

# Empirical criteria for reconciliation in practice

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*This article illustrates the opinion that a bottom-up reconciliation requires, in addition to a top-down legal and political agreement between the parties, a complementary educational and social-psychological process. After an intractable conflict such a process will help the people involved to work through and let go of hatred, the desire for revenge, the mistrust, and the pain that were imprinted as a result of the conflict. A successful synchronisation of these two processes could diminish the danger of a renewed outburst of violence. The article discusses experience with the TRT (To Reflect and Trust) group, which has brought together Jewish descendants of Holocaust survivors and German descendants of Nazi perpetrators over the past thirteen years. Lessons learned from these experiences are applied to the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the course of this discussion, the concept of reconciliation is critically examined. Several empirical criteria are suggested to study reconciliation in practice.*

**Keywords:** cultural differences, dialogue, Hudna, monolithic identity construction, Musalaha, reconciliation, secondary reconciliation, religious differences, Sulha, Ubuntu, working through

## **The concept of reconciliation**

The concept of reconciliation is quite widespread today and used extensively when conflict transformation is discussed

(Kriesberg, 1998; Lederach, 1998; Bar-Tal, 2000). Its introduction is usually based on the assumption that after a political settlement has been reached top-down, another bottom-up process should take place in which any unresolved issues of the conflict will be handled as well. It is assumed that without such a bottom-up complementary process, there is a real danger that the top-down conflict settlement will not last and a new violent outbreak might follow.<sup>1</sup>

One should take into account that the top-down and bottom-up processes are difficult to synchronize because of the lack of a common language and social perspective. The politicians who are in charge of the top-down processes are looking for short-term measurable results, as they have to be accountable to their voters. The bottom-up activists, or academics, are usually more interested in long-term social processes that are difficult to measure, and are accountable to more disciplinary criteria of truth seeking or justice. Therefore, when both parties use the term 'reconciliation', one should be careful to test what is meant by the different aspects while using the same idiom.

Within the reconciliatory process, several issues have to be addressed simultaneously, regarding both the *perpetrators* and *victims* of

the conflict. One could deliberate if the *perpetrators* should be brought to trial and punished (like in the Nuremberg trials or the current tribunal in Den Haag) or if they should confess and be given amnesty like in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) process. One has to relate to the perspective of the *victims* as well: how should they be compensated? Who will address their on-going plight stemming from the conflict, or from before its violent outbreak?

These aspects have been dealt with mostly as legal issues in the aftermath of a conflict. However, reconciliation has a psychosocial component as well as a legal one. The concept of reconciliation suggests that the enemies of yesterday will give up and let go of their hatred, animosity or desire for revenge, as well as their identity that may have been constructed around the conflict. One expects that a new identity construction will develop, along with a new relationship, between former enemies that will address the roots of the conflict and not only its unfortunate outcomes. How can we create such a deep process of change in people who have been committed to conflict, in some places for generations, or in others for a substantial part of their lives? Are these expectations realistic, or is it wishful thinking and talking that has little meaning in intractable conflicts?

We must recognise that reconciliation is basically a religious emotive concept that has been introduced into the social sciences discourse, in order to address key issues that earlier cognitive conceptualisations such as formal conflict resolution did not resolve properly. In this discussion, I would like to bring the religious, somewhat idealised, discourse down to earth by discussing some of its limitations, and by suggesting some empirical criteria to test its

feasibility. In this analysis I will rely heavily on my experiences with the TRT (To Reflect and Trust) group process<sup>2</sup>, as a longitudinal case study on the micro level, taking into account both the advantages of such thick observation of a single case study (Greetz, 1973) and the limits of its application to other on going conflicts (Bar-On, et al., 2000).

I would like to start with *religious and cultural differences* relating to the theoretical concept of reconciliation. Reconciliation is basically a Christian concept, very much integrated into the religious discourse from very early (Rittner & Roth, 2000). Judaism and Islam have very different religious approaches to reconciliation. According to Judaism, only the perpetrators themselves can approach the victims they have hurt, take official responsibility for the deed and ask for apology or forgiveness. Only after the victim accepts this plea, can reconciliation take place. No one can do it on behalf of the perpetrator. Dorff (1992) discusses the possibility of *secondary reconciliation (reconciliation between descendants of perpetrators and victims)*. But he does not represent the more orthodox view of Judaism that is not yet prepared to accept such flexibility in the implementation of reconciliation. The Islamic tradition and practices (like *Sulha*, *Hudna* or *Musalaha*) are closer to the Jewish tradition than they are to the Christian tradition (Irani & Funk, 2000).

It is, therefore, not a coincidence that the South African TRC process took place between two parties that belong to the same Church and that the African concept of *Ubuntu*<sup>3</sup> does not divert basically from the Christian notion (Villa Vicencio & Savage, 2001; Tutu, 1999). Symbolically, Archbishop Tutu was assigned as the Chairman of the Commission and some of its sessions were held in Churches (Boraine & Levy,

1995). When relating to the micro context of the TRT group, the group did not accept the concept of reconciliation as representing its work, as was suggested by one of its members, Martin Bormann, a former Catholic priest, in the BBC film made about the group (Time Watch, 1993). After watching the film, the Jewish members of the group said that they had no right to forgive in the name of their relatives who had been murdered during the Holocaust (Dorff, 1992). The terms *to reflect and trust* (TRT) were then chosen as alternative concepts, on which both the Jewish and Christian members of the group could agree.

**Empirical verification of related concepts: *dialogue* and *working through*<sup>4</sup>**

I wish to emphasise that the term 'reconciliation' needs empirical verification and precision in order to fulfil an important role in the future discourse of conflict transformation and social healing. In order to move from the somewhat theoretical and quasi-religious discourse into a more pragmatic and testable discourse, it must be specified how reconciliation differs from lack of reconciliation, and how different levels of reconciliation can be observed or measured. Empirical categories should be developed and tested, both in the laboratory and in real life situations. Until then, I would rather use somewhat related terms, such as the concepts of *dialogue* and *working through*. These concepts have already been developed conceptually and tested empirically in the communication and psychological literature. We know more about how dialogue or working through differs from lack of these processes (Bar-On, 1990). We have already identified different stages that empirically differentiate between these contrasting situations. We still have yet to dis-

cover how one can identify such stages or aspects of reconciliation in an empirical way.

For example, when relating to the concept of *dialogue*, Steinberg identified six categories of discourse in Israeli Jewish-Palestinian workshops that discussed the conflict (Steinberg & Bar-On, 2002). These categories represent the gradual changes that take place from an ethnocentric (non-dialogical) discourse, through attacks, opening a window<sup>5</sup>, intellectual exchange to addressing the different frames of reference and dialogical moments. Steinberg showed how the discourse changed over the weekly encounters, but not in a linear way. She also showed how the problem of the students' re-entry into their separate societies, still engaged in the conflict, caused the students to give up dialogical moments they reached and to revert to less dialogical categories of discourse as a preparation for what awaited them outside the workshop room.

I developed an empirical way of describing five stages of *working through*, when interviews with the descendants of Nazis and descendants of Holocaust survivors were analyzed (Bar-On, 1990). First, one has to know what had happened and how one's own family members were affected by what had happened during the violent acts. Second, this knowledge has to be framed as part of a wider understanding or meaning. These could either be a religious, historical, ethical or psychosocial meaning-making frames, or a combination of them. Then, after the knowledge has been framed, usually a strong emotional reaction will follow which could be either positive or negative, specifically toward the parent toward whom this process is related. Fourth, a phase of splitting will follow; in which the strong initial emotional reaction will be contrasted to the opposite emotion one feels toward that

person. Finally, if a person has succeeded in working through all these phases, s/he may be able to integrate the knowledge, understanding, the strong initial emotional reaction, and the splitting and become independent (neither dependent nor counter-dependent) from the person in question.

These studies have helped to clarify conceptually what are dialogue and working through and test these terms empirically, so that one can identify where an individual or a group actually are at a certain moment while relating to these concepts.

### **Parameters for empirical testing if reconciliation is taking place**

I would like to suggest several parameters for empirically testing if a process of reconciliation is taking place in a specific conflict<sup>6</sup>. I do not claim that these criteria are arranged in any linear order, but rather that their combination provides a kind of a profile to diagnose where the reconciliatory process is currently heading and where one has to try and go in order to move forward. The proposed parameters are: confidence, reflectivity, identity construction, time dimension, subjective language, women and children as specific target populations, unilateral versus bi-lateral initiatives, and the careful management of hope. I will now discuss each of these parameters separately.

*Confidence and trust building.* Violent conflicts usually destroy the confidence in a social contract that a society achieved earlier and this takes its toll on both interpersonal and inter-community relationships. In Bosnia, this meant that even within the same families (the interethnic marriage rate was 46% prior to the outbreak of violence) family bonds were destroyed due to the conflict (Ignatieff, 1998). Therefore, the process of reconciliation has to address and try to rebuild trust and confidence where it was

severely damaged. One cannot expect that this will happen immediately. Trust can be broken in an instant but may take years to be re-established (Gibson, 2000). It is not a coincidence that the TRT group, a process that took place more than fifty years after the Holocaust, chose trust as its first self-description parameter. The role of storytelling that the group initiated helped to re-establish some level of interpersonal trust that could later be translated into inter-communities trust (Albeck, Adwan & Bar-On, 2002). Trust can not be established only through storytelling or the mere use of words, but has to be accompanied by deeds: punishment of perpetrators, taking care of the plight and needs of the victims, formal agreements between the parties, and economic and educational initiatives to change the status quo in asymmetric contexts (Maoz, 2004). However, without some work on the emotional development of confidence and trust, the effect of these deeds will be erased after some time, as the reconciliatory processes are based on their combination, rather than one or other.

*Reflectivity and dialogue.* Reflectivity suggests ability for an inner dialogue, while the term dialogue is usually used to describe its interpersonal form. The two are complementary aspects to overcome silence and silencing (Bar-On, 1999b). Violent conflicts create zones of silencing in a society; silencing the acts and responsibility of the perpetrators, silencing the suffering and shame of the victims, silencing the role of the bystanders, even sometimes silencing the good Samaritans who rescued the victims from the hands of the perpetrators (Bar-On, 1989). Silencing can easily be transmitted to the following generations. Post-conflict psychosocial working through processes can take place only if some level of reflectivity and dialogue are established that can

penetrate through the domains of collective silencing. Again, it is not a coincidence that the TRT group chose reflectivity and dialogue as the second major parameter to describe its work: penetrating the veil of silences that their parents had shrouded them in, together with the rest of the German and Jewish societies of which they were a part (Bar-On et al., 2000). It may be that some of the reflectivity will happen first separately within each of the segments of the society that were split apart as a result of the conflict, but this eventually will lead to some new understanding and capacity for dialogue between the parties in conflict. For example, in the Israeli Jewish-Palestinian encounters, some reflectivity occurred first during the mono-national meetings, when the Jews and the Palestinians met separately. This helped establish new understandings and mutual reflectivity and dialogue in the following bi-national encounters (Maoz, et al, 2002; Bar-On & Kassem, 2004).

*Identity reconstruction.* The reconstruction of collective identity in post-conflict situations is closely linked to the ability to reflect and enter into dialogue with oneself and others, especially the previously perceived 'enemies' (Bar-On, 1999a). Intractable conflicts lead parties to develop a *monolithic* identity construction, in which each side constructs its collective identity *in opposition to the hostile 'other'*. Such a monolithic construction is very powerful, as every threat or violent act of the other instigates it anew, even if in many other aspects the monolithic constructions of both parties are no longer relevant to account for the complexity of the reality. For example, in the Palestinian-Israeli case, the Jewish-Israeli monolithic construction started to disintegrate in the nineties, as a social reaction to the peace process and due to a variety of other needs and voices within Jewish-Israeli society that

the initial monolithic construction did not address properly. But since the outbreak of the recent Intifada in October 2000, a kind of a *neo-monolithic* construction reappeared. The lethal effect of the Palestinian suicide bombings that has caused the death of many Israelis in a relatively short time instigated such a neo-monolithic reconstruction ('they want to kill us') that seemed already to have faded away during the Oslo process.<sup>7</sup>

The deconstruction and reconstruction of collective identities in post-conflict societies require the establishment of an internal process of reflection and forgiveness that will reinforce the external dialogue between the parties in conflict. In the deconstruction process, the monolithic self-representation is replaced by a more complex representation of the self as bits and pieces that do not fit together (Bar-On, 1999a). A dialogue among these parts can help replace the coherent representation of the past. If people can address the bits and pieces within themselves that no longer fit, they may be able to address also those within others, and vice versa.

In some post-conflict realities, one of the major obstacles to reconciliation has been the lack of an internal reflectivity to which people were accustomed. They externalised and projected all the evil onto the 'other' and stifled internal communication channels that suggested an internal variability or disharmony. In post-conflict realities it may be very difficult to let go of the monolithic construction, as many people feel that there is nothing that may hold them together as a collective or, even as individuals, anymore. This may explain, for example, why some East European countries moved from Communism directly to some form of neo-nationalism or religious collective constructions. It represented the fear of a total loss

of collective identity, as a result of the fall of the powerful previous monolithic construction. Though the previous monolithic construction had not been relevant for many years, in many ways, as it could not account for the changes in social and economic reality, its disintegration may still be frightening and painful for many.

The role of psychosocial reconciliatory processes<sup>8</sup> between parties means to also acknowledge and support the need to go through a gradual process of internal change. A 'hard' and simplistic identity construction that has been developed to support the conflict has to be replaced by a 'softer', more complex, and less monolithic construction. This process of change may then lead to a new and richer dialogue also with the 'other', helping to change its perspective from an 'enemy' to a 'partner'.

*The long-range temporal dimension.* Top-down peace making processes may happen in a relatively short time span. Internal and external reconciliatory processes usually need a much longer time perspective. When the need for such long-term bottom-up processes are overlooked or underestimated, the peace agreement may create merely an *illusion of settlement*, and in the end become a failure.

The absence of such long-term, bottom-up reconciliatory processes could have been one of the reasons for the failure of the Oslo peace process between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The Oslo process created a hectic timetable for the implementation of top-down agreements, without recognising the need for long-term bottom-up reconciliatory processes between people at the grassroots level. Processes aimed at developing trust and reflectivity did not take place, and therefore both societies were unable to address the more difficult issues (like the resettlement of the Palestinian

refugees, or the Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza); issues that were originally not addressed in Oslo and left for a later phase.

In Guatemala, a different process took place, in which a combination of bottom up process, dealing with the more difficult issues, such as the resettling of refugees, was initiated even before the top-down peace-making process. Refugee repatriation and resettlement were followed by peace talks with the government (Boggio, 2002). Grassroots reconciliatory processes are time consuming, and their outcomes are difficult to measure. This can become a major source of misunderstandings between peace-makers (politicians who usually work top-down) and peace-builders (social activists and scientists who facilitate processes bottom-up). For future peace-building initiatives to succeed, politicians, social activists and scientists need to develop a common language and time perspective.

*Subjective narratives and the meaning of peace.* In any conflict, the parties involved have developed their own separate narratives to account for what has happened between them. As part of their monolithic identity constructions, they have written their own history of the conflict, in which 'the others' are seen as the only cause of the conflict. The more powerful party will try to impose its own, subjective narrative of the conflict onto the other party. When both parties talk about peace and reconciliation they therefore may, in terms of their subjective narratives, mean very different things. They use the same words, but they speak different, subjective languages.

It often happens in such situations that the more powerful party wants to maintain the status quo while the less powerful party wants to change it. Habermas (1971) suggested that a change in asymmetric

relationships happens only when it is publicly identified in the subjective language of the weaker side. For example, in the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations after the Oslo Accord, Israel stressed the issue of its security (or 'negative peace'), while the Palestinians wanted a change on the ground – e.g. removal of Jewish settlements, the release of prisoners and the establishment of a Palestinian State ('just peace'). The implementation of the Oslo agreement, did, from the Israeli perspective, bring some 'security'. But viewed from the Palestinian perspective, it did not bring clearly visible changes. Therefore the renewal of violent acts was only a matter of time.

In addition, the weaker and poorer parts of both societies may fear that they may not profit from the outcomes of the peace process (Bar-On, 1998). This is especially true when the peace agreement that was achieved by the economic elite of both sides. The economic elite on both sides may directly benefit from the peace agreement and then care little for their long-time neglected backyards.

Without addressing these matters of subjective language, asymmetry and the status quo, reconciliation in the deeper sense may not be possible. At the Peace Research Institute in the Middle East (PRIME)<sup>9</sup> we developed, in cooperation with a group of Israeli and Palestinian teachers, a new school textbook which has two parallel narratives, relating to the same historical event: For example, the Balfour declaration, as it is constructed in the Israeli-Jewish and in the Palestinian collective memories and narratives (Adwan & Bar-On, 2004; in press). This form of representation can break through the asymmetric power relations, as it gives equal weight and 'voice' to both narratives.

*Target populations.* Usually, a conflict reinforces the male domination of societies, as men are the ones using the weapons, carrying out the violent struggle and becoming the celebrated heroes of the conflict. Post-conflict situations may bring to the foreground the importance of *women* in the psychosocial reconciliatory processes. As relatively oppressed segments of their societies, they have developed more complex representations of themselves in relation to the dominant male hegemony that can help them formulate the changes of perspectives for themselves and others. They may be better equipped, in terms of emotional intelligence, to express their feelings in words and to recognise the feelings of the 'other' (Hunt, 2004).

The question is if their voice can be heard, within the post-conflict social network. They may be underprivileged in ways that may hamper their relative advantages. In some societies, due to restrictions and discriminatory mechanisms the women are less educated, absent from the working force and/or repressed by rigid religious structures (such as those practised by the Taliban in Afghanistan). It is, therefore, extremely important that part of the changes that have to take place should relate to specific target populations within societies, such as women and children.

In the same vein, *children* may have been some of the most victimised populations within the conflict: in societies like Rwanda or Sierra Leona they have been recruited to exercise violent armed activities. They may have been mistreated, abused or misused to practice atrocities against others. In other cases, their studies have been hampered and they have been drawn into the working force. In many of these instances parents in conflict areas, or during periods of conflict, could provide neither physical nor

psychological safety for their children to grow up properly.

A third target population that has to be addressed in the post-conflict society is the population of *traumatised soldiers* of the conflict, both victims and victimisers, who may be left alone in the new reality without proper attention to their post-traumatic reactions (Bar-On, 2004). Reconciliation means that these target populations have been properly taken care of and have been integrated into the social healing process.

*Unilateral versus bi-lateral and external initiatives.* We usually think of reconciliation as a bi-lateral process: bringing the two sides of a conflict into mutual recognition and dialogue. However, that is not always the way in which such initiatives start. In some cases the International community has intervened to initiate the end of the violent conflict. This how the post-conflict period started in Northern Ireland (Good Friday Agreement) and the Balkans (The Dayton Agreement). In the Balkans, since then a permanent presence of NATO and UN peacekeeping forces are stationed there to prevent a renewed outbreak of violence. Yet, how does the presence of international peacekeeping forces affect the possibility of a reconciliatory process? To the best of my knowledge, this question has not been studied systematically. In particular, is has not been studied if, and to what extent, such an external presence *represses local initiatives of peace building*.

At the other end of the spectrum we find initiatives from one of the conflicting parties, both on the political and at a grassroots level. President Anwar Saadat's visit to Jerusalem was such a unilateral act, which enabled the peace agreement between Egypt and Israel in the Seventies. Even though it was well prepared by previous semi-official talks between the sides, one

could not envision the change of mind that took place in the Israeli public without the brave and unilateral act of Saadat. On the grassroots level we have two examples from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: *Zochrot*, an Israeli-Jewish organisation started, after October 2000, to organise public gatherings at Palestinian villages and neighbourhoods that had been destroyed in the 1948 war. The members of Zochrot listened to testimonies of refugees and displaced persons who used to live in these locations; thereby breakthrough the silencing of these events and voices, as it is usually 'forgotten' in the Israeli-Jewish hegemonic discourse. On the other side there is a group of Israeli-Palestinians, led by Emil Shufani and Nazir Megally, who organised a journey to Auschwitz in May 2003, to 'learn personally the humanity and Jewish pain that still stem from there.' Even if such unilateral acts have little immediate impact on the conflict, they may slowly result in opinion leaders developing more balanced views on the conflict and thus creating better conditions for a process of mutual recognition and reconciliation.

*Maintaining hope, not illusions.* In intractable conflicts, creating hope is a tricky business. Politicians can easily create illusions of change and improvement, but when these are not solidly grounded in social change processes, it may lead to renewed desperation and pessimism. Yet it is also difficult to maintain hope when only cold analytical observations are made.

Hope is a social and personal construction that cannot develop linearly and therefore must be tested continuously – while moving through whirlwinds inside and out; while taking into account the different chaotic turns of the process (Bar-On, 2004). This is extremely difficult. I can testify that amidst our current whirlwinds in the

Middle East I have become disillusioned many times, but each time I found ways to go on looking for hopeful possibilities. Despite all the hardships one encounters over long periods of time, one also can receive a great deal of support for continuing in one's path, from colleagues, students and participants of grassroots activities. Even if one cannot see a chance that the fruit of one's work will materialise in one's own lifetime, one can still develop a way and a vision for a future relief. A peaceful future requires giving up the romantic, monolithic desires of the idealised past before the conflict - a past that perhaps never even existed. It requires a more complex understanding of the world and ourselves, an understanding that can create new possibilities for dialogue within ourselves, among ourselves within a single collective, and with each other across the divide.

### **Some criteria for reconciliation-activities**

In this paper I have tried to bring the discussion on activities aimed at reconciliation down from the theoretical, quasi-religious discourse to a more pragmatic and empirically oriented discourse, like the one developed around dialogue and working through. I gathered some criteria from the experience of colleagues and my own experiences, criteria that have to be considered when addressing the process of psychosocial reconciliation. This list of criteria is not final, nor is it exhaustive. It should serve as an opening of a discussion.

The list included here is also heavily biased by the experiences of the author in a micro setting. As more conflicts are reviewed and analysed, other dimensions will probably follow, and the relative importance of the ones cited here may change.

The criteria suggested in this paper can be summarised along three axes:

1. Effective programs acknowledge the emotional complexities surrounding the conflict,
2. They don't ignore the matter of power asymmetry of the conflicting partners, and
3. They recognise the necessity of both top-down and bottom up processes.

The next step in developing good practice for psychosocial interventions aimed at reconciliation could be to define, or identify, concrete parameters that will help us determine if within a specific post-conflict context the reconciliatory process is moving forward or backward. For example, in the Middle East, it will be our task to try and analyse how a peace process that seemed to have moved forward, suddenly moved backward. Or, perhaps, did it move forward after all, even though recently it went through a temporary violent period? Hopefully, such an analysis will help us understand what has happened and how can we get back to a reconciliatory process that will work better in the next phases.

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- (Villa-Vicencio & Savage, 2001). These facts caused the political system in Rwanda to look for another way, in the form of the *Gacaca* courts, based on local tradition of village wisdom. Even if this solution has its own deficiencies, it may help the Rwanda's society heal some of its unresolved pain. Similarly, the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRC) in South Africa, that granted amnesty on a specific legal ground and enabled 22 000 survivors of violence during the apartheid to come forward with their testimonies, had a partial healing effect of the post-apartheid South African society.

<sup>2</sup> The TRT group was composed of German Nazi perpetrators' descendants and descendants of Holocaust survivors. The Germans began meeting as a self-help group in October 1988, as a by-product of the interviews the author carried out in Germany (Bar-On, 1989). After following their work for four years, the author asked the group if they would be ready to meet a group from 'the other side.' When they answered positively, he approached a few of students from his seminar at Ben-Gurion University in Beer Sheva, Israel, on 'the psychosocial after-effects of the Holocaust on second and third generations' (Bar-On, 1995a). In addition, he approached members of 'One Generation After', the organization of descendants of Holocaust survivors in Boston and New York. Volunteers of the three subgroups gathered for the first encounter in Wuppertal, Germany in June 1992 and met almost every year for the past ten years. Since 1998 the group invites practitioners who work on issues of reconciliation in current conflicts in South Africa, Northern Ireland and Palestinian/Israeli conflicts to take part in these encounters (Bar-On et al., 2000).

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<sup>1</sup> In the past it was assumed that a legal settlement that will bring the perpetrators of criminal acts to justice, combined with reparations for the victims will resolve intractable conflicts. For example, there were formal legal procedures that brought criminals to justice and provided reparations to the victims in the case of the Holocaust. But these acts had little impact on the social mutual estrangement between Jews and Germans.

Today, many experts admit that these assumptions have to be re-examined. Paradoxically, after the International Tribunal in Den Haag was established, its limitations were also more widely recognised (Haveman, 2004). For example, the aftermath of the Genocide in Rwanda brought 125 000 people into jail for their participation in one of the more vicious genocides of our time. It would have taken 100 years to bring all these people to trial, and there is no money to compensate the survivors

<sup>3</sup> Ubuntu is very difficult to render into Western language... It is not 'I think therefore I am'. It rather says: 'I am human because I belong, I participate, I share... we say: 'a person is a person through other people'' (Tutu, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> I wish to emphasize that when I talk about psychological processes like dialogue or working through on the social level, I rely mostly on our experiences with individual and small group processes. One should be careful when doing such inferences, as on the social level there are other processes, political, cultural and economic to name just a few, that work simultaneously to the psychosocial processes. Still, the need for psychosocial explanations on the social level stems from the inability to account for certain outcomes by other disciplines.

<sup>5</sup> Opening a window is based on the image of the 'double wall' identified by the author when the relationship between survivors or perpetrators and their children, or other social relations, have been considered. Each side constructed their own wall and when one side tried to open a window in its wall, they usually met the wall of the other side (Bar-On, 1995b).

<sup>6</sup> The present list of parameters was first prepared during the conference on Refugees and Reconciliation at Castellon University, Spain, May 11-12, 2002 and is based on earlier work of several colleagues and myself (Maoz, 2004; Villa-Vicencio & Savage, 2001). It was revised for a Hebrew version of this paper (Mishpat & Mimshal, in press) and a lecture at the Red Cross, Geneva, on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005. The current list is neither exclusive nor comprehensive and should be viewed as a beginning of a discussion rather than a final outcome.

<sup>7</sup> This, neo-monolithic process, however, does not stop some of the earlier processes from continuing in parallel (Galili, 2002). The social sections that gained a new 'voice' during the disintegration of the hegemonic 'voice' do not tend to re-subdue themselves to the original hegemony, even not in light of the new outbreak of violence, as they had done earlier during the fifties and the sixties. A similar process can be observed in the US after 9-11. The 'War on Terror' has similar neo-monolithic

aspects (top-down manipulation of public fear), but it cannot stop the disintegration of the previous monolithic construction of collective identity, which was part and parcel of the Cold War years (Bar-On, 2004).

<sup>8</sup> Psychosocial reconciliatory processes are bottom-up working through processes, in which the parties are willing to acknowledge their wrongdoing of the past and enter into a dialogue with the former enemy to create a joint more positive relationship between the adversary parties.

<sup>9</sup> PRIME is located near Beit Jala in the PNA (Palestinian National Authority), and is co-directed by Professor Sami Adwan of Bethlehem University and the author.

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