) and reconciliatory emotions (i.e., collective guilt and collective shame; Study 2.2). The additional finding in Chapter 2 further confirmed expectations in that across the two studies (i.e., Study 2.1 and Study 2.2), morality threat was positively predicted by the extent to which this particular group identified with the parent nation (i.e., national identification), in line with the group identity lens model (Verkuyten, 2009), and by the extent to which it felt economically and politically more powerful vis-à-vis the separatist group (i.e., perceived dominance), supporting the integrated threat theory of prejudice (ITT; Stephan, Ybarrá, & Rios, 2016).

I shifted the focus of Chapter 3 from the social-psychological perspectives of the majority to those of the separatist group. This empirical chapter provided a novel approach which was relatively unexplored in previous research, integrating analysis of identity motives and power motives with the
aim of illustrating how each of these motives uniquely predicts the separatist group’s support for reconciliation. The theoretical rationale in this chapter was built upon a combination of the model of group schism (Sani, 2005; Sani & Reicher, 2000; Sani & Todman, 2002) and the NBMR (Shnabel et al., 2008, 2009). Through the lens of these two theoretical models, I advanced a research question of why identity subversion and power threat are factors that can motivate a separatist group to oppose reconciliation. I hypothesised that identity subversion obstructs reconciliation by giving rise to perceived injustice, as does power threat due to its impact on elevating the need for subgroup empowerment. The main findings in Chapter 3 offered clear support for these hypotheses. It was found that identity subversion was positively associated with perceived injustice, which in turn decreased the separatist group’s reconciliatory attitudes (i.e., national identification, trust in the national government, positive intergroup attitudes, and positive intergroup stereotypes; Studies 3.1 and 3.2). Power threat was found to be positively associated with the need for subgroup empowerment, which in turn attenuated the separatist group’s reconciliatory attitudes (Studies 3.1 and 3.2). Moreover, in support of the additional hypothesis, Chapter 3 showed that across the two studies identity subversion and power threat were augmented by the separatist group’s feelings of being attached to its ethnic group (i.e., ethnic identification) and its sense of being dominated by the majority (i.e., perceived subordination), corroborating the logic of the group identity lens model (Verkuyten, 2009) and the ITT (Stephan et al., 2016).

In Chapter 4 I establish the research question, “to what extent does a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings, in contrast to a reminder of ingroup rightdoings, affect the majority’s sense of perpetratorhood and competitive victimhood, and how do these constructs ultimately predict this particular group’s reconciliatory attitudes?” In exploring this issue Chapter 4 offered the first empirical comparison of the impact of reminders of ingroup wrongdoings compared with reminders of ingroup rightdoings regarding the majority’s reconciliatory tendencies within the context of separatist conflict. The findings discussed in Chapter 4 were also the first to verify that the majority can simultaneously claim the role of perpetrator and victim, whereas these constructs (i.e., sense of perpetratorhood and victimhood) were assumed to be mutually exclusive in the previous research (e.g., Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998, 2006; Peetz, Gunn, & Wilson, 2010; Rees, Allpress, & Brown, 2013; Rotella & Richeson, 2013). Based on self-criticism literature (Brander & Hornsey, 2006; Hornsey, 2005; Hornsey & Imani, 2004) and related lines of research (e.g., Doosje et al., 2006; Zebel, Zimmermann, Viki, & Doosje, 2018), I predicted that the majority’s reconciliatory stance could be more effectively enhanced by means of a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings rather than a reminder of ingroup rightdoings, given the more consequential role of the former in inducing a greater sense of perpetratorhood. In support of this hypothesis, I found that a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings affected the majority’s sense of perpetratorhood more than a reminder of ingroup rightdoings. Furthermore, perpetratorhood positively predicted the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes (i.e., intergroup trust, positive intergroup attitudes, positive intergroup stereotypes, and perspective-taking). In accordance with the NBMR, the direct impact of perpetratorhood on reconciliatory attitudes was mediated by morality threat and the compensatory needs for social acceptance and the restoration of moral image. In further support of my hypothesis it was observed that, contrary to perpetratorhood, competitive victimhood was positively related to moral licensing, which in turn negatively predicted this group’s reconciliatory attitudes towards the separatist group by depressing the needs for social acceptance and the restoration of moral image. Finally, as hypothesised, Chapter 4 demonstrated that perpetratorhood positively predicted the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes, but only when this particular group perceived separation as highly
legitimate and, congruently, that the historical integration of the separatist group was lacking legitimacy.

Chapter 5 offered a follow-up study to that of Chapter 4, with the main goal of describing the specific mechanism by which a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings is beneficial to the promotion of reconciliation among the majority. To this end, Chapter 5 framed ingroup wrongdoings in terms of violations of moral ideals or, alternatively, as violations of moral obligations, and tested the extent to which the effect of this morality framing was qualified by the majority’s national identification. I adapted the morality framing procedure from the research of Does and colleagues (Does, Derks, & Ellemers, 2011; Does, Derks, Ellemers, & Scheepers, 2012). I hypothesised that for a strongly identified majority, moral ideals framing more so than moral obligations framing would contribute to the promotion of reconciliation. For a weakly identified majority, the hypothesis was reversed such that moral obligations framing was assumed to be more effective than moral ideals framing in enhancement of the majority’s support for reconciliation. As hypothesised, it was found that moral ideals framing than moral obligations framing resulted in higher levels of reconciliatory attitudes (i.e., intergroup trust, positive intergroup attitudes, positive intergroup stereotypes, and perspective-taking) and reconciliatory emotions (i.e., collective guilt and collective shame) among high identifiers. In stark contrast, among low identifiers, moral obligations framing generated more reconciliatory attitudes and reconciliatory emotions than moral obligations framing. Chapter 5 also served to reinforce Chapter 4 through complementing the ingroup wrongdoings condition with a neutral control condition. I hypothesised that the participants in the ingroup wrongdoings condition more so than participants in the control condition would report greater morality threat, reconciliatory attitudes, and reconciliatory emotions. Morality threat, as NBMR (Shnabel et al., 2008, 2009) suggests, was hypothesised to positively predict the need for social acceptance and the need for a restored moral image, and these compensatory needs mediated the effect of reminders of ingroup wrongdoings (i.e., an ingroup wrongdoings condition versus a control condition) on the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes and reconciliatory emotions. In line with these hypotheses, I found that the levels of participants’ morality threat, reconciliatory attitudes, and reconciliatory emotions in the ingroup wrongdoings condition were significantly higher than in the control condition. The effect of a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings on reconciliatory attitudes and emotions passed via perceived morality threat and the compensatory needs for social acceptance and a restored moral image. These observations demonstrated that reminders of ingroup wrongdoings are effective in promoting reconciliation as a spur towards perceived morality threat, which enhances the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes and emotions by augmenting the group’s compensatory needs.

This dissertation also aimed at providing better insight into the interrelations among the multifaceted constructs of intergroup reconciliation. I built my arguments on the theory of planned behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, 1991) and its extended version (e.g., Moons & De Pelsmacker, 2015) which proposes that attitudes and emotions are potent antecedents of intentions, and intentions in turn are the best predictor of behaviours, as compared to attitudes and emotions. Substantiating this expectation, in Chapter 2 (Study 2.2) I found that the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes and reconciliatory emotions positively predicted the group’s reconciliatory intentions (i.e., willingness to apologize, willingness to cooperate, and support for affirmative action). Chapter 3 revealed that the separatist group’s reconciliatory intentions (i.e., willingness to forgive, willingness to cooperate, and support for special autonomy) were a significant mediator of the impact of the secessionist group’s reconciliatory attitudes and reconciliatory emotions on reconciliatory behaviours (e.g., donating blood to other Indonesians). Chapter 5 outlines more empirical evidence in which the reported
reconciliatory intentions (i.e., willingness to apologize, willingness to cooperate, and support for affirmative action) significantly mediated the role of reconciliatory attitudes and emotions in predicting the majority’s reconciliatory behaviours (e.g., donating blood to indigenous Papuans).

**Theoretical implications**

**Morality threat as reflecting on the acceptance of negative meta-stereotypes**

In this dissertation morality threat was conceptualised as a negative meta-stereotype, connoting the majority’s beliefs that the separatist group negatively evaluates its group as immoral. Most distinct in Chapter 2 (Studies 2.1 and 2.2), as well as Chapters 4 and 5, the majority was found to express high levels of morality threat, and these empirical findings are noteworthy. The reason for this is that according to the intergroup sensitivity effect (ISE; Hornsey, Oppes, & Svensson, 2002), people tend to welcome criticisms by ingroup members. However, criticisms tend to be met with sensitivity and are received more defensively when made by outgroup members. In light of this, with nonetheless high levels of morality threat implying that the majority accepts the moral criticisms by the separatist group, it is demonstrated that people’s proclivity to resist negative evaluations from the outgroup can be overcome. These patterns suggest that people’s acceptance of outgroup moral criticisms may depend on two contexts, as described by Rabinovich and Morton (2010): (1) the content of the criticisms and (2) the identity of the critics. As for the content of the criticisms, morality threat in this dissertation assesses the extent to which the majority is concerned with the negative characterisations of its group in the eyes of the separatist group. As such, it may be associated with outgroup moral criticisms which emphasise how the wrongful actions of the majority against the separatist group are attributed to an internal cause, i.e., this non-separatist group’s immoral traits or dispositions. Rabinovich and Morton (2010) found that outgroup critics were effective in tackling the ingroup’s defensiveness in response to its wrongdoings when such critics attribute these misdeeds to an internal cause rather than an external cause (e.g., the circumstances that may compel the ingroup to commit collective transgressions).

Regarding the identity of the critics, Zebel, Doosje, and Spears (2009) argued that the perpetrating group evaluates moral criticisms from the victimised outgroup as being more credible and legitimate than those of the non-victimised outgroup. They found that moral criticisms from the victimised outgroup compared to those of the non-victimised outgroup induced more collective guilt. However, Shuman, Johnson, Saguy, and Halperin (2018) recently found evidence that outgroup moral criticisms are likely to carry considerable weight in enhancing the ingroup’s reconciliatory stances (i.e., feelings of collective guilt and willingness to take part in collective action challenging the ingroup transgressions) when the ingroup itself does not negatively stereotype the outgroup. Indeed, the present dissertation finds that the majority’s positive stereotypes towards the separatist group were high (see Table 2 in Appendix I; Table 4.2 in Appendix III; Table 5.3 in Appendix IV). In sum, resonating with Zebel et al.’s (2009) ideas and empirical findings, the observed high levels of morality threat were taken to suggest that members of the majority may strongly believe in the credibility and legitimacy of the separatist group’s negative meta-stereotypes about their own group. In line with Shuman et al.’s (2018) rationale and empirical findings, the high morality threat suggests that the majority holds low negative stereotypes about the separatist group. Overall, these arguments offer a coherent explanation for why it is that the majority is highly concerned about its own moral integrity as a group, and for why this perceived morality threat is then positively associated with feelings of collective guilt over its treatment of the separatist group (see Chapters 2 and 5).

**Morality threat and its connection to moral community**
The needs-based model of reconciliation (NBMR; Shnabel et al., 2008, 2009) suggests that morality threat is positively related to collective guilt as well as the compensatory needs, because it reflects anxiety over social exclusion from the ‘moral community’ to which it belongs. This refers to a collective belief in what counts as right or wrong, which motivates community members to act in accordance with a specific code of ethics (Tavuchis, 1991). A moral community may encompass various groups, however, comprised of subgroups as well as the superordinate majority. People take special care in their moral evaluations regarding groups considered to be part of their shared moral community (Vines, 2017). Applied within the context of the present research, this suggests that the majority may consider the separatist group as an integral part of an overarching moral community, sharing in the unifying heritage of the parent nation. This construal may motivate the majority’s concern with its disrepute in the eyes of the separatist group, prompting efforts to repair its tainted public image.

In the context of the present dissertation, the key concept that can explain how the majority’s sense of moral community is linked to its perceived morality threat is national identification. In this regard, as posited by Johnston, Banting, Kymlicka, and Soroka (2010), national identification can lead the majority to see its own group and co-nationals (i.e., a minority national group within a state) as part of a shared moral community within the parent nation. National identification can thus generate the feeling among the majority that separatist group members are “fellows” rather than “others,” who fall inside the bounds of the superordinate moral community. This perception generates the majority’s sense of connectedness and solidarity with the separatist group. In line with this reasoning, the current dissertation found that the majority’s national identification was positively correlated with this particular group’s morality threat (see Table 2 & Table 2.4 in Appendix I) and feelings of collective guilt and shame (see Table 2.4 in Appendix I; Table 5.3 in Appendix IV).

**Identity motives and power motives: The route to resistance of reconciliation**

In Chapter 3 of this dissertation (see Studies 3.1. and 3.2), I found that identity motives and power motives decreased the separatist group’s reconciliatory attitudes towards the majority. The existing historical accounts (e.g., Beary, 2011; Harris, 2009; Spencer, 1998) and social-psychological accounts (e.g., Abrams & Grant, 2012; Grant et al., 2017) on separatist movements suggest that separatist sentiments can be fuelled by either identity motives or power motives. Confirming this expectation, Chapter 3 of the current dissertation revealed a simultaneous impact of both identity motives and power motives in attenuating the separatist group’s reconciliatory attitudes. An instrumental model of group conflict (Esses, Jackson, & Armstrong, 1998) posits that the ingroup’s negative stereotypes towards the outgroup, which hinder intergroup reconciliation, stems from the former’s perception that its group is in conflict with the latter over valuable, tangible resources such as wealth, territory, and group power, or intangible resources such as social status, norms, and values. Resonating with this rationale, at the core of identity motives in the current dissertation was identity subversion, denoting the separatist group’s perception that the norms and values of its group are in conflict with those of the majority. Power motives originated from perceived power threat, denoting the separatist group’s view that the power of its group is in conflict with that of the majority.

In addition to this simultaneous impact of identity motives and power motives, the current dissertation, extending the existing literature, illustrates how each of these motives impairs the separatist group’s reconciliatory attitudes via a unique route. The route of identity motives describes that a sense of identity subversion attenuates reconciliatory attitudes by augmenting the separatist group’s perception that its group has been unjustly treated by the majority. The route of power
motives describes that a sense of power threat lowers reconciliatory attitudes by giving rise to the separatist group’s perception that its group power should be enhanced vis-à-vis the majority. This unique route to the resistance of reconciliation highlights different psychological mechanisms. The route of identity motives reflects a cognitive mechanism (Blanton, 2001; Cadinu & Rothbart, 1996). This mechanism describes how perceived identity conflict (i.e., identity subversion) may trigger the separatist group’s negative stereotypes towards the majority, which hinder reconciliation, because unfavourable perceptions may make the first group focus on information that reinforces intergroup gaps or dissimilarities (i.e., perceived injustice) instead of intergroup harmonies or commonalities. Meanwhile, the route of power motives reflects a motivational mechanism (Esses et al., 1998; Struch & Schwartz, 1989). This mechanism describes how perceived power conflicts (i.e., power threat) may be accountable for obstructing reconciliatory attitudes, as following the adoption of these derogatory cognitive beliefs motivates the separatist group to justify its aspirations in the dispute (i.e., being more powerful vis-à-vis the majority).

Overall, these empirical findings are taken to suggest that in order to promote reconciliation among the separatist group the majority should find the best solution to simultaneously tackle both identity motives and power motives. Of course, such efforts are not trivial as they can tax the majority’s resources. If the majority is reluctant, however, in addressing the two motives and devotes efforts to only one aspect of the issue, its attempts at reconciliation can be criticised on the basis that they do not genuinely represent the grievances of the separatist group. Such a fragmentary effort towards reconciliation can lead the majority’s affirmative action or autonomy programs to be treated with suspicion or outright rejected by the separatist group, falling short of achieving a durable peace.

**A reminder of ingroup wrongdoings, causal responsibility, and normative conflict**

During the course of this dissertation, it was revealed that the ingroup wrongdoings condition more so than the ingroup rightdoings condition (Chapter 4) enhanced the majority’s sense of perpetratorhood. The ingroup wrongdoings condition was also more effective in promoting the majority’s sense of morality threat, reconciliatory attitudes, and reconciliatory emotions compared with the control condition (Chapter 5). What can be inferred from these findings is that, echoing the arguments made by Powell, Branscombe, and Schmitt (2005), a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings has the potential to drive ingroup members to attribute the responsibility of the collective misdeeds to their own group. This causal responsibility in turn motivates the perpetrating group to reconcile its conflict with the victimized group, resulting from the former’s sense of perpetratorhood and feelings of collective guilt and shame (Zimmerman, Abrams, Doosje, & Manstead, 2011).

Moreover, Packer’s normative model of dissent (2008) suggests that a confrontation with ingroup wrongdoings can induce the perception that the ingroup has committed violations of its own moral norms and values. Awareness of this normative conflict in turn propels the perpetrating group towards reconciliation with the victim group as a means of amending its perceived misdeeds. This motivation to reform the ingroup, which is activated through perceived normative conflict, is stronger among high ingroup identifiers compared to low ingroup identifiers as empirically evidenced in previous research (e.g., Packer, 2008; Packer & Chasteen, 2010). Resonating with this rationale, Chapter 5 of this dissertation precisely demonstrated that among the majority high in national identification, a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings that was framed as a violation of moral ideals in contrast to a violation of moral obligations triggered more reconciliatory attitudes and reconciliatory emotions. This observation implies that framing ingroup wrongdoings as violations of moral ideals, as opposed to framing the collective misdeeds as violations of moral obligations, elicits
perceived normative conflict and, in turn, a motivation to reform the ingroup among high national identifiers.

**Positive peace, negative peace, and group identification**

In this dissertation, I operationalized reconciliation as a construct consisting of attitudes, emotions, intentions, and behaviours. In doing so, I aimed to not only analyse reconciliation as a multidimensional construct, but also to identify the manner of reconciliation which promotes positive peace, i.e., a peace that is stable and durable, and does not easily revert to conflict. Positive peace is distinct from negative peace, which is merely the absence of violence (Biton & Salomon, 2006; Galtung & Fischer, 2013). Positive peace is argued to be a more valid indicator of reconciliation than negative peace (Biton & Salomon, 2006; Clark, 2009). Unlike negative peace, the achievement of positive peace requires disputing parties to develop not only constructive cognitive orientations such as positive intergroup attitudes and mutual trust, or emotions that reflect an acknowledgement of outgroup harm such as collective guilt and shame; it also requires the willingness to forgive or to apologise, to support intergroup contact and cooperation, and to personally take part in activities that promote reconciliation (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004; Kelman, 2004; Nadler, Malloy, & Fisher, 2008). Maintaining such a disposition in cognition, affect, and behaviour is of course not easy, and even very costly, demanding great effort in the context of intergroup conflicts. It is not easy because intergroup conflicts, especially those that are ongoing, are commonly marked by mistrust, prejudice, revenge, and anger (Bruneau & Saxe, 2012; Halperin, 2011). It is costly because during intergroup conflicts, expressing feelings of collective guilt and shame suggests that ingroup members are themselves chiefly responsible for their collective wrongdoings, which can threaten their sense of social identity (Doosje et al., 2006; Klein, Licatta, & Pierucci, 2011). Even more costly is personal participation in reconciliatory activities (Cikara, Bruneau, & Saxe, 2011; Schmitt, Miller, Branscombe, & Brehm, 2008), as these activities may demand significant amounts of time and resources. People may also risk their own lives in these activities. That said, this dissertation found consistent and strong correlations between reconciliatory intentions and behaviours. These patterns were observed among the majority (see Chapters 2 and 5) as well as the separatist group (see Chapter 3). What can be derived from these findings is that despite the hurdles, the majority and separatist group’s support for reconciliatory programs or actions which specifically reflect each group’s reconciliatory intentions can translate into a personal willingness to take part in reconciliatory activities. Identifying reconciliatory strategies that are conducive to a positive peace appears feasible, among both the majority and the separatist groups.

Moreover, in Chapter 2 I found that national identification positively predicted the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes (Studies 2.1 and 2.2) and reconciliatory emotions (Study 2.2). Reasoning that reconciliatory attitudes and reconciliatory emotions are associated with positive peace as described above, these findings suggest that a strongly identified majority more so than its weakly identified counterpart conforms to difficult and costly demands on behalf of the ingroup. Indeed, Ellemers, Kortekaas, and Ouwerkerk (1999) argued that conforming to effortful demands on behalf of the ingroup implies a strong commitment to people’s own group. This commitment implies people’s strong sense of belongingness to their own group and a strong desire to continuously reinforce that identity, which is exhibited more pronouncedly by high identifiers than low identifiers. In Chapter 5, the majority’s wrongdoings against the separatist group were morally framed in terms of violations of moral ideals or violations of moral obligations. As moral ideals framing involves the persuasion toward actions and decisions that can achieve reconciliation, it is arguably more strongly associated with positive peace than negative peace. In contrast, as moral obligations framing
involves the persuasion toward actions and decisions that can avoid violence, it is likely more conducive to mere negative peace rather than positive peace. Because moral ideals framing is oriented to positive peace and moral obligations framing to negative peace, it can be argued that the former morality framing more so than the latter may be perceived as being more difficult, more costly, and simply more effortful to follow. In line with Ellemers et al.’s (1999) rationale suggesting how high identifiers more so than low identifiers, by virtue of their relatively high ingroup commitment, conform to effortful demands of their own group, we found in Chapter 5 that among strongly identified majority members, moral ideals framing was more effective than moral obligations framing in eliciting reconciliatory attitudes and reconciliatory emotions. This pattern was reversed among less identified majority members such that moral obligations framing was more effective compared to moral ideals framing in promoting positive attitudes and emotions.

**Linking instrumental reconciliation to socio-emotional reconciliation**

The needs-based model of reconciliation (NBMR: Shnabel et al., 2008, 2009) is built upon the premise that intergroup reconciliation is a process of ameliorating threats to the moral image of the perpetrating group, and to the sense of power, control, and agency of the victim group. The perception of these differential threats is likely to develop following wrongdoings in protracted intergroup conflicts. Successfully ameliorating the threats can facilitate so-called socio-emotional reconciliation, which refers to the satisfaction of the perpetrating group’s needs for social acceptance and the restoration of moral image, as well as the victim group’s need for empowerment (Nadler, 2012). Socio-emotional reconciliation, according to the NBMR, follows the logic of the apology–forgiveness cycle (Tavuchis, 1991), whereby the perpetrating group’s needs for social acceptance and the restoration of moral image can be satisfied when the victim group is willing to grant forgiveness. The victim group’s need for empowerment can be satisfied when the perpetrating group is willing to apologise for its transgressions. However, as pointed out by Nadler (2012), intergroup reconciliation can also take the form of instrumental reconciliation. Kelman (2008) theorised that instrumental reconciliation requires disputing parties to mutually maintain reciprocal trust, positive attitudes, and respect.

The remaining question that needs to be addressed is, “can socio-emotional reconciliation be connected to instrumental reconciliation?” There are yet no empirical investigations addressing this uncertainty. However, Nadler et al. (2008; see also Nadler, 2012) argued that instrumental reconciliation is likely a precondition for socio-emotional reconciliation. To be willing to apologise, perpetrators should first develop a foundation of constructive cognitive orientations (i.e., mutual trust, positive attitudes, and respect), as should the victims in enabling their willingness to forgive. Corroborating this argument, the present dissertation revealed that the majority’s constructive cognitive orientations were positively related to their willingness to apologise for wrongdoings against the separatist group (see Chapter 2, Study 2.2 [Table 2.4 in Appendix I]; Chapter 5 [Table 5.3 in Appendix IV). As for the separatist group, Chapter 3 of this dissertation (see also Table 3.6 in Appendix II) found that their constructive cognitive orientations were positively related to a willingness to grant forgiveness for collective misdeeds. This dissertation presents the first such effort to empirically confirm the interconnection between socio-emotional reconciliation and instrumental reconciliation.
Limitations and recommendations for future research

Peaceful or violent responses to separatist conflict: The role of the involvement of third parties

In this dissertation, the focus of my investigation was on separatist conflicts assumed to involve two parties: the majority and separatist groups. Yet separatist conflicts can also involve third parties, such as that of East Ukraine pitting West European countries and the United States against Russia (Mortimer, 2017; Peterson, 2017), and the conflict in Turkey pitting the United States against Russia by proxy (Fraser & Vasilyeva, 2018; Landler & Gall, 2018). The relevant literature suggests that external forces are more likely to intervene in separatist conflicts when the tensions of the conflict escalate (Cooper & Berdal, 1993; Saideman, 2012). These external forces are more likely to support separatist groups with which they have special relations, and when secessionist disputes within a country are deemed a threat to regional stability (Saideman, 2002). The separatist groups that gain support from external forces are more likely to radicalise their methods (Jenne, Saiderman, & Lowe, 2007). In response to the intervention of external forces, some governments are willing to accommodate the separatist group’s aspirations as evidenced in Indonesia with the East Timor independence referendum. However, other governments continue to resist and oppress separatist groups, even under the pressure of international forces, as seen in China and Turkey (Hannum, 1998). The empirical evidence overall indicates that the involvement of third parties in separatist conflicts can significantly influence the ways in which government and separatist factions respond to the issue. When third parties intervene in separatist conflicts, this often implies that they take sides in the dispute. This manner of intervention, according to some literature (Black & Baumgartner, 1983; Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992), only escalates intergroup conflict. The needs-based model of reconciliation (NBMR; Shnabel et al., 2008, 2009) suggests that genuine de-escalation and resolution requires that both disputing party’s psychological needs (i.e., needs for social acceptance restoration of moral image for the perpetrating, dominant group; need for empowerment for the victim, dominated group) be satisfied. The question remains, “to what extent should majority and separatist groups be considered capable of addressing each other’s threatened psychological needs?”

According to the NMBR, and empirically supported in the previous studies (see Shnabel et al., 2008; Shnabel, Halabi, & Noor, 2013), the parties directly involved on either side of the dispute should simultaneously empower and accept their counterparts. The influence of third parties, even when they are perceived as being neutral, is suboptimal compared to the efforts and concessions of the opposing party in promoting reconciliation (Harth & Shnabel, 2015). But what happens when the third parties show blatant partiality? This question has yet to be addressed through empirical research. I speculate that, in accordance with the NBMR, the third parties that support the majority might satisfy their needs for social acceptance (e.g., forming alliances) and the need for the restoration of moral image (e.g., a feeling that what the majority has done towards the separatist group is right). Meanwhile, the separatist group might feel that the outside influence obstructs its need for empowerment (e.g., hindering the separatist group’s aspiration to challenge the power of the majority). Does this mean that third parties’ interventions favouring the majority help the dominant group become more willing to reconcile, yet simultaneously decrease the separatist group’s reconciliatory tendencies? In contrast, the third parties that endorse the separatist groups might be perceived by the majority as hindering their own needs for social acceptance and the restoration of moral image. For the separatist group, this partiality might be taken to satisfy this group’s need for empowerment. Does this imply that this manner of third party intervention may boost the separatist group’s support for reconciliation, but otherwise attenuate such conciliatory...
tendencies among the majority? These questions could open up new avenues of research, and should be empirically tested in future studies.

**Differentiating morality threat as moral defect or moral condemnation**

In relation to negative meta-stereotypes, morality threat in the present dissertation refers to the extent to which the majority believes in the moral deficits or trespasses of its own group in the eyes of the separatists. Operationalized as such, I found that, in line with the NBMR, morality threat was positively associated with the compensatory needs for social acceptance and the restoration of moral image, which themselves were positively related to the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes and emotions. These results suggest that morality threat is a facilitating factor for the majority’s support of reconciliation. However, Gausel, Leach, Vignoles, and Brown (2012) argued that in intergroup conflict, the disputing parties can also be concerned with so-called moral condemnation, which occurs when outside groups express disapproval through scorn or ridicule of the moral standing of the ingroup. They found that concern for moral condemnation positively predicted the perpetrating group’s physical and psychological avoidance of the victim group. Meanwhile, concern for moral defect positively predicted the perpetrating group’s support for making restitution. Morality threat, when construed as moral defect, may represent what Allpress et al. (2014) termed a genuine moral concern, given its merit in enhancing reconciliation. Morality threat that is construed as moral condemnation may rather reflect what Alpress et al. (2014) termed as defensive moral concern. These notions can be tested in future studies by differentiating between morality threat as moral defect and morality threat as moral condemnation, offering assessment of their potentially distinct influence over the majority’s willingness to reconcile.

**Examining moderators of the relationship between the compensatory needs and support for reconciliation**

In this dissertation, the compensatory needs for social acceptance and for the restoration of moral image have been empirically confirmed as positive predictors of the majority’s reconciliatory attitudes or reconciliatory emotions regarding the separatist group. These findings corroborate the basic tenet of NBMR (Shnabel et al., 2008, 2009) suggesting that the compensatory needs denote the desire of the perpetrating group to establish rapport or constructive relations with the victim group. Meanwhile, the need for subgroup empowerment has been found to depress the separatist group’s reconciliatory stance toward the majority. This observation likewise resonates with the logic of the NMBR, suggesting that the need for subgroup empowerment denotes the desire of the victim group to enhance its power vis-à-vis the perpetrating group.

Within the context of separatist conflict, the need for subgroup empowerment is at odds with reconciliation as the achievement of peace requires the separatist group to relinquish its aspiration of exerting more power against the majority (Bakke, O’Loughlin, & Ward, 2009). The NBMR (Shnabel et al., 2008, 2009) contends that reconciliation occurs when the perpetrating group is willing to satisfy the victim group’s need for subgroup empowerment, and alternatively the victim group is willing to satisfy the perpetrating group’s need for social acceptance. Future studies could attempt to verify whether the willingness of the majority to meet the separatist group’s need for subgroup empowerment can reduce the impact of this need in depressing the latter group’s reconciliatory stance. Future studies could also examine whether the willingness of the separatist group to fulfil the majority’s need for social acceptance can enhance the role of this compensatory need in promoting its willingness to reconcile. It may be valuable as well for future studies to assess the extent to which the majority or separatist groups *believe in their own ability* to fulfil those needs, and look at the impact of such a perceived efficacy on each of these groups’ reconciliatory stances. Prior research (Stewart, Latu, Branscombe, & Denney, 2010) revealed that the perpetrating group’s
perceived efficacy in making reparations to the victim group enhanced their collective guilt over harmful actions, as well as their support for providing reparations. In brief, examining this perceived efficacy is important as successful reconciliation depends upon not only how one party views the perspectives of the other, but also those of its own members (Bakke et al., 2009).

Implementing comprehensive and interactive models of intervention to promote reconciliation

This dissertation focused on social-psychological interventions addressed at the majority (see Chapters 4 and 5). The reason for this is that the majority, compared to the separatist group, frequently exercises more power, which assigns it the de facto role as the initiator of reconciliation in separatist conflict (Satha-Anand, 2016). Social-psychological interventions aimed at the majority may therefore stand a better chance of gaining success in promoting reconciliation. This does not mean, however, that the potential efficacy of interventions aimed at separatist groups should be ignored. Successful reconciliation requires not only that the majority is willing to apologise and grant affirmative action or autonomy. It also depends on the extent to which separatist group members are willing to forgive the majority and accept the proposed reparative programs (Bakke et al., 2009). It is pivotal to devise a comprehensive social-psychological intervention which takes into account the needs and perspectives of both parties in promoting reconciliation. Whereas this dissertation is focused on fostering reconciliation among the majority, future studies could develop practical and effective interventions aimed at both sides of the dispute.

Another limitation that deserves attention is that I examined the social-psychological perspectives of the majority and the separatist groups regarding reconciliation, as well as the effectiveness of interventions on the promotion of reconciliation among the majority in separate studies. Although beneficial in gaining a detailed insight into how the majority and the separatist group feel and think about reconciliation, these separate studies do not allow for an evaluation of the effectiveness of an interactive social-psychological intervention to promote reconciliation. This type intervention involves practical strategies that are effective in promoting reconciliation by considering how the majority reacts to the feelings, thoughts, and behaviours of the separatist group and vice versa. Development of such an intervention is of great importance, given that the success or failure of reconciliation in separatist conflict depends on the mutual reactions of the majority and the separatist group as put forward above. Future research may profit from this idea by examining in a single study the extent to which the majority and the separatist group’s reconciliatory emotions, attitudes, and behaviours are affected by the willingness of each disputing party to express guilt and shame, apology or forgiveness, and to grant or accept autonomy or affirmative action programs.

Practical implications for the majority and separatist group

As separatist conflicts typically involve (at least) a majority and a separatist group, any efforts dedicated to promoting reconciliation should take into account the perspectives of both parties to enable effective social-psychological interventions. The empirical findings in this dissertation have shown that a reminder of ingroup wrongdoings more so than a reminder of ingroup rightdoings (see Chapter 4) or a no-reminder of the ingroup action (i.e., a control condition; see Chapter 5) was effective in promoting reconciliation among the majority. This suggests that in order to enhance the majority’s reconciliatory tendencies in separatist conflict, it is important for this group to be willing to acknowledge its harmful and unjust actions against the separatist group. In separatist conflict in particular and other collective conflicts in general, the majority is represented by the government, and it is this ruling body that executes reconciliatory programs or policies. Historical records reveal that governments tend to focus on executing programs or policies such as affirmative actions or the granting of autonomy or federalism when they believe them to be beneficial to the separatist group (Martin, 2001; Weller, & Nobbs, 2011). But reparative programs
are oftentimes futile in winning the hearts of the separatist group, especially when they are not paired with the government’s acknowledgement of its wrongdoings (Cornell, 2002; Hechter, 1992).

To develop reparative actions that have great potential for success and are beneficial to the promotion of reconciliation, they should be complemented with the government’s acknowledgement of its wrongdoings against the separatist group. The willingness of the government to acknowledge its wrongdoings may represent an aspiration of the separatist group, and as a result it can be instrumental in increasing the latter’s support for reconciliation. Indeed, prior work has demonstrated that the perpetrating group’s willingness to acknowledge its wrongdoings decreases the victim group’s anger, and enhances this group’s psychological well-being as well as its willingness to reconcile (Iqbal, & Bilali, 2017; Vollhardt, Mazur, & Lemahieu, 2014). What can be derived from these findings is that the acknowledgment of ingroup wrongdoings is beneficial for the promotion of reconciliation for both majority and separatist groups. Yet despite this merit, the acknowledgement of ingroup wrongdoings in reality is not an easy process. Its implementation is frequently hindered in that within intergroup conflicts, especially when prolonged, the disputing parties both tend to view themselves as the “real” victims of collective transgressions. Under these circumstances, neither the majority nor the separatist groups are likely willing to admit their past wrongdoings, which naturally stalls the process of intergroup reconciliation.

Indeed, the relevant literature (Banks, 2002; Govier & Verwoerd, 2002) suggests that not all governments are willing to acknowledge their past or current misdeeds. What commonly happens then is that the governments favour the option of granting the separatist groups with affirmative action or autonomy programs without acknowledging their own wrongdoings. This phenomenon is called ‘peace without justice,’ as observed in Aceh (Aspinall, 2008) and West Papua (Tebay, 2005), which renders the process of reconciliation in these separatist regions fragile and fraught with opposition. When the acknowledgment of ingroup wrongdoings is absent, governments’ affirmative action and autonomy programs may be negatively evaluated as unsolicited or assumptive help (for a review on negative consequences of assumptive help to the recipients, see Nadler, 2017; van Leeuwen, 2017), which can lead to resistance. As suggested by Nadler (2012), one way to solve this difficulty is by encouraging both parties to acknowledge their role as either victim or perpetrator. The acceptance of this dual role may facilitate the development of the cycles of reciprocal apology–forgiveness. Within these cycles, the majority and the separatist group alike may develop adequate mutual trust in that one group’s acknowledgment of its collective wrongdoings is reciprocated with a similar acknowledgement by the other.

**Concluding remarks**

Separatist movements are a social phenomenon that spread in many countries across the world, threatening the stability of established political entities due to its violent and intractable nature. Deescalating conflict and establishing peace among the disputing parties is of paramount importance. Despite the pressing need, there is a notable dearth of social psychological research that has made reconciliation in such conflicts the focal point of its empirical investigation—and even less so pertaining to social-psychological interventions conducive to reconciliation. The aim of this dissertation was to address these gaps, offering an examination of the social-psychological factors and interventions that can promote reconciliation in separatist conflict.

The empirical studies presented in this dissertation assume that separatist conflicts involve two disputing parties harbouring contrary points of view: the majority that resists separatism and the separatist group that advocates its demand for autonomy. I investigated how majority and separatist groups alike think and feel about their involvement in conflict. Uncovering these
perspectives has helped me through this dissertation in gaining a better insight into the social-psychological factors that facilitate or hinder support for reconciliation among the majority and separatist groups. This dissertation also examines the effectiveness of social-psychological interventions in attenuating the majority’s defensive reactions to its harm against the separatist group and, in turn, in promoting reconciliation among members of this non-separatist group. Finally, this dissertation confirms that the nature and the dynamics of reconciliation are complex. In this regard, I interpret reconciliation as a multidimensional construct that bears within it attitudinal, affective, intentional, and behavioural components, and assess the relations among these components.

This dissertation provides answers to several important research questions. Some limitations remain, however, raising new questions, and potential directions for future research have been outlined accordingly. I hope that by addressing these remaining gaps in our knowledge, follow-up studies will provide a more in-depth account concerning the underlying mechanisms of reconciliation in separatist conflict. These future studies can hopefully provide scholars and practitioners with further insight into social-psychological interventions that are effective in promoting reconciliation not only among members of the majority, which is the focus of this dissertation, but also among those of the separatist group.