

FROM STABLE TO SUSTAINABLE: AN INTEGRATED  
MODEL OF RECONCILIATION IN  
TRANSITIONAL SOCIETIES

by

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## THESIS ABSTRACT

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When looking at societies that are in transition from violence to peace, one of the major issues that is present is the need to reconcile with past adversaries. Political philosophy points to the need for the creation of a social contract that all groups can reach through reasonable agreements. This represents a political reconciliation between groups. This thesis classifies this idea as the need for cognitive reconciliation. The field of Social Psychology points to how negative emotions, or affect, can inhibit the use of reason. The field of Conflict Resolution asserts that there must also be a reconciliation on an emotional level as well. This thesis classifies this as the need for affective reconciliation. This project looks at a way to integrate the cognitive and affective forms of reconciliation into a single model.

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# CHAPTER I

## A NEW MODEL OF RECONCILIATION

To look back through human history is to look at the struggle that we have faced in answering the question of how to live together with people that hold different views of the world. As humanity has moved through the later half of the 20th century and into the new millennium, these questions have taken on new meanings as globalization has increased the scale of these interactions. At the heart of the issue, though, still lies the types of problems that are related to questions of group identity. Though differences in conceptions of morals and values will inevitably arise in all societies, pluralistic societies face a more acute version of this problem. In many cases, and specifically the ones that I will focus on, these issues have manifested into incidents of violence. The violence has lead to greater divisions in these pluralistic societies, making for the perception of intractable situations. These new challenges have naturally lead to questions on the best ways in which to solve the issues.

The field of political science has been attempting to find answers to the question of how to build peaceful societies for centuries. These discussions have evolved to the point where a general acceptance has been reached that the creation of a social contract is necessary to build a peaceful society. The contemporary political thought has focused on the way that groups with different conceptions of a good society can reach agreement on the creation of social contracts. Though there are certainly debates between the contemporary political theorists, what they all agree upon is that the use of rational dialogue is the key for reconciling these sometimes very different conceptions. Through

this project I will show how this literature points towards an idea that I am calling cognitive reconciliation.

However, there is an aspect to humanity that the political theory has left out almost completely. It is this aspect that becomes particularly relevant in the context of divided societies. What is lacking in many divided societies is a minimal level of social cohesion. That is, there is a very limited amount of social connection between the members of the different groups. What political theory argues is that it is the agreements between the people that will lead to the building of the social bonds. What I will demonstrate through this project, though, is that if social cohesion is not already present, the ability of the people to reach reasonable agreement is unlikely. What I will also demonstrate is that the process of creating stable, peaceful societies takes more than just the reconciliation of ideas and concepts. There must be an attempt to also reconcile the social bonds that have also been broken. This will necessitate a focus on the feelings and emotional aspects that social psychology refers to as affect.

In this project I have looked specifically at the situations where there are different groups that are attempting to share the same land. For example, Northern Ireland is a case that has involved many instances of cognitive attempts at reconciliation. This year Northern Ireland is celebrating the 17th anniversary of emerging out of a 30 year cycle of violence, euphemistically referred to as “The Troubles”. When the Peace Agreement was signed in Belfast on April 10, 1998, Northern Ireland was a divided society, with a large split between the two main cultural identities, Catholic and Protestant. However, by most standards, Northern Ireland is unfortunately more divided socially today than before the signing of the Peace Agreement. Many Catholics and Protestants can go most of their

lives without meeting a single member of the other community. This holds true whether living in small towns, or in segregated neighborhoods in the bigger cities. There are entire towns that are made up of a completely Catholic population and likewise towns that are completely Protestant. In the cities entire neighborhoods are separated by what are called Peace Walls; structures that were built at the height of the troubles to keep violent groups apart. These walls were constructed to prevent direct violence and their continuing existence, it is argued, is necessary to foster stability, and bring about a sense of security. The physical walls separating the communities works to reinforce the psychological barriers that have also been established.

This was very much a political agreement that helped to shape Northern Ireland politics from that point onward until today. Unfortunately there was no part of the peace agreement that called for a Truth and Reconciliation commission, nor has there been much support for organizations that are working in communities to. One such group that is doing trauma healing and relationship building is called The Junction. The Junction has been able to bring together members of both the Catholic and Protestant communities with the goal of allowing people to share their own personal narratives of the troubles. The participants have included ex-paramilitary forces from both sides along with former police officers and British military forces, many being in the same room with members of the former adversary for the first time. However, there has been very little affective work on any larger scale and not enough support for programs on the local level. Most of the work that has gone on in Northern Ireland has occurred at what I will demonstrate as the cognitive level.

In contrast there is the case of Sierra Leone, in which there has been a lot of focus

paid to what I will demonstrate as the affective level. Civil war raged in Sierra Leone for over 10 years from 1991 until 2002. This war started in with the “invasion” of the RUF, a militia force under the control of ex-Sierra Leonen Army general Foday Sankoh. The RUF was constituted in the neighboring country of Liberia and was supported by then Liberian president Charles Taylor. The goal of the RUF was to overthrow the newly elected government after a new constitution had been agreed to in 1991. The RUF claimed to be a voice of the people after widespread political corruption had all but destroyed the Sierra Leonen economy. However after a series of setbacks, the RUF turned to the forced recruitment of child soldiers and begun increasingly brutal guerilla type attacks on the civilians of Sierra Leone. The brutality of these attacks is best epitomized by the tactic of removing people's hands. By using this tactic the RUF sought to discourage people from voting. The RUF used this tactic indiscriminately, ruthlessly cutting even the hands and arms off of children.

A peace agreement was signed in 1999 between the government and the RUF, and new elections were called for as part of the agreement. The peace agreement did not include any provisions on justice for the crimes carried out during the civil war, and the RUF was allowed to participate in the elections as a party. Elections were held in which Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was voted into office. The peace agreement lasted only a few months, when RUF soldiers attempted to take the Capitol of Freetown. After a series of UN interventions from 1999 until 2002, the RUF was defeated and the leadership, including Foday Sankoh, was arrested. This time an international tribunal was established that indicted high level leaders in both the RUF and the Army. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission was also established and worked in cooperation with the

international criminal proceedings. This TRC differed from the one in South Africa as it focused mainly on the types of political reform that would be necessary as well as serving as a truth finding body.

There has been numerous examples of affective reconciliation in Sierra Leone after 2002, including a TRC, as well as robust efforts to restore former RUF soldiers back into local communities. This combined with active criminal proceedings against the upper levels of commanders of the RUF, as well as investigations into Generals of the Sierra Leone army, has provided for a strong sense of healing and community rebuilding. In this, Sierra Leone provides one of the better examples of how affective reconciliation can lead to the restoration of communities following high levels of violence. Former child soldiers, whom the survivors have accepted back to society, went through a process of public apologies and acts of restitution. The current government in Sierra Leone seems to be stable and did not collapse during the Ebola crisis in 2014. Sierra Leone provides a good example of how affective and cognitive reconciliation can work together well.

What I want to show through this research is that there needs to be an additional layer of theory added to the existing political theories on the creation of stable and sustainable pluralistic societies. This additional level of theory will take into account the aspects of emotions and feelings, the affect. What this project will show is that both the cognitive and affective forms of reconciliation are necessary for societies to be able to build sustainable peace. By exploring both the political theory, the social psychology research, and the practices of conflict resolution, I will show the need for an integrated model of reconciliation. One that takes into account the need for the reconciling of

conceptions as well as emotions.

This new integrated model of reconciliation will be able to create the conditions necessary for the transition from violence to peace. However, I believe it also needs to be mentioned that even this more robust model of reconciliation may not be sufficient in all contexts. This model should not be read as a panacea to all of the issues facing societies transitioning away from violence. What an integrated model of reconciliation does provide is a way of creating a more robust society. A pluralistic society that has reconciled both cognitively and affectively would more easily cope with and find solutions for the other issues that they may face. In this sense, an integrated reconciliation becomes the mechanism for building a peaceful, pluralistic society. It is not the singular answer for all of the questions. The combination of cognitive and affective reconciliation is a necessary component for the building of peaceful societies, and can be a platform that supports the other elements of the transition process. It can be seen as a necessary step towards finding a solution to divided societies.



**CHAPTER II**  
**COGNITIVE RECONCILIATION: PUBLIC REASON**  
**AND RATIONAL DISCOURSE**

“There are long periods in the history of any society during which certain basic questions lead to deep and sharp conflict and its difficult if not impossible to find any reasoned common ground” - John Rawls

**Introduction**

The foundation of what I am defining as cognitive reconciliation lies in the ideas of public reason and rational discourse. This is the idea that in order to overcome the differences that people have on beliefs of morality, values, and conceptions of the good can be resolved through the use of reason and rationality. To better understand these core concepts, this chapter will examine the works of several political philosophers. These works describe a foundation for a way in which pluralistic societies, those that contain what contemporarily may be called different identities, can function peacefully. Though there are many debates within the discourse, there are a few core concepts that are common amongst the different theories. These core concepts represent the foundation of political philosophy, that people are capable of overcoming difference using reason and rationality. What is represented is the general idea that people are capable of building pluralistic societies. These societies are capable of producing, within its citizens, a stability necessary for the coexistence of a myriad of differing conceptions.

One track of this thinking has produced the idea of a deliberative democracy. In this chapter I am going to explore the two foundational theories that comprise this concept. Also, I will discuss the ways in which author's have described the application of

these theories to the real world context of divided societies. I believe that through this exploration I can accurately define what it would mean to have cognitive reconciliation. I will also be able to demonstrate how effective it may be in the creation of stable, pluralistic societies. Since this is the stated goal of the author's that I will be focusing on for this exploration, I do not believe the context that I am creating for this discussion falls outside the realm of political theory.

Public reason is a political philosophy concept that pertains to the need of having the rules that regulate society to be justifiable or acceptable to all those persons over whom those rules purport to have authority. (Quong 2013) In any society that follows these ideals, this authority comes from the ability of these rules to be justified by ideas or arguments that all people can, at a certain level, endorse or accept as reasonable. This would make any law or rule that could not be justified on these grounds delegitimate and the people living in that society would be under no obligation to follow that law or rule. This ideally then goes beyond any sort of undue coercion or force, allowing for people to live freely, while also maintaining a sense of commitment to the larger society as a whole. The functionality of this relies then on reason itself becoming the unifying force of a society, not allowing for any single group or moral doctrine to dominate any other.

Virtually all proponents of public reason assume that there is deep and intractable disagreement amongst some people, and this disagreement is not simply the result of irrationality, prejudice, or self-interest, but rather arises as a result of the normal functioning of human reasoning under reasonably favorable conditions. (Quong 2013) The goal of public reason then becomes to provide a mechanism that allows for discussion between these comprehensive doctrines. By allowing that differences exist

amongst people and that those differences are reasonable, space is then conceivably created for a dialogue to occur.

In this chapter I am going to be exploring public reason through a progression of theorists, roughly from the highest levels of abstraction, digging down to the more pragmatic of theories. The foundations of pluralism have come from primarily two sources: John Rawls and Jurgen Habermas. As Chantal Mouffe states it “what Rawls and Habermas are out to do is to build a foundation of how conflicting interests can be mediated in a pluralistic society.” The approach that each of them takes is based on the foundations of reason and rationality, though they may define those two in differing ways.

John Rawls represents some of the highest level of theoretical abstraction as he looks towards the creation of the ideal society based on the conceptions of justice and equity that would allow pluralistic society to function over many generations. At the most basic of explanations his theory rests on the idea that people can come to agreements on what is just, agreements that all people in the society can view as reasonable. The agreements would then become what holds the society together, as the conceptions of justice would direct peoples actions in the public sphere of society. The fairly arrived at agreements would carry the authority necessary to govern this public sphere because it was agreed to by all.

Jurgen Habermas also strives for a highly idealized form of society that uses rational and ethical discourse model of engagement between members of a society, discourse that could build social cooperation thereby creating a stable foundation for pluralism to shape the way that government functions. For Habermas the solution lies in the ability of people to have a strong ethic of discourse that would work to shape the way

people interact and to create an impartial moral norm. This is perhaps more procedural than a complete moral impartiality, as Habermas presents it as more a guide to use rather than a definitive rule. Habermas, while theoretical, is much more pragmatic in his discussion of how societies ideally should function. His views are mostly based on observations of dialogic societies that existed in late 19<sup>th</sup> century, from which he draws his theory. Thus his theories take on more of a tone of the functionality of his discourse combined with theories of how it should best be designed.

As we work down to a level of application, we find many writers who have worked to explain ways of making theories work in certain contexts. For the purposes of this chapter I am going to be focusing the writings of John Dryzek. His work is on a level that is that applies many of the theories of both Rawls and Habermas to the contexts of divided societies. In his discussion of deliberative democracy, Dryzek paints a picture of how deliberation can work to build bridges across these divides. He focuses on the ideal way in which discussions can happen in the public sphere and subsequently shape the political discourse.

The overall goal of the philosophy associated with deliberative democracy is to maintain pluralistic societies that are stable enough to be sustainable for generations. In today's world this is especially important as a majority of the world's conflicts exist between different identity and cultural groups that are both inhabiting the same borders. The question must be answered as to how to accomplish the task of bringing people who now share the conceptual space of a nation state to a place where there can be an agreed upon foundation of society.

## **A Rawlsian System of Justice**

In *Justice as Fairness*, John Rawls attempts to establish the conditions necessary for, what he terms, a well ordered society. In order to accomplish this goal, Rawls constructs an argument for the necessity of Political Justice as the standard for which society will find permanent stability. Rawls believes that the structures of government are only just when those structures are agreed upon as reasonable for all, and not controlled by what he calls a comprehensive doctrine. A government controlled by one doctrine would lead to the over use of coercive force to make other doctrines conform to the one desired. For Rawls, this system is unjust and therefore could not be sustainable over longer periods of time. Instead, Rawls conceives of an ideal of government that will work towards a cohesive model, one where no single comprehensive doctrine will be able to rule. This would be established by maintaining an agreed upon set of fair principles established as the basic structure of government. In this form a society may exist where a plurality of values may be able to coexist. Rawls believes that a political system based upon this idea of justice and political equality is the foundation of a pluralist society, even in cases where there is a multitude of competing comprehensive doctrines. In this section I will attempt to explain how Rawls builds his argument for this political justice.

As I will further show in this section, Rawls believed in a narrow scope for his philosophy, choosing to focus only the political structure of society. Though I have stated Rawls as being the most abstract of the three theorists, this does not suggest that his ideas are not realistic. By keeping such a narrow focus on a fair and just structure, it is fair to argue that Rawls theory could be achievable. He believes that reasonable

agreements are something that human beings are capable of creating. As he states, “We suppose then that one task of political philosophy.. is to focus on deeply disputed questions and to see whether, despite appearances, some underlying basis of philosophical and moral agreement can be uncovered... Or if such a basis of agreement cannot be found, perhaps the divergence of philosophical and moral opinion at the root of divisive political differences can at least be narrowed so that social cooperation on a footing of mutual respect among citizens can still be maintained.” (Rawls 2001, 2) It is, however, on this last point that I find an assumption upon which Rawls theory rests. Rawls believes that a just and fair political system can build social cooperation. However, social cooperation must also be present for there to be an agreement in the first place. It is here that Rawls' theory can become tautological. Through explaining Rawls theory, I will show how this is the case.

### Original Position

For Rawls, the theory of political justice needs a mechanism that will ensure that members of a society could chose a form of political justice that would in fact be seen as reasonable by all. This mechanism must exist outside the realm of how normal governments tend to be created. This meant that there could be no competition between competing factions for control of the structure of government. This would ultimately lead to an unjust system, one in which would exist an unhealthy, sometimes repressive, amount of coercion. In order to have a basic structure not under the influence of any one comprehensive doctrine the basic structure would need to be decided on by in the strictest neutrality. Even if true neutrality were impossible, this mechanism would still need to

achieve the closest to neutral as possible. Rawls introduces this mechanism as the original position.

The original position would be established as a device of representation. This means that the basic structures of government would be decided upon by people acting as trustees, or possibly as direct representatives, on behalf of the different groups within a society. It is essentially a conceptual framework in which these representatives would reach an agreement on the most reasonable political structure. Rawls believed that in order to accomplish this task, the representatives would need to find an agreeable conception of justice, one that would likely need to fit with the political philosophies of the society. Rawls imagines that this could be like choosing a form of justice from a menu of justice choices. This would not necessarily entail all forms of justice known in existence, just the forms conceptualized within appropriate political limits. Whatever form of justice chosen would meet the minimum criterion of being a conception of justice that all civilians in the society could reasonably agree with, even if it did not match with all morals or values.

Rawls then imagines further what the reasons would be for using this mechanism and on what foundation it could have. The goal of the original position would be to find a framework for the fair terms of cooperation. Rawls imagines that this could come about three ways: 1) By every representative submitting to higher law than themselves, i.e. God's Law 2) By using terms recognized as fair, possibly referring to a moral order of values, possibly "natural law" or 3) Terms settled by an agreement reached by fair and equal citizens engaged in cooperation, made in view of what they regard as their reciprocal advantage. Of these three, Rawls pushes for the third, reasoning that societies

may contain different moral or religious standards, and may also have different moral authorities. The third option also protects against the ability of a comprehensive doctrine gaining any leverage. Option three therefore creates the best opportunity for a political structure based upon equal agreement and the highest likelihood that a pluralistic society could exist in whatever system is chosen. Since the decision made in the original position would represent an agreement reached by representatives of citizens who are all free and equal, then it can be said that basic structure is fair and just.

Rawls viewed the original position to be abstract in nature, separating representatives from any real identity that they may have. This abstract notion is supported by a concept that Rawls calls the veil of ignorance. The veil conceptualized would act to mask the representatives from knowing who precisely they represent from the society, not knowing either their social positions or any particular comprehensive doctrines. The representatives would also not be allowed to know any socialized categories like race or ethnic group, sex, or any sort of native endowments such as strength or intelligence. (Rawls, 2001) Because of this, the original position could be thought of as a thought experiment, a device that would allow for fair agreements to be reached. Any agreement reached would have no necessarily binding principles per se, it would only represent agreed upon principles that would be fair and just. This then would serve as the background principles for the foundation of the rest of society.

### A Well Ordered Society

The overall goal of Rawls entire conception of justice is to create a well ordered society. The argument here is that any society that emerges from the original position



would necessarily be well ordered and would be sustainable that way from one generation to the next. This stability is possible due in part to three foundations. First is the knowledge that each citizen has that a conception of justice they find acceptable is also acceptable to every other citizen. This agreed upon conception of political justice is then allowed to work cooperatively with the rest of the societal institutions, such as religious or cultural groups and institutions. Lastly, every citizen would be regulated according to the recognized principles of justice, allowing all to act justly in whichever position in society they attain. This shared understanding by all would allow for the public conception of justice to provide a mutually recognized point of view from which citizens can adjudicate their claims of political right on their political institutions or against one another. (Rawls, 2001)

This well ordered society is created because the basic structure is agreed upon and therefore just. Since the focus of the political justice model is only on this basic structure of government, it would not have the capacity to directly dictate the views of any other social institutions. Instead the basic structure would act as a means of indirectly informing citizens of ways in which those institutions should fit into this political framework. Therefore the principles of justice for the basic structure of society would be viewed as reasonable, while also allowing for private institutions, associations, or cultural practices to remain distinct. Rather citizens may look at these generalities and decide how best to apply these to the basic background understanding of what is just. In terms of theory, Rawls does not set out to endorse any specific conception of justice, he instead attempts to only establish a system for determining a reasonable agreement of justice for all citizens.

In this sense Rawls system does not set out his theory to be a comprehensive doctrine of its own, merely as a political conception, one that can be shaped by each society for their own benefit. It is not a concept that can be applied to all subjects nor one that covers all matters. In this regard, Justice as Fairness is designed to be narrow in scope, focusing only on the basic political structures, different than other comprehensive doctrines. In this way, Rawls believes his philosophy should be seen as a realistic idealist model. It gives each society something to strive for while at the same time is based upon principles can be achieved.

### Overlapping Consensus

For Rawls then the idea of a well ordered society rest entirely on the creation of what he described as an overlapping consensus. This is “a consensus in which the same political conception is endorsed by the opposing reasonable comprehensive doctrines that gain a significant body of adherents and endure from one generation to the next.” (Rawls 2001, 184) In this way Rawls establishes his theory of justice as one that is based upon a political ideal. This is the ideal of what a society should strive to create in the liberal democratic political institutions. The difficulty in this, and one that Rawls recognizes, is the problem of how to get reasonable people to buy into the system. In this system “Citizens have conflicting religious, philosophical and moral views and so they affirm the political conception from within different and opposing comprehensive doctrines, and so, in part at least, for different reasons.” (Rawls 2001 32) “Rather we say that in a well-ordered society the political conception of is affirmed by what we refer to as an overlapping consensus.” (Rawls 2001, 32)

In order for a pluralistic society to exist, Rawls argues for a separation of a political conception of justice and any other form of comprehensive doctrine, either fully or partially held. Political justice conceived in this way would allow citizens to be able to determine in what ways the political concepts related to any of their own comprehensive views. This would prevent any one comprehensive doctrine to dominate the political structure. It also allows for political justice to be endorsed by those who would hold onto those comprehensive doctrines. (Rawls 2001)

This view is based upon three facts Rawls holds to be true. The first general fact is that “the diversity of religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines... is a permanent feature of the democratic society. Under the political and social conditions secured by the basic rights and liberties of free institutions, a diversity of conflicting and irreconcilable yet reasonable comprehensive doctrines will come about and persist.” (Rawls 2001, 34) Secondly, that oppressive use of state power would be required to maintain an adherence to one comprehensive doctrine. (Rawls 2001) Third, that an enduring and secure democratic regime, one not so divided by bitter doctrinal disputes and hostile social classes, must be willingly and freely supported by at least a substantial majority of its politically active citizens. (Rawls 2001)

By creating a stand alone political conception of justice, Rawls allows for a system that can be agreed to separately, allowing both political justice and comprehensive doctrines to exist simultaneously. In this sense, it is contrasted to “a system framed as a workable compromise between known and existing political interests, or a system that looks at existing comprehensive doctrines and is tailored to win their allegiance.” (Rawls 2001, 188) The major difference here is between a compromise and

a fair agreement. Though the distinction may seem slight, the difference is quite major. A fair agreement for Rawls would be one in which no one feels they have had to give up anything important, and thus no compromise. Rawls sets up his system to be one in which political conditions are created to where all citizens can reasonably accept the political system. In this way reasonable comprehensive doctrines can coexist with the political conception. In contrast a political conception that is tailored to fit other social comprehensive doctrines would always be a compromised conception, and therefore one that not all citizens could accept as just at all times. This would never allow for a sense of political justice to outweigh the concerns of the competing comprehensive doctrines. “A political conception must be able to generate its own sufficiently strong supporting sense of justice.” (Rawls 2001)

A stand alone political conception may work to create a stable political system only if it is allowed to create a framework that can contain all other doctrines. Most citizens in a society may not hold any well articulated comprehensive doctrine. Rather people affirm their own Religious and Philosophical, associational and personal values with a political conception. These views may in fact be comprehensive views that encompass the qualities listed above, they are also nonpolitical in nature. These types of comprehensive views are neither systematic nor are they complete. (Rawls 2001) This allows for space inside a comprehensive doctrine for an outside conception of justice to gain traction and be acceptable. The requirements for this outside concept would be that it be limited to the basic structure. That its acceptance presupposes no particular comprehensive view. Third, its fundamental ideas are familiar and drawn from the public political culture. If what Rawls is saying here is true then it does give weight to the idea

that societies may in fact be able to move from a *modus vivendi* to an overlapping consensus, it just takes time, and requires a politically just basic structure in order to work.

### The Tautology of Social Cooperation

Here the relevancy of Rawls' question of stability is key. Rawls creates his system so that it may in the belief that an overlapping consensus will be able to create a stability as a condition of a reasonable conception of political justice. Such a conception must be able to generate its own sufficiently strong supporting sense of justice, so that citizens feel a sense of justification in the way in which they are governed. In this however, Rawls wants to move away from the ideas of stability associated with a *modus vivendi*, or with stability as a balance of political forces. (Rawls 2001) Rawls believes that his system of justice would move beyond simple power sharing. This discussion should begin by examining the foundational concepts needed for an overlapping consensus: social cooperation, public justification, and reflective equilibrium.

First there is the conceptualizing of society as a fair system of cooperation. Herein lies the first tension point between theory and reality. Rawls states that social cooperation is a starting point for his theory and that the goal is to make this more determinate by spelling out what results when this idea is fully realized. This becomes problematic if a society has not yet attained a sufficient level of social cooperation. What if there are groups living in a society that do not wish to cooperate with each other?

The question must become how to reconcile these two societies with each other. When Rawls speaks of reconciliation he does so in a way that means a softening of

individual emotions towards society “Political philosophy may try to calm our frustration and rage against our society and its history...” When this idea of reconciliation is applied to one's own society, there seems to be some coherency. I question whether that same idea of reconciliation can be applied when that frustration and rage is directed towards a society that is not your own. Conceivably this rage may be caused by a situation in which injustice is occurring on some basic political level, but if we are using Rawls model, the solution to this problem seemingly is to change the basic structure. This argument becomes increasingly tautological as social cooperation is needed to change the basic structure and a new basic structure is needed to bring two distinct groups together.

It then begins to be difficult to see how any sort of public justification can exist without a priori social cooperation. For Rawls the idea of public justification is a natural extension of society based on cooperation. He defines public justification as the way citizens can justify to one another their political judgements. In times of disagreement, an acceptance of the idea of public justification would allow for reasoned public discourse. However, this reasoned public discourse relies on an agreed upon framework of justice, and establishing an agreed upon framework seems impossible in Rawls system if there is no existing foundation of cooperation. It also seems highly unlikely that there could be any sort of conception of reflective equilibrium without social cooperation. Rawls argues that a well-ordered society is made of citizens who have achieved a capacity for wide reflective equilibrium. (Rawls 2001) Reflective equilibrium is the state of balance between comprehensive doctrines, which is what Rawls is seeking.

Where Rawls' theory falls short is that it relies on an unspecified, though assumed, level of social cooperation. Where social cooperation exists society can possibly reach

towards the conceptions of political justice. Without this foundation it would seem unlikely that a fair agreement on justice that all people accept as reasonable could be reached. If Rawls' theory rests on the foundation of a presumed existence of social cooperation but does not provide an explanation for how that social cooperation can be created, then perhaps we can look towards other political theories that could elaborate on this point. By doing this I believe we will find a better explanation for the creation and functionality of social cooperation.

It is for this purpose that I am going to concentrate on the idea of the creation of a deliberative democracy. What deliberative democracy offers to the expansion of Rawls is the idea that there must also be communication between groups in societies that house competing values systems, or as Rawls would put it comprehensive doctrines. That it is the discourse between the groups that will lead people to reaching an understanding that cooperation is reasonable. That the process of discourse will allow for people to understand each other and that this will lead to cooperative action. This will, according to deliberative democratists, ultimately lead to the state of public reason. For deliberative democratists it would not be enough to simply reach an agreement on a fair and just political system and expect that agreement would be enough to create pluralism. This then could adequately explain a means for creating the social cooperation that is needed.

This idea comes from several different perspectives though I am going to be focusing mainly on the ideas of John Dryzek and Jurgen Habermas. Habermas has focused much of his work on the role communicative action and the role that this plays in building social cooperation and order. The difference between Habermas and Dryzek is the level on which this communicative action should take place in society. While

Habermas believes in the need for a discourse ethic throughout all levels of society, Dryzek believes that deliberation needs to be maintained in a public sphere which is semi-detached from the politics of governance and sovereignty.

However, the goal for each of these two theorists, and for deliberative democracy is the building of social cooperation, the necessary component that Rawls theory is lacking in the contexts of divided societies. Theoretically then, deliberative democracy offers the possibility of creating the social foundation necessary for a Pluralistic Society to be created. The main reason why I chose this path to expand on Rawls' is that I believe that the idea of deliberative democracy is as close to being able to describe what I would like to call cognitive reconciliation in the political philosophy field.

### **Habermas – Theory of Ethical Discourse<sup>1</sup>**

A Theory of Discourse sets out to reconstruct the use of discourse in everyday life. For Habermas this started as an attempt to understand the history of discourse in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe. He specifically looked at the development of the public sphere and its impacts on shaping the political and economic realities. This led to the creation of his moral-political theory which is based on the idea that interlocutors can be involved in critical discussion free from the pressures of social and economic pressures only in the public sphere. These discussions would be a vehicle to reach an understanding on matters of common concern. Habermas started his research by looking at what he termed “small discussion societies” and the effect that these groups had on the larger society as a whole.

1 Note: For this section on Habermas I used the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry on Habermas.



What Habermas discovered was that as the small discussion societies grew into mass publics, the ideas themselves became commodified. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) From this he moved to a position of a more formal structuring of the public sphere, one that would be able to support his view of democratic deliberation, which Habermas believed would be a mechanism for the creation of a rational society. This more structured public sphere would involve a concept of public opinion-formation instead of the idea of full public reason. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) In turn Habermas argues for the separation of society into two spheres, the public and the government. The public sphere would be an entity where rational discourse could occur, which would then shape the political discourse of the government itself.

This shift for Habermas looked to the “practical-interest” of the human species, which is to secure and expand possibilities of mutual and self-understanding in the conduct of life. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) Habermas argues that human societies depend on these types of understandings and the norms that these understandings lead to. However these understandings do not simply happen. In order for there to be mutual self understanding, humans must interact with each other. This theory of interaction became the foundation for what he calls communicative action, where individual actors coordinate their behaviors on the basis of consensual norms. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) What Habermas is getting at here is the idea that human beings are able to moderate our own behavior as well as that of others by agreement of what should and should not be acceptable.

Communicative action then is the pragmatic end of rationality if understood as Habermas does. For Habermas, rationality consists not so much in the possession of

particular knowledge, but rather in 'how speaking and acting subjects acquire and use knowledge.'" (Bohman and Rehg 2007, Par 3.1 Section 4) According to Habermas, language is the medium for coordinating action, which fundamentally requires actors to orient towards "reaching understanding". Through describing communicative action as rationality, Habermas demonstrates how it is inherently different from other forms of action. Other types of action would require more coercive behavior in which the individual goals of each actor would trump any need for mutual understanding. Thus through rational discourse actors are able to determine a shared understanding of the inherent reasonableness of the mutually pursued goals.

The process then of being able to understand the shared goals through communicative action further leads to a coordination of action. Habermas believes that communicative action is successful in creating acts of cooperation because the actors are able to freely agree that the goal is reasonable and worthy of cooperative behavior. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) This is, for Habermas, the process of how social cooperation is built. However, in order to understand this more, it will be important to understand how he arrives at this idea. In order to do this I will first look at his description of morals and ethics. This will then lead into a wider discussion of how this works towards building stability in democratic governments.

In order for rationally motivated agreement to be possible, this type of communicative action must be able to meet certain acceptable conditions. Since the goal of the speaker in this instance is to attempt to build cooperation, there must be grounds on which agreement can occur. The actor who is making a speech act must aim towards being understood by the other actor(s). "We understand a speech act when we know the

kinds of reasons that a speaker could provide in order to convince a hearer that he is entitled in the given circumstances to claim validity for his utterance—in short, when we know *what makes it acceptable*.” (Bohman and Rehg 2007, Sec 3.1 Par 10)

Understanding that there must be acceptance for cooperation the actor will engage in the practice of reason giving. This process of making reasoned statements for acceptance will ultimately lead to a give and take of criticism and justification. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) This means that for the hearer to accept the communicative act of the speaker, that the hearer accepts the underlying reasoning of the speaker. As often happens though, if the hearer does not accept the offer of the speaker, the discourse may change to argument or debate, leading the underlying reasons to be tested for truth, correctness, or authenticity. (Bohman and Rehg 2007)

Habermas then looks at the ways in which the validity of the underlying reasons can be accurately determined. In the search for ways of creating validity, he argues for introduction of a spectrum of validity that includes moral rightness, ethical goodness or authenticity, personal sincerity, and aesthetic value. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) Along this spectrum, a claim can merit acceptance because it is “true” with-in this sphere of validity and dialogical context. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) By creating this spectrum Habermas has allowed for a complex range of social interaction that can be involved for the purpose of cooperative action. Therefore a speech act can be judged on whether it is sincere, socially appropriate, and at the very least representationally adequate of truthfulness. Social cooperation, thus conceived, depends upon acceptance of communication along these lines, and is both deeply consensual and reasonable.

Habermas builds a concept of social cooperation that relies upon the capacity of

actors to recognize the validity of different claims. Social cooperation for Habermas is completely cognitive and reliant upon his explanation of rationality. This type of social cooperation is relatively well suited within the circumstances of the lifeworld that Habermas explains as “referring to the background resources, contexts, and dimensions of social action that enable actors to cooperate on the basis of mutual understanding: shared cultural systems of meaning, institutional orders that stabilize patterns of action, and personality structures acquired in family, church, neighborhood, and school.” (Bohman and Rehg 2007, Sec 3.1 Par 12)

I think here it is best to transition to an explanation of the ideal of Habermas' form of discourse before trying to understand how that form may work in the context of social cooperation across boundaries of culture. This form of discourse is highly reliant on the validity of the claims made by actors. For Habermas this entails a highly reflective form of communication that is based upon argumentation as a social practice. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) The practice of this argumentation is based upon the three aspects of product, procedure, and as a process which is based largely on the more traditional perspectives of logic, dialectic, and rhetoric. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) Each of these requires an assessment of the cogency of the argument, though, as Habermas points out, “at no single one of these analytic levels can the very idea intrinsic to argumentative speech be adequately developed.” (Bohman and Rehg 2007, Sec 3.2 Par 3)

Habermas looks to describe his theory of discourse that builds from the logical level of argument, one in which actors are concerned with the production aspect as they try to build a case based upon sets of reasons to support conclusions with the goal of arriving at a valid claim that can convince based upon its intrinsic properties. (Bohman

and Rehg 2007) For Habermas, the determination of the validity of an argument needs to go beyond resting on deductive certainty only, needing to how well the claim takes in all relevant information and possible objections. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) For Habermas, this represents the ideal speech situation.

However, Habermas soon came to hold these ideal conditions of speech overly reified and began to look for ways to critically judge real discourse. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) He then lays out a rhetorically adequate process that participants can execute that would represent a sufficiently critical test as to the validity of an argument. The 4 procedures are: (i) no one capable of making a relevant contribution has been excluded, (ii) participants have equal voice, (iii) they are internally free to speak their honest opinion without deception or self-deception, and (iv) there are no sources of coercion built into the process and procedures of discourse. (Bohman and Rehg 2007, Sec 3.2 Par 6) As a critical test the fulfillment of each of these procedures would ensure that the outcome of any agreement would be reasonable for all parties. By creating standards that provide a way of determining if the process of the discussion was itself reasonably conceived, I argue that this still represents an idealized form of discourse. By relying on this idealized procedure for being able to come to reasonable agreement, Habermas has created an inherently formalized standard of discourse. This has left his theory open to criticism on this aspect, though this discussion will have to wait until later in the chapter.

Before that discussion, it is important to look at which types of validity claims Habermas believes his theory applies. For example, he believed that claims about the sincerity of interior subjective feelings, desires, beliefs were not realms that were open to rational analysis. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) For Habermas, the ability to judge the

sincerity of these is through the actions of the person or group making the claim.

(Bohman and Rehg 2007) Conversely, the types of claims that are open to discursive justification generally fall into two categories. The first being truth claims and the second being right claims. Habermas further elaborated on these as being a difference of empirical-truth claims and claims about moral rightness. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) Empirical-truth claims reside mostly in the realms of science and moral rightness claims will be one that I am focusing on in this paper.

The other that I will focus on is claims of authenticity. Authenticity claims are a third category of validity claims that Habermas believes fits into his discourse framework. Habermas argues that authenticity claims are made about what is considered to be good, thus differentiating authenticity from truth and rightness. Claims made in a discourse about what constitutes a good life are influenced directly by life histories, traditions, and particular values. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) This means that there is not an expectation of reaching any sort of universal consensus. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) Authenticity then exists almost entirely in the realm of ethics, either personal or group.

Together both rightness and authenticity claims make up one of the foundational problems in pluralistic society. The ability for members of plural societies to assess the reasonableness of other groups' claims of rightness and authenticity are major hurdles in the creation of social cooperation. Habermas' theory of discourse provides a measured perspective on how this could be accomplished. The inter-relatability of rightness and authenticity is key to understanding the way towards reconciling the differences. For Habermas the process of reconciling difference is seemingly through a process that he calls universalization.

## Universalization

Habermas describes the role of discourse in the creation rational moral norms as the process of Universalization. The goal of universalization is to come to an impartial moral point of view. The use of a discursive process means that each person must be able to justify their morals in a way that is acceptable for all others present. Thus if one assumes that dialogue is a requirement for moral discourse then we arrive at the principle of universalization. In this process the discourse principle can functionally be used to test the impartiality of moral norms. A moral norm can be considered impartial when the general observance of that norm “can allow the interests and value-orientations of *each individual* can be *jointly* accepted by *all* concerned without coercion.” (Bohman and Rehg 2007, Sec 3.4 Par 4)

The moral norms then become general binding obligations whose acceptance thus affects each person's pursuit of interests and the good life. This stems from Habermas' belief that the discourse principle and universalization are not simply thought experiments, that the only way to determine moral norms is through the process of discourse. Thus Habermas insists that universalization is a principle of real discourse: an individual's moral judgement only counts as fully reasonable only if it issues from participation in actual discourse with all of those affected. Moreover, it is imperative that one gain the reasonable agreement of other's in forming one's conscience.

This represents for Habermas the view that the morals of an individual should be directly influenced by the morals of society. That no moral claim can made by any individual that does not in some way find acceptance from the rest of the members of a

society. In this sense I believe that this theory would only apply to the things that can be moralized, which Habermas addresses in his discourse theory. This criticism has led many to the belief that discourse ethics and the universalization of moral norms is only truly plausible in the realm of the legal and the political.

### Legal-Political

The goal of Habermas' democratic theory is to provide an account of legitimate law and law making. This theory is built largely on the discourse principle, which Habermas defines thusly: A rule of action or choice is justified, and thus valid, only if all those affected by the rule or choice could accept it in a reasonable discourse. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) This is important because Habermas argues, similarly as Rawls, that in order for society to be stable over time it must be viewed as legitimate by the people. When the discourse principle is extended to spheres of legality and politics we arrive at the basis for this legitimization. For Habermas, this looks at the relationship between private and public autonomy. For people to be able to view laws as valid, they must have the protection of the law for their individual freedoms. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) This is considered the private autonomy. The individual freedoms associated with the private autonomy can only be considered as free if the citizens can also understand themselves as the authors of the laws protecting those freedoms. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) This can only occur by the practice of public autonomy. Thus the private and public are inextricably linked in Habermas' theory.

The combination of liberty (private autonomy) and political participation (public autonomy) combine to create an abstract system of basic rights that serve to set a



normative framework based upon a minimal set of institutional conditions. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) The institutional mechanisms of the government would then fit within this framework. This would also create a process of public discourse for legitimization of ordinary legislation. As Habermas states, “only those statutes may claim legitimacy that can meet with the assent of all citizens.” (Bohman and Rehg 2007, Sec 3.4 Par 15) As decisions about laws tend to involve a combination of validity claims, this justification process would include the types of tests that Habermas proposes for claims of validity.

Thus citizens would openly be discussing claims of authenticity, feasibility, and moral rightness of legislation in the public sphere. Much of the criticism of Habermas' revolves around whether or not citizens would be able to separate morality from ethical and pragmatic considerations. (Bohman and Rehg 2007) Habermas counters this argument by pointing out that in the democratic theory there is much less of an emphasis on the creation of consensus. Instead, what is being sought is the “warranted assumption of reasonableness”. (Bohman and Rehg 2007, Sec 3.4 Par 17) In this sense citizens can justify the laws if process warrants the presumption that the outcomes are reasonable products of a sufficiently inclusive deliberative process. (Bohman and Rehg 2007)

In this way Habermas attempts to build a democratic system that rests on the need for cognitive validity. This cognitive validity follows from the types of rationally motivated agreements that make up Habermas' discourse theory. Thus the types of communicative actions that lead to the coordination of actions are essential parts of the democratic theory. Habermas has built a theory of a rational society that is founded on discursive procedures that would lead to all citizens accepting the reasonableness of their society by accepting that the procedures themselves are reasonable. For Habermas, this

rational society would be constructed through the creation of the social cooperation that comes through rational discourse.

Habermas' theory holds great value in relatively stable societies, and can act as a way of moving a society towards greater levels of cooperation and stability through rational means. What is not clear is how this formalized system of discourse would hold up in the context of a divided society. Is it likely that people living in divided societies would be able to agree upon authenticity of claims? Would it be possible to come to universalized set of moral standards? In order to explore these questions further, I turn to the work of Dryzek

### **Dryzek – Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies<sup>2</sup>**

Using the theories of Habermas as a platform, Dryzek has expanded concerning the power of communication and deliberation to build stable pluralistic democracies. The goal of Habermas and Dryzek is the same. The major critique that Dryzek makes is that the level of discursive ethics that Habermas seeks is not possible in the context of an electoral democracy. In order for the ideas to work they must be pulled out of the contest for sovereignty and fully into the public sphere. This would conceivably allow for dialogue to happen across a divided society without the burdens of a zero sum contestation for power. This acknowledgment by Dryzek that deliberation is difficult in the context of a contest for power is extremely important for this conversation.

While the foundations are the same in that both advocate for a deliberative form

2 Note: For this section I chose to focus on Dryzek because of the nature of his work being a more empirical study of deliberative democracy in divided societies. I feel that while author's such as Guttman and Thompson are in fact relevant, that Dryzek's work was more specific to this discussion.

of democracy of Habermas and Dryzek make a few different conclusions in how discourse should interact with politics. Dryzek is focused on taking the theories of discourse and of deliberative democracy and applying those theories to the contexts of divided societies. This application allows for a realistic insight into the difficulties and challenges that rational discourse faces in situations where “a way of processing the toughest issues concerning mutually contradictory assertions of identity in deeply divided societies can be understood.” (Dryzek 2005, 219)

What Dryzek believes in is a form of democracy that will allow people living in a divided society to be able to discursively bridge the barriers of difference, thus enabling that society to function in a way that is stable. Dryzek starts his explanation of deliberative democracy with the statement that what is being offered is “Deliberation across divided identities is hard. On a widely shared account, deliberation is what Bessette calls the "mild voice of reason"-exactly what is lacking in tough identity issues, at best an aspiration for how opponents might one day learn to interact once their real differences are dissolved.” (Dryzek 2005, 219) He argues for a deliberative democracy that would be able to handle the deep differences, and his solution to this is found in decoupling the deliberative and the decisional. This would allow for the deliberations to be held in a way that the outcome does not include the winning or losing of power. This would allow for the deliberative process to be free of that particular zero sum battle.

Dryzek believes that these deliberations can occur without threatening the identities of any individual or group. In his theory, he is looking to build a foundation of discourse that can find ways for people of different identities to communicate on issues that are vital to nation as a whole. This politics of engagement is able to process

contentious issues by focusing the conversation on the issues that are relevant for all members of the society. In this way, if the focus can remain on needs rather than on values, it is less likely that violence will ensue. “But if individuals can listen to each others' stories, they might at least accept one another's specific needs which can be reconciled, even when value systems and identities cannot.” (Dryzek 2005, 225) So by seemingly endorsing Forester's precept about accepting each other's needs is Dryzek making the case for the deliberative model being used in these types of cases? This would certainly be a refining of Habermas' discourse model. Though Habermas would likely endorse the use of the discourse principle for this, it seems that Dryzek is trying to limit the scope. “Engagement is less likely to end up in hostility if the focus is on specific needs (security, education, etc.) rather than general values.” (Dryzek 2005, 225)

Secondly he argues to “loosen the connection between the deliberation and decision moments” as he calls them. In this it seems that he is trying to take the discourse principle to a more informal setting in the hopes that this will be able to more effectively shape politics in the way that Habermas desires, though in this he does slightly differ from Habermas. In divided societies it is certainly true that there is a power struggle between identities for the control of the mechanisms of power. Even in stable democracies identity politics is a major issue that is in constant flux. In divided societies identity power struggles can act to reinforce the divisions on a societal level. In order for the ideas to work they must be pulled out of the contest for sovereignty and fully into the public sphere. This would conceivably allow for dialogue to happen across a divided society without the burdens of a zero sum contestation for power. This acknowledgment by Dryzek that deliberation is difficult in the context of a contest for

power is extremely important for this conversation. In this I agree with Dryzek. What Dryzek doesn't make clear is how moving the discourse principle out of this contestation will actually work to counteract this.

The greatest strength of Dryzek's work is that he is able to demonstrate the need for discourse in divided society. For Dryzek deliberative democracy is a practice of discourse that allows for a shared way of making sense of the world embedded in language. communication must be capable of inducing reflection, be non-coercive, and capable of linking a particular experience with a more general point or principle. These deliberations should point to larger, more abstract, principles that can be more easily accepted by all. This is in line with Habermas' appeal to the universalization of morals.

Dryzek moves dialogue to the public sphere, but in that all that he focuses on is the difference between “cold” and “hot” deliberative settings. In this he argues that the “hot” settings are not conducive for coming to agreement over positions for the reason that people rarely will change their positions on topics even when another's argument may have actually caused this to happen. In this case it will be much more valuable for the participant to save face and not lose authority or standing in the group. The cold type of setting that Dryzek endorses resembles two sorts of institutions networks and discursive designs. The networks are described as loosely formed groups with little centralized leadership. Though for these these groups to work, Dryzek acknowledges that there would first need to be a “relatively well-behaved political system”. However, the informal nature of these networks would be difficult to achieve in divided societies where there is a high level of in-group communication and little communication between groups.

Since this is the case, it further shows the challenges that this type of discursive process has in building social cohesion between groups in a divided society. This is not to say that I do not believe that this process is without merit. It is just not well suited for building social cohesion in divided societies. Social cohesion being what is necessary for the theories to work in these contexts. First, though, I believe it is beneficial to define cognitive reconciliation before moving to ways to build social cohesion.

### **Cognitive Reconciliation**

To understand best the way that I am attempting to draw out a definition of what cognitive reconciliation represents, I believe that it will be best to summarize briefly the principles of each author that I am using to build this definition. In understanding the core concepts I believe that it will be easier to discern the ways that political philosophy has made a case for reconciliation in the creation of society. For Rawls, reasonable differences between comprehensive doctrines can be resolved by agreements on a conception of justice. This type of consensus allows for each identity group to accept a place in without having to relinquish their core beliefs. As long as these beliefs remain in the private sphere and do not effect the agreements of justice. This thereby reconciles the differences of the between comprehensive doctrines through agreement on the public conceptions of justice.

For Habermas social cooperation is built upon ethical discourse. Strong ethics provide the foundation for argumentation. This is not built upon rhetoric but on the ability of people to provide rational reasons for their beliefs. These reasons would need to be acceptable to all people in order to be considered rational. This process is

dependent on the conception of moral universalization. This is a process that allows for the creation of impartial moral standards. Any moral principle that cannot be accepted by all as reasonable is not impartial and therefore cannot be used as a standard for society. In this there is a sense of being able to reconcile difference through a discursive process that leads to an understanding by all members of society of an impartial norm that is agreeable to all.

For Dryzek, discourse needs to be separated from the machinations of politics and sovereignty. This type of discourse needs to be used in “cold settings that are able to foster ideas that can then influence and shape the dialogue of the political sphere. This process will help to foster trust between divided groups through discourse, allowing for bridges to be built between identity groups. This works in two prongs for Dryzek. First, there must be a movement towards abstract ideas and second this then allows for discourse on the needs of the society. This conceptually would allow people to move beyond their desire for things like revenge and see ways for working with people who were previously antagonists.

If we are to take a foundation for Cognitive Reconciliation from the ideas of political philosophy, then we can define this concept as the ability to have reasonable moral and ethical discourse about the issues of the society as whole. This is discourse that will bring a sense of social cooperation as people see members of other groups as being participants in this larger ideas of reasonable expectations of justice. This also works towards a definition of cognitive reconciliation as the ability of adversarial groups to be able to settle societal disputes through a process of rational discussion and reasonable agreements. Cognitive reconciliation then is to come to a shared sense of

what is a reasonable foundation for society. It means that people have been able to accept different values, ethics and beliefs as also having a reasonable foundation. On that basis it is possible then to have an acceptance of the conception of a society in which those difference can exist together equally.

Ultimately, I believe that we can distill a concept for cognitive reconciliation into three main components. First, it is represented by the idea that reconciliation in pluralistic societies can be achieved by means of problem solving through discourse. Secondly, that this discourse must rely on the use of reason and rationality. Thirdly, that consensus built through this discourse signifies a reconciling of differences. A society that is built upon this model will be one that is able to be stable for generations. However, when the theories on the use of rational discourse and reasonable agreements are applied to contexts of divided societies, we can see that there are difficulties in applying the theories to the situations.

What this chapter has demonstrated is that cognitive reconciliation may not be sufficient when dealing with societies that are lacking social cohesion. Rawls theory on the creation of just and fair agreements on political structures is dependent upon the existence of an a priori level of social cooperation. Habermas believes that social cooperation will come about through discourse, namely that communicative action will lead to the realization of cooperative goals. However, this discourse needs structure so that it will in fact lead to the outcome that Habermas desires. As shown, this discursive process needs a formalized, agreed upon, set of rules and is best tied into a formalized system. What Habermas' theory cannot account for is the lack of basic levels of cohesion,



absent in societies that have been divided by violence, but necessary to come to agreements on moral rightness and authenticity claims. Dryzek demonstrates the difficulties that these theories have when applied to divided societies. What we will explore next is a way to add a layer to the political theory that I believe will ultimately strengthen the overall argument.

## CHAPTER III

### AFFECTIVE RECONCILIATION: THE BUILDING OF SOCIAL COHESION

“At each level of society – grassroots, middle, and elite – coexistence requires changes in the emotional, psychological, and perceptual attitudes of individuals who have lived through unthinkable trauma and who still live in fear and hatred of the 'enemy' that has caused them pain.” - Diana Chigas and Brian Ganson

#### **Introduction**

To move forward in this discussion we will need to explore the relationship between affect and cognition. It will be my argument that the political theories have relied too heavily on the use of rationality and reason. While political philosophy has provided the theoretical foundation of how to build societies based upon reason and rationality, it has not taken into account the role that feelings and emotions have in the equation. This part of the discussion is especially important when looking at pluralistic societies where groups have engaged in violence against each other. Violence, especially on the scale talked about here, causes negative emotions and feelings between those groups. These negative emotions and feelings are a main cause of the divisions in the society. As shown, this lack of social cohesion is unlikely to be overcome with the use of rationality and reason. What must be explored are the ways that feelings and emotions can be changed and, subsequently, how to build social cohesion.

To do this, we will first turn towards an understanding of human psychology that will help to explain some of the ways that feelings and emotions influence our perceptions of rationality and reason. The first part of this chapter will look at the social psychology literature on the primacy of affect. This will lead into a discussion of some of the ways in which affect limits people's capacity to use reason. At the end of this

chapter I will look at possible ways of creating positive affective change through a discussion on the practices of conflict resolution. It is through this discussion that I will be establishing a framework for a better understanding of what I am calling affective reconciliation and the importance that this form of reconciliation has in societies that have experienced violence.

While there is still not full consensus on the ways in which affective reconciliation is most effective or the ways in which a proper balance can be found between different models, the idea that reconciliation needs to occur at the emotional level is undisputed in the literature. What does seem to be lacking is a more firm understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of how the practices fit into the larger discussion. In order then to have a better understanding of where these foundations come from, I turn to social psychology. It is through the work of social psychologists that we can begin to understand the underpinnings of the role that affective reconciliation plays, and its necessity in the building of peaceful societies. By looking at this material, a picture will begin to emerge of the role that affect and intuition play in the motivations that people have for the behaviors and actions reflected in the social world.

In social psychology we find ideas on affect that are in stark contrast with the conceptions of reason or rationality in chapter II. The field of Psychology has been in an intense debate over the past half century over the role and primacy of cognitive and affective functions. Much of the contemporary literature in the field today has focused on the role that affect plays in people's perceptions of reason and rationality. By focusing on the social psychology literature that discusses the ways that affect influences cognitive functions, I believe that a contrast between reason and affect can be shown clearly. We

will start this exploration with the research on the primacy of affect, which states that primary way that humans process external stimuli is through an affective process. Then, we will look at the research that shows the way in which these affective intuitions lead to moral judgements. Lastly, we will look at the studies that show how this process manifests the phenomena of motivated reason and reactive devaluation. An understanding of these concepts will help to better understand the ways in which affect works and why it is important to understand these concepts in this discussion.

What this chapter will ultimately show is that the practices of the field of conflict resolution offer a solution to questions raised by the social psychologists. That it is possible to reach the outcomes sought by political philosophy by reconciling on an affective level. I use the term Affective Reconciliation to describe the ability to reconcile with others through the process of transforming emotion. Affective reconciliation can also be seen as being the ability of people to change the social circumstances that are left after violent conflict has occurred.

### **The Psychology of Affect**

We will begin our exploration in this chapter with a discussion on what is affect. Affect is described as the experience of feelings or emotions. (MA Hogg et. all 2010) The most common way that human beings use affect is through the emotional processing of stimuli and behavior outputs. (Zajonc 1980) As such, affective reactions are generally separated from the content of the experience. For example, people will more easily remember how a movie made them feel for a longer period of time than they will remember what the movie was about.

This is all different than the process of cognition. Cognition describes the way in which people process information and reach a decision that is based upon the rational comparisons between competing options. Much of the cognitive process was described in Chapter II. I think that the best way of describing the difference is that affect represents the feeling aspects of life and cognition represents the thinking. In order to draw this distinction more clearly between affect and cognition, we will begin by looking at the work of RB Zajonc on the primacy of affect.

### The Primacy of Affect

The ideas that make up the theory of the primacy of affect start to take shape in the work of RB Zajonc. Zajonc sets out to show that the process that is used to react to stimuli is one that is initiated by affect systems. The main goal for Zajonc is to show that the way in which human beings process information is almost entirely affective. He is attempting to push back against the psychologists in the 1950's and 60's who were attempting to take the field of psychology towards a conclusion that thinking comes before feeling.

Zajonc comes from a social psychology background, and so constructs his work starting from that direction, commenting on the fact that social functions are based on almost pure affect experience. "There are probably very few perceptions and cognitions in everyday life that do not have a significant affective component.." (Zajonc 1984, 153) Therefore, according to Zajonc, it is important to understand the difference between thinking and feeling. Everyday human beings take in an enormous amount of information through our senses. From those inputs we must make decisions, in many

cases this requires split second processes. It is believed that because of the fast nature of these responses that it may take a minimal amount of actual cognition to transform the initial input into action. Thus the responses that human beings have in their day to day lives are largely based on this fast process.

The initial stages of this process are almost entirely affective and have little, if no, cognitive input. Cognitive thoughts may enter this sequence at various stages, though these cognitions generally become a construction of the initial feeling, a way of rationalizing that emotion. (Zajonc 1984) We make decisions based mostly on our initial affective judgement and then after, we use the cognitive information to provide reasons why we made the decision. (Zajonc 1984) Further clarifying the idea, Zajonc points out that in order for a decision to be cognitive, all options must first be weighed equally against each other, weighing all the pros and cons, and only then arriving at the decision. There is simply no evidence that this process occurs more than on limited occasions. (Zajonc 1984) The judgements that are made in this way would require slow processing. Most decisions in life occur quickly and are usually characterized by an overwhelming attachment to one alternative over the other. (Zajonc 1984) The choice of a certain alternative is based on little more than “I like this alternative” the most.

It is these initial 'feelings' that help human beings to assign meaning to the inputs that are received. The emotional reactions help us to determine the differences in what we perceive. For example this allows for determinations of the good vs. the bad (Saber-toothed Tiger vs Antelope), the strong vs weak (Saber-toothed Tiger vs Mosquito), and the quick vs. the slow (Saber-toothed Tiger vs Quicksand). (Zajonc 1984) These determinations were all necessary for survival. This process is also almost completely

involuntary, and easily influenced by our surroundings. (Zajonc 1984) The reactionary nature of this process means that it is difficult to control by any sort of attentive measures. (Zajonc 1984)

Another characteristic of the affect process is that it generally produces outputs that are difficult to challenge. As Zajonc states, “We can readily accept that the fact that (our cognitive judgements) can be wrong. But we are never wrong about what we like or dislike.” (Zajonc 1984, 157) The perseverance of the initial output is so strong that it is 'virtually impervious' to persuasion, even when the cognitive basis for the output can be shown to be invalid. (Zajonc 1984) Even when no other actual evidence exists, or there is no other cognitive way to voice the reasons to support the initial reaction, it is still likely that people will maintain their initial impressions. (Zajonc 1984) “(T)his certainty that we like what we like is often accompanied by our inability to verbalize the reasons for our attraction or repulsion..” (Zajonc 1984, 157)

Zajonc bases his assessment of this on the work of Nesbitt and Wilson who performed a study of the research looking into whether people are capable of reporting on why they are performing certain behaviors. Their findings go towards disputing the claim of several author's that human behavioral systems are a fully cognitive process. They state that “it is the *result* of thinking, not the process of thinking, that appears spontaneously in consciousness.” (Nesbitt and Wilson 1977, 232) They were able to conclude this by looking at the results of the work done on the ability to verbalize behavioral motives. What they discovered was that humans are generally unable to state why they make certain decisions, or are wrong in their assessments. “The overall results thus confound any assumption that conscious, verbal cognitive processes result in

conscious, verbalizable changes in evaluations or motive states which then mediates behavior.” (Nesbitt and Wilson 1977, 235)

This is significant because verbal report is tended to be seen as evidence of cognitive functioning. The fact that subjects were not able to verbalize the reasons for their behavioral changes highly suggests that the motivations behind their behaviors is likely non-cognitive. Though this study does tend to show that this motivation-behavior system can be manipulated, it does not suggest that the behaviors are likely to change purely based upon changes in cognition. The actual change occurred because the researchers modified the fear response mechanism in certain subjects. This, then, also lends credence to the idea that changes in behavior are likely to come more through a change in stimuli to the affect appraisal system than through a cognitive change.

For Nesbitt and Wilson, this still left a question, though, of whether the respondents in these tests were aware that any change had occurred, and if so what might be attributed as the cause for the change. If no awareness was reported it would further suggest that people are cognitively unaware of the existence of a process. In order to show this Nesbitt and Wilson added a step to similar types of tests as previously mentioned. This extra step involved asking the respondents questions after the tests had been conducted. For example, the author's cite a test in which participants were convinced that a pill they were taking would mimic all of the symptoms of electric shock. The participants were the subjected to electric shock to test whether the 'pill' would have any effect. The pill that was given was a placebo, however the effect that it had on participants was real. On average, the people who took the pill endured 4 times the amount of electric shock as those who did not receive the pill. When asked why they



were able to withstand more of the shock than normal, respondents come up with answers that had nothing to do with taking the pill. Even when the respondents were told about the reason for the test and that the pill was actually fake, the respondents generally agreed that the pill likely would have an effect on other test takers, but that it still did not have an effect on them. Thus the author's concluded that while participants had likely attributed the discomfort of the electric shock to the pill and were therefore able to take more of the shock, they were unaware that this had taken place.

What this study showed was peoples' inability to access the motivations behind certain behaviors that the researchers were attempting to alter. This further suggested that the cause of the change in behavior was due to a non-cognitive process. This supports the conclusions that Zajonc reached about the role of the affective system in processing external inputs. This also show that reason may be a secondary function to affect. To better understand the implications of this, we turn next to the work done on the use of affect in the creation of moral judgements.

### Moral Judgements and Reasoning

Building from the studies of Zajonc, Nesbitt, and Wilson, Jonathan Haidt takes the understanding of affective intuition and applies it to the creation of moral judgements. In this same vein as the previous author's, Haidt is attempting to push back against the purely rationalist models of moral judgement creation. Haidt bases his model on social intuitionism. This is the idea in philosophy that “there are moral truths and that when people grasp these truths they do not do so by a process of ratiocination and reflection but rather by a process more akin to perception.” (Haidt 2001, 814) Notice that Haidt uses

very similar language to both the studies done by Zajonc and Nesbitt and Wilson. The argument is that intuition, perceptions, and emotions come first. In Haidt's case he argues that moral emotions lead to moral judgements. To make the case for this he sets out to demonstrate 4 things: (a) There are two cognitive processes at work—reasoning and intuition—and the reasoning process has been overemphasized; (b) reasoning is often motivated; (c) the reasoning process constructs post hoc justifications, yet we experience the illusion of objective reasoning; and (d) moral action covaries with moral emotion more than with moral reasoning.” (Haidt 2001, 815)

Haidt also then categorizes these into three categories which he defines as moral intuition, moral judgements, and moral reasoning. These are defined as follows:

**Moral Intuition:** Contrasted with moral reasoning, this is the seemingly instantaneous judgement that appears suddenly and effortlessly in consciousness. This means that the outcome of the cognitive effort is aware to the person but not the process. Moral intuition may include affective appraisals (good-bad, like-dislike) though it is defined as the contrast between emotional and cognitive, as intuition can also be a cognitive process. (Haidt 2001) A good way of describing moral intuition is this: “One sees or hears about a social event and instantly feels approval or disapproval.” (Haidt 2001, 818) For instance, Haidt uses the example of a brother and sister who both willingly decide to have a sexual relationship. No matter what other factors are involved in the context of the story, we will all have an immediate reaction of either approving or disapproving of this action.

**Moral Judgements:** Haidt defines moral judgement as the process of social evaluations that take place to determine the validity of the actions and character of a person living in

any society. (Haidt 2001) Many of these judgements are made about skills or talents, though, possibly more important for this discussion, are the judgements that people make about fairness, honesty, and virtue. All of these assessments come through social interaction, discussions between people living together, and these discussions have consequences for future interactions with the people in society. Referring back to the example above of the brother and sister, each persons intuition about their behavior will lead to judgements about not only the situation, but of the people involved as well. These evaluations, and the way that those are formed is crucial in a discussion of reconciliation.

**Moral Reasoning:** This is defined by Haidt as the “conscious mental activity that consists of transforming given information about people in order to reach a moral judgement.” (Haidt 2001, 818) Haidt also compares this type of reasoning to scientific hypothesizing in that this process usually entails people searching for relevant evidence that supports the moral judgement, weighing the evidence, coordinating the evidence with theories, and then reaching a decision. (Haidt 2001) This process may include steps that are performed unconsciously. (Haidt 2001) This process would exclude any type of momentary intuitive response such as sudden flashes of insight and gut reactions. (Haidt 2001)

What Haidt proposes is that the social intuitionist model explains how moral judgements come directly from moral intuitions and that moral reasoning comes as an ad hoc explanation for the judgement. This is very much in line with Zajonc (intuition) and Nesbitt and Wilson (post-intuition reasoning). This also goes towards the idea that morals and judgments are not going to be persuaded by reason or rationality. In the case of any sort of affective intuition that a person or group of people have towards another

person or group of people are not likely to be changed unless the process itself is affective. Thus it is likely that if it is possible to transform the ways in which previously hostile groups see each other, the process that will need to be taken will need to be an affective one.

To break this down further, let's accept that the way in which people judge other people is through affective systems in the brain. What we are looking for in affective reconciliation is the ability to change a previously negative affective judgement (this person is bad) to a positive affective judgement (this person is good). The argument that I put forth is that if this is possible, then it is much more likely that people will be able to live together in the same society. The counter argument is then also true. If the moral judgement is that those people are bad, then it is unlikely that a functional society can be built between those groups of people.

From the understanding of Haidt, Zajonc, Nesbitt and Wilson, one can see an easy path to understanding how the Social psychology arguments play out as follows: it is the limbic system that takes and processes initial sensory inputs and the initial response to these inputs is an emotional response (affective). The affective response to stimuli works mostly in binaries: good-bad, like-dislike, fight-flight. This initial assessment of a situation becomes the 'feeling' that a person has about said situation and this feeling is very difficult to change. It is also not likely to change through attempts at cognitive persuasion. Cognitive change can occur, but only on things that are also cognitive decisions. The affective change, if possible, can only come through affective processes. Affect is also where human beings derive their motivation for action.

## Motivated Reasoning

As a demonstration of the studies on affect primacy and moral reasoning, several social psychologists have conducted studies on the way in which the mind works when processing empirical facts. One of these is the idea of motivated reason and is defined by Kahan as, “motivated reasoning refers to the tendency of people to conform assessments of information to some goal or end extrinsic to accuracy.” (Kahan et. All 2012, 408) It is psychologically easier to reason away contradictions than it is to revise feelings. Feelings come first, and evidence is mostly used in service to those feelings. (Redlawsk et. all 2010) This most often happens in situations when “the goal of protecting one's identity or standing in affinity groups that shares fundamental values can generate motivated cognition relating to relevant facts.” (Kahan et. All 2012, 408) In other words, when a piece of information is presented, a person is more likely to find the parts of that information that will confirm held beliefs rather than process any of the information that might challenge that belief. As Kahan points out, the cause of this phenomena is believed to be found in the socializing that is part of being in a group.

Kahan explains this further as the need to protect one's identity, which is tied into the identity that one has with-in a group. The group provides for the need of the individual and thus it becomes paramount to protect one's status in the group. This is why individuals display what Kahan calls identity-protective cognition. (Kahan 2012) Every social group has a certain conception of how the world is and the way that it should be. It becomes the responsibility of the individual in each group to defend this group conception. (Kahan 2012) If, then, a member does not display loyalty to the accepted perceptions of the group, this will mark that person as untrustworthy and the

status with-in the group has now become compromised. (Kahan 2012) Thus a member of a social group will only process the parts of information that work to prove the already held belief.

A study conducted by Kahan goes further to demonstrate the effects of motivated reasoning. In this study, Kahan used a recorded protest to test whether or not the an affinity with the cause of the protest would shape peoples perception of the legitimacy of the protesters' actions and the actions of the police that are present at the protest.

Through this study, Kahan wanted to show the effects that motivated reasoning has on perceptions of fairly normal occurrences like that of seeing a protest. Kahan wanted to look specifically at the way people process an event, in this case a protest, and determine which of the facts that people perceive as taking place. What the study will show is that people perceive facts differently depending on their own moral judgements. This demonstrates the idea that people will find the facts that best support their beliefs while at the same time ignoring the facts that might be subversive to their cultural claims. This is all in the name of protecting the values of the group that the person has an affinity with, while protecting their place in that group.

The participants for this study were made up of 200 Americans selected at random from a national sample. (Kahan 2012) These people were then separated into 4 different categories based upon the answers to a political views questionnaire that differentiate between two spectrums. The first of these was between individualism and communitarianism. The second was between hierarchical and egalitarianism. This made 4 different possible combinations. After determining where the participants fell on these spectrums they were then split evenly into two groups. The first group would be told that

the protests were taking place at an abortion clinic with the protesters aimed at stopping doctors and nurses from performing abortions. The second group was told that the protests were held at a military recruiting station and aimed at protesting the ban on openly gay and lesbians being able to join.

Participants were then told that they would be adjudicating a case made by the protestors that the police in the video had wrongfully stopped the protests. The claim was made on the grounds that the protestors were not actually breaking any laws, though the police had claimed that the protestors were blocking traffic and that they were harassing people who were attempting to gain access to the facilities in question. The participants were asked to make a determination on this claim and use the evidence from the video to support their decision. Kahan predicted that people would make determinations on whether to support the protestors or the police based upon whether they agreed with the underlying reasons for the protests or not. (Kahan 2012)

The results of the study showed this hypothesis to be true. In both conditions roughly fifty percent of the participants voted that the police were liable for wrongfully ceasing the protests. (Kahan 2012) The split over whether the police officers were at fault was exactly along the lines of how participants identified politically. After watching the video, the participants were asked to determine as to what level they agreed or disagreed to witnessing events that had taken place in the video. All of the questions pertained to events that had actually occurred in the video, this was simply to judge what events each participant had processed. (Kahan 2012) As expected, participants only processed the events in the video that would support their conclusion on whether the protests were justified or not. For example, if a participant agreed with the protestors that it was wrong

to exclude openly gay or lesbian people from joining the military, then the respondent would only witness the events that supported the protestors. The opposite was true for people viewing under this condition who disagreed with the protestors.

As a way of further lending credence to this finding, Kahan also asked the participants if they believed that protests were a legitimate expression of political disagreement. The participants in the experiment showed no inherent bias that protests themselves are wrong, all agreed that protests were a right that should be protected. Thus the difference in whether or not participants thought that the protests were legitimate or illegitimate came down entirely to the cultural values and judgments that the participants claimed to hold. This shows that while people may agree in principle that a certain conception of justice should in fact exist, people are at the same time divided on when that right is being enacted rightly in the public sphere. As I will show later, these differences are all motivated by the underlying affective intuitions influencing the moral judgements.

### Reactive Devaluation

Another phenomena that demonstrates the primacy of affect is what is called Reactive Devaluation. Moaz set out to show how the theories of affect applied to the context of the Israeli and Palestinian conflict. The goal was to show that the perceptions that each side have of each other has a profound impact on how proposals made during negotiations are perceived. Reactive Devaluation is a cognitive bias that occurs when a



proposal is **devalued** if it appears to originate from an antagonist.<sup>3</sup> This is built from what are called attribution errors, which is the phenomena described by the Heiderian balance. This theory states that a negatively valenced source will equal a negatively valenced object. Valence refers to the subjective evaluation of positive and negative emotions. What the Heiderian balance means then is that if an object is associated with a group or person that is viewed negatively, that object will also be viewed negatively. What this study shows is that this also extends to objects such as peace proposals.

This study consisted of three separate trials, two conducted at the University of Tel Aviv and one conducted at Stanford University. In each trial an actual proposal used during some stage of the negotiations between Israel and Palestine was used to determine if randomly selected students would be subject to the effects of motivated reasoning. The first trial focused specifically on Jewish-Israeli students, splitting these students by political affiliations as either “hawks” or “doves”. While the second trial was similar to the first in that it split Jewish-Israeli students into hawks and doves, it also added in Israeli Arab students. The third trial, was conducted at Stanford University with American participants who were split into those who claimed to favor Israel and those who claimed to be neutral.

In the first trial, participants were given part of a proposal made by the Israeli delegation during the peace talks in Oslo. The participants were separated into three groups with one group being told that this was an Israeli proposal, the second group being told that this was a Palestinian proposal, and the third group was given the proposal as being unambiguously for a two-state solution. What the results showed was that, on

3 Note: This theory was first proposed by Ross and Stillinger

average, when told that the proposal came from the Israelis, the participants believed that the proposal was fair and even for both sides. When it was presented as a Palestinian proposal it was believed that the proposal favored the Palestinians. The third part of trial showed evidence that the Israeli students believed that a two state solution favored the Palestinians, which meant this was deemed not significant to overall findings. What the overall findings of this trial did show was that reactive devaluation, and therefore motivated reasoning, had a large effect on how proposals are perceived. By this I mean that the participants believed that they were being reasonable even though their biases clearly had an effect on how the proposal was perceived. A negative affective judgement about the other group of people caused proposals made by that group to be devalued.

The second trial was almost identical to the first trial, with the additions of the Israeli Arabs and a slight change in that the proposal that was used was one that Palestinian delegates presented at the Camp David talks. The Jewish students were again split into hawks and doves, though the Arab students were not separated. This second trial produced the same effects as the first trial for the Israeli students. What was interesting was that the converse reaction was true for the Arab students. As in the first study, the participants were shown the proposal and asked to rate it on a scale of 1-7 with 1 being completely in favor of Israel and 7 being completely in favor of Palestine. When the proposal was presented as Palestinian it was rated, on average, as a 3.6. The Palestinian students believed that it represented a fair and balanced deal for both sides. When it was presented as an Israeli proposal the ratings changed, averaging between a rating of 2 and 3. The proposal itself was the same. The only thing that had changed was who had supposedly authored the proposal. Both of these results lend further credence to

the existence of reactive devaluation.

The third trial was conducted in much the same way as the first two, though with one slight change. A third of the participants were told that the proposal was made by diplomats from the United States. The participants were separated into two groups, one being pro-Israel and the other being considered neutral. The findings of this trial were also very similar to the first two trials. The pro-Israeli Americans believed that the proposal was balanced when made by Israel or by US diplomats and favored Palestinians when made by Palestine. The Neutral was a little bit different in that the statistics showed that they believed the proposal was relatively fair and balanced<sup>4</sup> no matter who had made the proposal. The findings of each of these trials further demonstrates that reactive devaluation plays a major role in determining the perception of peace proposals.

Both Reactive Devaluation and Motivated Reason are examples of the ways in which affect impacts the use of reason. Each of these phenomena points to use of the affective functions of the brain, and the ways in which emotions and feelings can influence people's ability to use the cognitive functions of reason and rationality. Each also describe how people are also not likely aware of this degradation in cognitive functioning. In the context of divided societies, the understanding of how affect impacts the use of cognitive functioning is important. If affect hinders the ability to use cognition effectively and also shades the awareness of this degraded capacity, then this points to the need for affective change. Perhaps the most relevant example of this is the way in which reactive devaluation makes the prospect of coming to reasonable agreements, in these

4 Note that there was slight variations with an Israeli proposal being slightly in favor of Israel and a Palestinian proposal being slightly in favor of Palestine. There was a stronger belief that a proposal made by American diplomats was believed to be pro Palestinian.

divided contexts, improbable. Must we accept that this condition is permanent or is there a way to encourage a change in affect in order to strive for a better cognitive capacity?

Both Zajonc and Haidt argue that affective judgements and attitudes are not susceptible to change through forms of cognitive persuasion. (Zajonc 1980) Zajonc uses an example of a person who thinks that candidate A in an election is the most honest and therefore the best candidate. The argument then becomes that to change this perception, one could provide proof that candidate A is not actually honest, or try and change the weight given to the value of honesty. However, these have proven to be the least effective methods of changing perceptions. (Zajonc 1980) If one imagines that perceptions that people who are in conflict may have of one another will be similarly based on affective impressions, it becomes very important to understand a way to persuade people to change affective judgements.

Haidt points to the idea that the only way in which others can change affectively based attitudes is to use affective forms of persuasion. Haidt does make the point that private reflection can have an impact on moral judgements, allowing for change, though he points out that this really relies on two things being present. The first is that reasoned changes are likely to occur only when “the initial intuition is weak and the processing capacity is high.” (Haidt 2001, 819) Secondly, private reflection can also work if the person can understand another moral intuition and is then able to weigh the two intuitions against each other to see which is stronger or to decide by the conscious application of a rule or principle. (Haidt 2001) However, these reflections are entirely individualistic and are not likely to happen often. If affective intuitions can be changed, then it is much more likely that it will occur with the use of affective methods.

Since changing affective judgements, attitudes, and behaviors is likely to need an affective process, then what might be a way to effect positive change? The answer, I argue, lies in affective forms of reconciliation. The conflict resolution literature brings forth the idea of reconciliation being a transformative process. This transformation, or the creation of new social relationships, is in fact referring to the idea of changing the affective moral judgements that people have made. This speaks to an ability of being able to change an affective binary reaction of say “dislike” to “like”; or possibly “mis-trust” to “trust”. Any number of negative impressions could conceivably be flipped to positive impressions. The field of conflict resolution offers practical ways of changing the affect.

### **Conflict Resolution Practices**

In order to explore the literature on the practices of conflict resolution I have broken it into three sections. First, there needs to be an understanding of what it means to find truth. Secondly, building from the concepts of truth, there is a need to rebuild or transform social relationships. This happens through a process of restorative justice, generally involving the acts of apologies and reparations. Thirdly, conflict resolution looks to heal the traumas that violence has caused. “As it is defined this allows for the process of healing the traumas of both victims and perpetrators after violence, providing a closure of the bad relation. This process prepares the parties for relations with justice and peace.” (Galtung 2011, Speech)

## Truth and Acknowledgment

When a society is emerging from a violent conflict situation, the things that are lost are truth and sense of justice. Truth is an 'absolute, unrenounceable value'. (Stanley 2001) How then can we define truth and how can it be accomplished? “The desire to promote change in civil society and state mechanisms has led commissions, across the world, to question the nature of truth.” (Hayner 1994, 600) When the field of conflict resolution talks about truth though, what kind of truth is being sought? A central assumption is that reconciliation requires truth-telling, though how truth-telling is defined is a matter in contention. First, there is the idea that truth telling is necessary to provide accountability for past crimes, to heal the individual and national psyches, and to restore the moral consensus and order of the community. (Renner 2012)

In order to better define the concept of truth and the ways in which it can be sought, I turn to Albie Sachs. Sachs was a judge in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. After the commission ended in 1998, Sachs was one of the main author's of the report about the commissions effectiveness and impact. For Sachs true reconciliation comes from “laying the foundations to be able to live together in country as human beings sharing certain common memories and common moral values.” (Sachs 1999, 1575) This involves an agreement that events occurred, acknowledgement of the pain these events caused, of the cruelty and violence, and the need for reparations of some sort. There needs to be a sense that the entire community is now on the same map, so to speak. (Sachs 1999) Sachs believes that this is accomplished through a process of seeking the truth. In the report, Sachs lays out the 4 typologies that he uses to define truth:

**1) Microscopic truth:** Think here of positive scientific research. The process of defining a field, setting the parameters of that field, and then narrow down until you find an appropriate answer. The process involves experimentation, i.e. control the variables, measure them and infer certain relationships. Or think of legal enquiry where an issue is defined followed by a series of narrow questions. Both of these would be microscopic truths.

**2) Logical Truth:** This is the truth that is implicit in a statement and doesn't require any further observation. For example, “men are a fundamentally flawed species.” Therefore if you are a man then you are fundamentally flawed. The flow is from general observation to necessary consequences of that statement being true. Here then the goal is not so much finding the truth, but of finding the proof needed for the original statement. Here then truth is an element of proof where proof may be of more value than raw truth.

**3) Experiential Truth:** The truth that comes from the experiences of life. These are phenomenological in nature. The experimenter is a part of the field they are studying, examining their own relationships with others and drawing conclusions from the different experiences encountered in by being in this place. This is a profound source of truth for the social sciences and psychology.

**4) Dialogic Truth:** This emerges from the interaction of all of the other types of truth, but through multiple participation, people arguing, debating with, listening to each other, so the truth emerges and changes, emerges and changes, never-endingly. There is no single comprehensive authority of truth or final narrative about what happened. This is just a process of ideas mingling with other ideas, experiences mingling with other experiences. Through this process certain levels of conviction about different episodes

and phenomena, with many different layers, emerges. There may be certain moments of closure, but even these moments of closure will become part of the commentary over time. This process allows for multiple narrations of the “truth” with extraordinary interactions between these narratives.

According to Stanley, the Truth commission set out to discover the truth through the overlapping relationships of the 4 types of truth. (Stanley 2001) Specifically, the workings of the TRC seemingly were based on both the subjective truth of individual story telling alongside the objective truth of fact-finding(microscopic) and debate(dialogic). Stanley argues that this process led only to the discovery of an “acceptable truth”. (Stanley 2001, 528) I think the question of whether or not this “acceptable truth” is a just outcome must be based on the amount of people who find it acceptable. It does not seem possible to find an “acceptable truth” that is indeed acceptable to all people. The (TRC), like other truth commissions across the world, has had difficulties in accessing truth. (Hayner 1994) It seems very likely that there will be at least some who are not satisfied with this outcome. The likely outcome of finding an acceptable truth is the maintenance of the status quo. By this I mean that it is highly probable that the determination of what is acceptable is likely to be determined by those in power.

This is a problem all truth commissions will face because of the political aspect that goes into doing a TRC on a national level. The desire for truth will always run into the barrier of political will to keep at least some parts of the real truth hidden. The politics of power dictates that those who are in power maintain that power, and those who are not in power, seek to gain power. This game for power and control requires people to



hide their own weaknesses as much as possible. For any weakness that is exposed presents an opportunity for someone to use it against you. This is not to say that truth commissions are not helpful to the process of reconciliation. As Igantieff states it, truth Commissions can “reduce the number of lies that can be circulated unchallenged in public discourse.” (Stanley 2001, 530) On this point Stanley argues that ultimately the truth uncovered by the (TRC) has promoted a more truthful future for South Africa, though it has ultimately left many South Africans unsatisfied. (Stanley 2001)

If the closet that institutions like a TRC can achieve is a sense of acceptable truth and that truth works to create a minimum sense at least of what stories are no longer acceptable, then we left with something short of the objectionable truth. This leaves me with the question of what is it that individuals want out of truth? “It therefore seems that people sometimes use the word ‘truth’ when what they mean is ‘judgement’.” (Hegarty 2002) Not ‘judgement’ in the formal legal sense that one gets damages for a civil wrong done or that someone gets sent to jail for a criminal offense, but an acknowledgement, an admission that what was done was wrong. (Hegarty 2002) Many times this debate creates objective ‘truth’ as a pre-requisite for peace, when what is actually necessary is acknowledgement. “Individuals, families, and communities may all ‘know the truth’ about events, but if that truth is not formally acknowledged, the sense of injustice persists and the possibility of the abuse occurring again remains.” (Hegarty 2002, 102) “Truth may be a part of the acknowledgement process, but without that acknowledgement, one cannot prevent the replication of the abuses of the past.” (Hegarty 2002, 102)

Defining truth, especially in the context of violent conflict, seems to be a very difficult task. For this discussion it seems that the best way to understand truth is to think

of it as both the uncovering of the events that occurred and a need for acknowledgement. An acknowledgement of the wrongs that were committed and that these wrongs caused suffering. In order for Justice to occur there needs to be some kind of acknowledgment by the perpetrator of the wrongs committed. Logically this must follow from some sort of truth process. A process like the TRC in South Africa allowed for the public viewing of this sort of acknowledgement. Therefore, in this way, truth and restorative justice are inextricably linked.

It would not be difficult to imagine how alienating it would feel to know that an injustice has occurred but to have no one else recognize this injustice. The acknowledgement of the past crimes allows for the relationships between people living in a community to be restored. Restorative types of justice are one of the main goals of affective reconciliation. It is the idea that the bonds of community that have been broken by a criminal act can be repaired and that the sense of community can be restored. This is done through the process of truth telling and apologies given by the perpetrator to the survivors.

### Relationship Transformation

The natural progression from the idea of truth finding and the acknowledgment of the past is to look at apologies. “Apologizing as a necessity for restoring a sense of normality in society because it is an acknowledgement of the wrongdoing that occurred.” (Sachs 1999, 1575) Once the past crimes have been acknowledged, there needs to be a process of apologizing that can bring about a better sense of justice. Schotsmans describes a process like this that occurred in Sierra Leone. “The ceremony lasts for two

days, with a bonfire where (survivors) and perpetrators share their experiences.

Forgiveness is the acceptance of apologies; 'forgiveness in the heart' cannot be forced and comes later, according to the project staff.” (Schotsmans 2012, 282)

She goes on to explain how this process was used in the Moyamba District of Sierra Leone and that the process helped to restore a sense of community of all inhabitants. Even though the former combatants had been allowed to live back in the communities by the survivors, and even though the survivors reported living 'peacefully' with the former soldiers, there was still a great lack of trust. Through this process the ex-combatants were able to apologize and have their apologies accepted and the survivors were able to receive economic support in the form of assistance with communal farming. In the attached note, the author acknowledges a comment by the Forum of Conscience that the challenge is to encourage genuine reconciliation without making people pretend reconciliation just in order to receive an economic benefit.

“Meanwhile, the best way to continue the process of 'cooling the hearts' seems to be creating what people are really looking for: a contained space for open dialogue on the past, according to traditional values of accountability and reconciliation, within a strict framework of space and time, and concluding with a ritual of reconciliation with the community and ancestors. Although such initiatives cannot operate in isolation of the broader social and cultural context, they may go a long way towards promoting the goals of transitional justice.” (Schotsmans 2012, 287) There also, however, needs to be meaning created for apologies to carry any weight. “Like most victims in Western Legal models, the victim is left asking, “What's in it for me?” This is the point where... some restitution might do much good. *The perpetrator has to deserve being forgiven.*

(emphasis is author's)" (Galtung 2011, Speech)

Ultimately what practices like public apologies and reparations do is allow for a change in social relationships. This is the second fundamental pillar of the idea of affective reconciliation. This is also a highly debated topic in the field. The debate centers around the idea of whether reconciliation is about actual repair of relationships or if it actually involves the transforming of prior bad relationships to more positive ones. I believe that this is best stated by Spelman when she references Chayes, "She, like many others, thinks it important to emphasize that the kinds of repair, restoration, or reconstruction that constitutes coexistence are not the same set that would constitute a real reconciliation among formerly warring groups." (Spelman 2003, 240) From this comes the question, and one that Spelman acknowledges as well, of the role of creating a new normative society from the ashes of the violence that had wrecked the society previously. Is it better to repair the best that we can, like super gluing a broken bowl, and move forward accepting that the situation will just never be the same. Or can we attempt to change the dynamics of the situation so that, in essence, the bowl is replaced by something new.

The difficulty that conflict resolution has had in general is in explaining this dynamic. What is the relationship between Reconciliation (in the sense of repairing a relationship that once existed) and transformation (creating a new relationship which had not existed in the past)? In asking this I am not suggesting that only one can exist at a time, but it seems that the arguments for reconciliation are ones that want to imagine some level of peaceful relations between peoples before the outbreak of violence and that the violence itself is what broke the bonds of the relationship. However, what if we were

to look at the situation with the idea that maybe a peaceful relationship was never in place even before the violence. What if the expressed violence was based upon the past negative relationships. In this case it would not due to return to the past relationships. I think this idea of reconciliation, as repairing past relationships, falls under the same fallacies as the idea of peace being the time and events that occur between epochs of latent violence. If this all has some truth to it, then we must understand the difference between creating a new relationship structure in post-violent communities, and the idea of reconciliation as stated.

I return to Spelman here when she says that “And yet repair is also presumptuous in its insistence that a given point in the history of something or a given point n history is more important than any other point or condition.” (Spelman 2003, 241) Meanwhile, Llewellyn argues that the idea of restoring relationships should not be understood as a restoration of the past relationship. Instead she argues that “the aim is to 'restore' relationships between and among peoples the parties involved to a state in which all parties are treated with equal concern, respect, and dignity.” (Llewellyn and Philpott 2014, 10) In this sense it is the restoration of relationships to an ideal of what a right relationship should be. If viewed in this light “restore” really means a transformation to a relationship that is more just, equal, and fair. This transformation of relationship can be seen then as a movement toward something that is positive and away from the negative aspects of the previous relationship.

### Healing Trauma

All of these restorative practices work towards the healing of the individual

traumas that have been experienced during the violence. It is the healing of this trauma that allows for the possibility that the underlying affect can change. The healing of trauma is a major part of the affective process of reconciliation. This healing could allow people to be able to move forward from the traumatic experience of violence. Notice that this is not saying that people should just move on and forget the past experiences. The forgetting of past events is not the same as healing the trauma. In fact healing entails the need to remember the past events, and for people to have what happened be acknowledged by others. This healing would allow for both the past to be remembered and for a more positive foundation to move forward.

While this is a very effective process for an individual the challenge has been how to translate this effect to a larger community of people. There is also the problem of how to get all of the people who have been effected by violence together individually if the violence was on a larger, national scale. The logistics of being able to get all of the people together can be prohibitive at times. Thus more people have turned to process on the more macro scale.

The healing of trauma on this more macro scale generally involves attempts at having survivors speak at commissions that have been put together, like the one in South Africa. It is believed that the public nature of these commissions can be a better platform for healing. The argument for this possibly best put forth by Michael Humphrey and is based on the idea that speaking out helps survivors get over their traumas and is a cathartic process for the perpetrators.” (Renner 2012, 56) There are also calls for a process such as this to be able to reach the type of historical truth that was talked about in the truth section. The subsequent general truth telling is argued to have a great healing

effect. “Healing and reconciliation in violent ethnic and religious conflicts depends on a process of transactional contrition and forgiveness between aggressors and victims which is indispensable to the establishment of a new relationship based on mutual acceptance and reasonable trust. This process depends on joint analysis of the history of the conflict, recognition of injustices and resulting historic wounds, and acceptance of moral responsibility where due.” (Fisher 1999, 28)

The challenge is that healing can occur on a collective scale, and there is certainly benefits for this, but that having this as the only vehicle for healing can leave people feeling alienated. The argument here is that healing needs to occur on both the individual and on the communal and national, with a balance between these three levels. Batchelor argues that the process should be more national. “On the contrary, some kind of collective, national transitional justice process is necessary for the reduction of the effects of trauma on individuals, given the fact that, as Sumerfield states, trauma ‘...is not a private experience and the suffering it engenders is resolved in a social context’.” (Batchelor 2012, 327) Though in the study conducted by Catherine Byrnes she discovered that individuals who had participated in the TRC reported feeling alienated after the process was over. (Byrnes 2004) These same people reported that they wished to have been able to have had an apology directly from the person and not just an account of the truth. This leaves the debate quite open as to how best to proceed, though I would argue that both are needed.

It is a combination of the actions described above that can have the most effect on healing. The search for the truth and the acknowledgement of wrongs, plays perhaps the greatest role in this process. In many cases involving past violence people may not know

where the bodies of loved ones have been buried. Being able to find the truth about where a body has been buried or learning the truth about the circumstances of how the person died can have an extremely positive effect on a person. This can lead in some cases to being able to accept the apology from the person who committed the crime, though this step is not always guaranteed. In this way though, truth, acknowledgment and apologies can act in accordance to help the healing of trauma.

### Forgiveness

The healing of trauma allows for one final step of affective reconciliation: the ability of people to forgive the acts that have been done against them. This is generally a step that tends to get over looked because, of all of the different aspects of affective reconciliation, forgiveness is the most personal. Forgiveness is not something that can be accounted for in peace agreements and is not something that even a community should be able to require. Forgiveness is as absolute and as non cognitive as the act of violence that it aims to resolve. Forgiveness is immutable, trans-inductive, and non-cognitive in nature, and therefore not able to be understood cognitively. This lack of human cognition of forgiveness should not in any way mute the effect that forgiveness can have on the individual. We understand it then as separate from the concrete and measurable aspects of reconciliation such as trials and reparations.

Forgiveness represents absolutism in the same way that violence represents absolutism. I speak of forgiveness in the terms that it represents for an individual. The singularity of being able to disassociate themselves from the negative emotions that surrounded the event. The act of forgiveness is then itself completely symbolic in nature,



representing this moment for the individual. Forgiveness represents the finite as much as a violent represents a finite event. To perhaps make it a bit clearer, violence acts are things that cannot be undone. Once a violent act has been committed it cannot be undone or changed. For most survivors it represents a landmark in their lives. Forgiveness is the very personal choice of letting go of the emotions that surround that event. In essence, this is not an act of changing the event itself, it is an act of changing the impact that this event has had on an individual. This clearly can only be done by the individual and only for that individual. What forgiveness does represent is the personal decision to move on from the negative emotions. I believe that in this way it represents the ultimate form of changing negative affect, and because of this, needs to be understood as a necessary element of affective reconciliation.

### **Affective Reconciliation**

This chapter has focused on the foundations for how the field of conflict resolution perceive the phenomena of reconciliation. I have labeled this idea as affective reconciliation. After exploring the concepts in this section I believe that it is fair to say that motivated reasoning, reactive devaluation, and cultural cognition all represent mechanisms used for the defense of moral judgements.

Based upon the social psychology research on the primacy of affect and the subsequent processes that follow, it is clear that initial judgements, generally influenced by group association and culture, are responsible for influencing how individuals interpret initial stimuli. These processes lead to conditions like motivated reasoning, cultural cognition, and reactive devaluation, which are the foundations for the naive

realism. These are all mechanisms that people use to protect that initial affective judgement. If these mechanisms are not susceptible to cognitive persuasion in cases like which restaurant to eat at or what your favorite color is, how much more are they going to be impervious to reason and rationality in situations where people don't like each other and they have experienced violence at the hands of the other peoples. In these cases of violent conflict, it is the underlying affect that must be addressed and changed.

Conflict Resolution practice offers this precisely. It is the ability to heal the trauma and to change the relationships that can lead to a change in the affect. I postulate here that when conflict resolutionists talk about the idea of affective reconciliation, it is really the idea that truth, justice, apologies and forgiveness really have the ability to change how people affectively react. That is, it is affective response from a negative to a positive. Since the affective response is binary, affective reconciliation pertains to have the ability to change a *dislike* to a *like*, or a *not-trust* to a *trust*, response. By changing this initial response to stimuli it follows that there would also be a change in the moral judgements that people make.

What the research in this chapter has shown is the tendency of people to make affective judgments and then to use reason as a way of justifying these judgements. These judgements provide the foundation for the cognitive beliefs that influence the way people make decisions. Moral judgments are based upon the intuitive, affective responses to stimuli. These judgments then influence the ways that people are able to use reason in certain contexts. Specifically in the perception of facts and in the perception of fair agreements. Thus, even the cognitive agreements that might be reached, can be undermined by the presence of a negatively valenced affect. If reactive devaluation and

motivated reasoning are the phenomenological byproducts of underlying affective moral judgements, then it follows that a change in the initial affective response would also cause a change in the overall sequence. A change in this sequence could ultimately lead to a greater possibility of reaching cognitive agreements and a higher likelihood that those agreements would be followed. This points to the need to integrate cognitive and affective reconciliation processes into an integrated model.

**CHAPTER IV**

**STRUCTURE AND SUBSTANCE: TEMPORAL LEVELS OF COGNITIVE AND  
AFFECTIVE RECONCILIATION**

So long as human beings possess the capacity for violence there will be a threat of violence. The fear that this threat creates is, I believe, the ultimate cause for the continuation of violent cycles. The reality of human beings capacity for violence may be inescapable, though not hopeless. I argue that the answer to preventing the continuation of violent cycles lies in the ability of human societies to assuage this fear of violence thus in so doing ameliorating the need for violence.

I argue that for this type of society to be created, human beings must be able to reconcile themselves with the social world in which they exist. In this I mirror Hegel's take on reconciliation and I find his view important in several ways. First, is his definition of Reconciliation which is the German word "Versöhnung". This interpretation is very specific to the idea of a positive form of reconciliation in which people opt into society because they have been able to reconcile with that society. Secondly, he believes that this a part of a well ordered society. Third, he talks about reconciliation as a way to make society be like a home. The analogy of a home is very important for the distinction between cognitive structuring of society and a way to substantiate that structure.

I will argue here in this chapter that there are two things which are needed in order for the building of a peaceful society to be successful. There needs to be a structure built that can allow for people to live in coexistence and there needs to be the substance of

social bonds that will sustain that structure. The structure needs to be right and reasonable for all members of the society. For that structure to be right and reasonable, cognitive agreements need to be reached. For the substantive element of society to exist, the people living within that structure will need to have a positive relationship with people who are a part of a different group. The structure needs to be built upon agreements between these groups. The relationships that support this structure need to build on a fundamental level of trust and cooperation.

Further, I want to demonstrate in this chapter is that there needs to be another layer of theory added to the political philosophy that has dominated the contemporary discussion on the building of peaceful societies. The additional layer begins with the understanding of reconciliation as two distinct forms, the cognitive and affective. If taken as two separate expressions of reconciliation then we can better understand how each can be used most effectively. ... the best for defining the expectations and limitations of both types. Perhaps the best way to look at reconciliation is as a means of incorporating all forms of reconciliation into a societal structure that would allow for people within that society to choose what best suits their needs. This is understandably vague. My point here is that reconciliation simply needs to be adopted as the goal of society, and that can take the form best suited to that society's needs. In this sense, there will need to be as much effort put into affective forms of reconciliation as there is into cognitive forms. That for the creation of a peaceful society, cognitive agreements need to take into account affective motivations, and that affective forms of reconciliation need to build cooperation towards a goal of fair and just structures.

The layers of reconciliation I believe work in this way: Cognitive reconciliation,

the ability to accept another persons' or groups' claims on what Habermas would call “the good life” are in fact based upon a reasonable foundation, is instrumental in the creation of social cooperation. This step, however, represents an upper layer of society building. This is because the ability to to accept these claims of reasonableness through the use of rationality are many times obscured by the presence of negative affect. The layer of rationality and reasonableness are built upon a layer of affect and emotion. If the affect feelings are negative, then this is likely to have a negative influence on the ability to use reason. Violent conflict between peoples almost certainly produces a negative affect response. Therefore, The ability to reach rational consensus and an acceptance on reasonableness is linked to the ability of society to heal the traumatic wounds of violence.

In Chapter II we explored the cognitive forms of reconciliation through several theories of political philosophy. The current direction of peacebuilding represents a reflection of these theories, and the more cognitive philosophies in general. Rawls conceptualizes what it would take to create a pluralistic society, this being the need for an agreed upon conception of political justice that would allow for different comprehensive doctrines to coexist in a society. His theory though is based upon an assumed level of social cooperation, something that his theory does not explain how to create. In an attempt to solve this problem I looked to the theories of Habermas, which aim at the creation of social cooperation. The theory of discourse describes how communicative action can lead to creation of societal goals, though does not discuss how this would world work in the context of divided societies. To answer this we looked at Dryzek, who has applied Habermas' theories specifically to the contexts of divided societies. What we discovered in Dryzek are the challenges and pitfalls that deliberative

democracy faces in these types of situations. The foundational argument is that rationality is what provides the human beings the ability to come to fair agreements. It is these agreements that provide the platform for people to reconcile their differing conceptions. Reason and rationality are the cognitive functions of the brain, hence why I am describing this as cognitive reconciliation.

In chapter III we looked at a different perspective of the ways in which affective intuitions can cloud the ability to use reason. As demonstrated by the research done in chapter III, the underlying affect plays a major role in determining whether or not people will be able to utilize reason and rationality. By looking at social psychology, the chapter established a way of understanding this phenomena. This process can be described as moving from affective intuitions to the creation of moral judgements. These moral judgements then further lead to phenomena such as motivated reasoning, reactive devaluation, and naive realism. We also examined the practice of conflict resolution, exploring the ways that in which truth, justice, apologies and forgiveness work to heal trauma and transform social relationships. When combined with the discussion of affective judgement, what was discovered is that when talking about transformation, conflict resolutionists are describing the process of changing a negative affect into a positive one. This will be represented as the substance of building a peaceful society.

What we have explored in the previous two chapters are two perspectives on the question of how to build peaceful, stable societies. Social psychology does provide a counterpoint to political philosophy and suggests some challenges in the theories. Political philosophers like Rawls and Habermas's argues for a conception of society that is based upon the idea of public reason. Social psychological research demonstrates that

there is a large component of affective moral judgements involved in the ability of people to reason. This seemingly puts these two at odds with each other. However, what I believe that conflict resolution practices can actually fill in much of this gap between psychology and political theory. I would thus like to conceptualize a new model of how to combine the affective forms of reconciliation along with the more cognitive forms of creating political reconciliation. This new model represents a way of understanding how cognitive and affect can work in tandem as well as describing a progression towards a state of reconciliation.

This model really starts though with where most peace processes begin, which the signing of a peace agreement. These peace agreements are necessary to bring the violence to a halt, but do not represent cognitive reconciliation. The state that is created by these initial agreements falls much closer to a political state of a *modus vivendi*, or a power sharing stalemate. I conceptualize this as meaning that the initial cognitive peace agreements need to create a balance of power and freezes the situation in a place of temporary stability. This is a necessary step in the peace process, but represents, alone, an unsustainable peace. Being locked into power sharing tends to reinforce divisions within a society. It is these divisions that are likely to lead societies back to violent conflict. Even though there is some agreement of this among political theorists and conflict resolutionists alike, the way in which to move beyond this situation is a place of contention. Rawls specifically states that his theory is attempting to move beyond a *modus vivendi* and I believe that Habermas would agree that his theory is a step beyond this as well. While conflict resolution argue for the more affective measures. This model represents an attempt to incorporate both the affect and cognitive into one model,



demonstrating the ways in which the two can work cooperatively.

What Rawls' theory, and to a large extent Habermas' as well, attempt to demonstrate is a way of moving past a *modus vivendi* through the creation of just political systems. The creation of these cognitive agreements is fraught with difficulties because of the ways that negative affective feelings can inhibit people's capacity to use reason. As demonstrated by Zajonc, affective judgement is the first to occur, followed by cognitive judgment. It is this initial affective judgement that is most difficult to change. This means that the first way in which human beings judge a situation is through affect. Nesbitt and Wilson argue that there is likely a high degree of influence from a person's cultural background on these affective processes. Also according to Zajonc, these affective judgements tend to stay the longest and are the most difficult to change. It is quite possible that Rawls' would find agreement with Zajonc, Nesbitt and Wilson. I believe that an argument can be made that this process is quite similar to Rawls' conception of comprehensive doctrines. Rawls is not also not looking to necessarily change any groups' comprehensive doctrine,<sup>5</sup> as long as what is practiced in public follows the reasonable agreement on justice. What Rawls argues for is a system that would allow for people with essentially differing affective moral judgements to coexist. This then is not necessarily a tension point.

What may prove to be a tension point is the idea that affective judgements lead to motivated reasoning. As Kahn points out in his study, people generally perceive themselves as being rational when in fact their perceptions of rationality are influenced by affect. Here is the first tension between the psychology and political theory. If Rawls

<sup>5</sup> Note: Granted that there certainly could be private practices that society could outlaw entirely.

depends on the ability of people being able to come to reasonable agreements, then affective motivated reasoning will make this difficult. The theory of motivated reasoning states that people's ability to use reason is effected by their affective judgements. I believe that this is likely the thing that Rawls attempts to get away from with the use of the original position and the veil of ignorance. Though the ability to have a mechanism like the veil of ignorance in a real life context is very much debatable.

A second tension point involves Habermas' theory and reactive devaluation. Habermas pushes the idea that communicative action will lead to the creation of social cooperation. Habermas may be right when he discusses the way in which communicative action leads to the building of social goals which would necessitate social cooperation to accomplish. What his theory does not take into account is the problem of motivation. If people lack the motivation to want to work with people whom are viewed as adversaries, I do not believe that rational discourse will be able to overcome this problem. This is demonstrated in the studies done by Moaz, highlighted in Chapter III. These findings show that the determination on the reasonableness of a proposal will be influenced by the affective feelings that a person has towards their own group and the other group. So when people are presented with what might otherwise be reasonable proposals made during a negotiation, the perception change depending on its source.

In the Moaz study, the proposals that were given to the respondents were ones that had already been agreed upon in negotiations between representatives of Israel and Palestine. So what is lacking is not an element of reasonableness of the proposal. This then points not to a problem of reasonable agreements or of rational discussions, but one of affective judgements shading perceptions. These feelings of fear and that the other

side is untrustworthy leads to diminished capacity to see reason. These are the types of affective judgements that Zajonc and Haidt point to. These affective judgements are not likely to change through a process of rational discourse, they are more likely to inhibit rational discourse. There may be, as Rawls suggests, some trustees or representatives that could, in essence, not be effected by the emotions and would therefore be able to reach agreements. Though these trustees will still face the challenges of reactive devaluation when the proposal is presented to the group as a whole.<sup>6</sup> In other words, people will have to want to opt into any of the reasonable agreements that are produced by a Rawlsian mechanism.

Thus cognitive agreements can conceivably only be effective if the affective motivation is present to both reach an agreement and enough positive motivation exists for people to follow the agreement afterwards. War weariness or a lack of desire to keep fighting may in fact represent enough of an affective motivation to sign peace agreements, though I would argue that this 'feeling' is inherently negative and unlikely to be enough motivation to sustain an agreement over the long term. Thus if we speak of post-agreement time periods, it is necessary that some sort of positive affective change will need to be introduced to maintain the motivation necessary for sustainability. Without positive affective motivation, any adherence to an agreement becomes coercive, likely even beyond the amount of coercion that political theorists would deem to be positive.

It is not my goal to discredit the theories of Habermas, Rawls, or Dryzek with this discussion. Nor is it my goal to argue against the use of a cognitive processes of

6 Note: I Concede here that a possible solution would be to make sure that upon presenting the proposal, the trustee would need to make sure to clarify that this was their sides proposal. This may work as an effective strategy.

reconciliation. It is my goal to demonstrate that it is necessary to add more layers to the theories, at least in the context of societies transitioning out of violent situations. The political theories rely on the assumption of an existent level of social cohesion or believe that the process of cognitive agreement making will be able to build the necessary social cooperation. What has been shown is that affect impacts people's ability to use reason and be rational.

What the field of conflict resolution shows is that it can be possible to transform the underlying affective. This is through the affective forms of reconciliation through processes of truth, justice, trauma healing and community building. The goal of affective reconciliation is to transform the negative affect to positive, changing the way that the people living in society judge the other groups living in that society. I propose that with affective reconciliation we can fill in the gap between psychology and political theory. Conceivably, the transformation of affective judgement could lead to a change in the processes of moral reasoning and reactive devaluation. These changes in the affect would also conceivably lead to an increased ability to have rational discourse and to reach reasonable agreements. This would allow for people to opt into pluralistic societies, thus allowing for the reconciliation of society as a whole. Even if this process wouldn't assure that every single citizen would ultimately be reconciled, it would ensure that enough people would be to make the cognitive structures meaningful. This would allow for stability and sustainability over generations, which, I believe, is ultimately the goal of all three fields discussed in this thesis.

Even having overarching goals, as Habermas suggests, that build social cooperation only allow for the cooperation for as long as the goals remain present. Once

the goals are gone, the reason for social cooperation goes as well. What affective reconciliation offers is the ability to create the social cooperation where it was lacking before. Bonds that are built between people on an affective level are not reliant on the existence of existential goals or threats. The transformation of relationships, the flipping of the underlying affective reactive system, would allow for the type of social cohesion that would also allow for the cognitive political structures to be able to be sustained. To show this, let's take a look again at the arguments through Dryzek.

Dryzek in his work attempts to describe a process of pulling people into a cognitive state and away from negative feelings. To make this point he uses an example of “a harrowing story of (say) rape and murder in a Bosnian village can be told in terms of guilt of one ethnic group and violated innocence of another-fuel for revenge. But the story can also be told in terms of violation of basic principles of humanity that apply to all ethnicities, making reconciliation at least conceivable (though not easy).” (Dryzek 2005, 223) This is an example of cognitive reconciliation and how it cannot deal with the emotions of guilt and revenge. Having survivors, who lived through the experience, try and take a step out of their context and into the realm of cognitive abstraction, seems to be a.

What would it matter to a survivor of rape that it the action violates all basic principles of humanity? That person would not need to even comprehend that kind of abstraction, they have lived through it. Even if it was able to be accomplished, why would the survivor of rape want to change their narrative? I posit here that what the survivor needs is to be helped with the trauma of the event. Reconciliation in this instance will not come about by changing the narrative of the people involved to help facilitate

better political deliberation. Dryzek's assertion could possibly work temporarily to allow for an agreement to be reached. However, the trauma of the event will not just go away because the person has abstracted out to the rights of humanity. The person will still experience the trauma of the event even if an agreement is reached that is rational and reasonable. It is this trauma that will need to be healed if it is ever likely that the agreements will be sustainable of over time. I argue that it is fact the change in affect that will lead to the ability for people see each other as human, which would lead to the ability to have reasoned discourse.

I argue that there must exist an element of accepting each other's humanity before we can accept the validity of another person's values and beliefs. If the perception exists that another group means to do harm, then there is little ground for accepting the others' claims as also being reasonable. This would suggest then, a change is needed, though not in the capacity for reasonableness and reciprocity, but in the willingness to do so. Therefore, the creation of the trust to accept that the other is acting with fairness, is a precondition for the presence of the types of reconciliation that Dryzek is arguing for. If the perceptions of the other are still tied into the violent events that occurred in the past, it seems unlikely that there would be an impetus to change those perceptions of mistrust and fear. The trauma of the past must then be accounted for in order for cognitive reconciliation to be possible.

Trauma healing only represents one aspect of this work though. The relationship between survivor and perpetrator, and more abstractly between each of these people and the community as a whole, needs to be repaired where a previous relationship existed, or transformed where no positive relationship was present in the past. Only then can the

cognitive structures be able to have the desired effect of building stability over generations. In other words, what is needed in order to make the political theories work is for the building of the type of social relationships that the field of conflict resolution discusses. Transforming the social relationships is the step necessary for the political theories to make sense.

Taking into account these discussions, I believe that there needs to be a better understanding of how to incorporate cognitive and affect theories and practices into a more coherent model of reconciliation. Cognitive reconciliation works in situations where a sufficient level of social stability has already been attained. Situations where the memories and trauma of recent violence are not still having an impact on the human psyche. Situations where the negative affective judgements are not clouding perceptions of reason and rationality. However, the first step in this process is, in fact, a cognitive agreement to cease hostilities. The peace agreements generally create a state of *modus vivendi*, bringing about the situation of frozen hostilities. There needs to be a way to move past this state. A way that involves the use of affect that leads to the ability for cognitive reconciliation to take place.

Viewed in this way, the model essential works as a progression from cognitive agreement, to the use of affective reconciliation techniques, which subsequently allows for the creation of better cognitive agreements. The political theories work to push society to attain very high levels of justice. These levels of political justice rely on a sustainable level of social cooperation to work. A more sustainable social cooperation requires a higher threshold of social cohesion. This level of social cohesion is attainable when the positive affective motivation exists to create it. A new social cohesion is

possible when people are able to transform the negative relationships of the past into positive relationships. A transformation on a social, affective, level will therefore enable the types of cognitive discussions that lead to reasonable agreements. This creates a generalizable three stage process to transition out of violence (Table 1). The first step is the signing of peace agreements, which allows for the stability to do affective forms of reconciliation, which then allows for the more complex form of political justice to become possible.

Table 1. *Stages in the model*

<p><b>Stage 1:</b>  - <u>Peace Agreements are Signed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These agreements create situations where powers are balanced and governments can start to take effect on society.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 2:</b>  - <u>Affective Reconciliation Measures is begun</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This would include the strategies of Truth, Justice, Trauma Healing, and Relationship building. These would focus on building trust and social cohesion.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stage 3:</b>  - <u>Creation of more Politically Just Institutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These types of agreements become possible when the affect has changed and there are greater levels of trust and social cohesion. This stage represents cognitive reconciliation.</li> </ul>

**Scale of Reconciliation**

I believe that the above table is useful for looking at a theoretical foundation for the model and that it would also be a useful exercise to look at several cases of transitioning societies to see where they might be in the process. Therefore I would like



to create a scale of cognitive and affective reconciliation. By placing countries along this scale I will show whether those countries are trending towards affective or cognitive forms of reconciliation. I have chosen 5 countries that all started the process with either peace agreements between the groups in conflict or with specific agreements to form power sharing governments (Table 2). For the sake of this argument I am going to be treating those two as similar enough starting points.

Table 2. *Model Stages with Countries*

	<b>Cognitive Strategies</b>	<b>Affective Strategies</b>
<b>Stage 1:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yemen</li> <li>• Northern Ireland</li> </ul>	
<b>Stage 2:</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rwanda</li> <li>• South Africa</li> <li>• Sierra Leone</li> </ul>
<b>Stage 3:</b>		

In the discussion below I will provide a brief description of the current situation in South Africa, Yemen, and Rwanda. I will also demonstrate why I believe each of these three plus Sierra Leone and Northern Ireland, deserve the spots I have given them. Both Northern Ireland and Yemen have attempted to approach their transitions through a

process of reaching more political agreements and neither have enacted many affective strategies. Rwanda, South Africa, and Sierra Leone have all used affective means of reconciliation in attempts to create social cohesion.

### Rwanda

A 4 decade long struggle between the ethnic Hutu majority and Tutsi minority culminated in one of the worst genocides that has ever occurred in human history. From April 7 until July 17, a span of 100 days, over 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred by the more radicalized factions of Hutus. The genocide ended only when the rebel Tutsi militia, known as the Rwandan Patriotic Front, was able to fight their way into the capital city of Kigali. This in turn lead one of the largest refugee migrations, as over 2 million hutu refugees left Rwanda to neighboring countries, including a staggering 800,000 that entered the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the span of 4 days.

Rwanda is an extremely densely populated country meaning that many of the people who carried out the genocidal acts live in the same villages as the survivors. This has lead Rwanda to carry out a tradition form of local justice known as the Gacaca courts in an attempt to restore the relationships between perpetrators and survivors and allow for communal reintegration.

Rwanda, though, is in a very precarious place politically, with no formal agreement between Hutu's and Tutsi's on the formation of a government or how that should look. Rwandan politics is very much a one party system, with the political opposition to Paul Kagame and his party being ruthlessly oppressed. This suppression of political dissent stretches to even the moderate Tutsi controlled politicians and political

parties. There is an election scheduled for 2017 with Kagame saying that he will not seek to be elected for a third term. With the amount of political suppression that has occurred over the last 15-20 years in Rwanda this new election is likely to result in a high margin of victory for whichever party leader replaces Kagame in the party structure. This all stems from the way in which the Genocide in 1994 ended, with Rwandan Patriotic Front, a Tutsi militia, moved into the capital city of Kigali. No official peace agreement was ever signed between Hutu and Tutsi representatives. Though the Genocide makes Rwanda a special case, the lack of political agreement is worrying.

What is perhaps more worrying is that it is currently illegal in Rwanda to state that all of the government's top leadership is of Tutsi origins as it is now illegal to public distinguish between Hutu and Tutsi. While this policy certainly has legitimate foundations, it also serves the more malignant political purpose of not being to talk about this power imbalance in public. The political problems in Rwanda have, at least since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, always revolved around the exclusion of opposition voices in the government. My fear is that if this continues it will eventually lead to the same types of issues that lead to the 1994 genocide. For this reason I believe that Rwanda is very close to the extreme affective part of the scale and demonstrates some of the dangers that can occur when reasonable cognitive reconciliation has not occurred.

### South Africa

Ended the period of forced racial segregation and political oppression known as Apartheid with the first open and free election in the countries history in 1994. Apartheid had been in place for nearly 50 years (though racial oppression had gone on for much

longer), causing great injustice for the black majority by the white minority. There was a great amount of violence committed in the time period as well, as brutal police tactics were needed to keep the repressive system in place. These acts of violence routinely lead to the deaths of anyone that was deemed as subversive. When Apartheid ended it was decided that the rifts that existed between the different communities should be mended. This led to the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was established in an attempt to heal the collective trauma that the violence and oppression had caused. The TRC played a large role in deterring the types of retaliatory violence that had been seen in other post colonial countries.

South Africa attempted to perform affective Reconciliation on a national level, focusing on inter-community reconciliation, to mixed results. The TRC sought to exchange the truth about past political crimes for amnesty from prosecution, It was hoped that by bringing the past crimes out into the open, that forgiveness and healing could occur. The TRC was successful at bringing much of the truth about these crimes, but the general effect and whether it was in fact able to bring about community healing, is highly debatable. Many participants report feelings of alienation from the process and that there was a perceived lack of justice for the criminals. Others report that the TRC offered the entire nation of South Africa a collective moment of being able to heal from the past. Thus, I believe that the TRC was able to provide a more macro level of affective reconciliation, it was not able to achieve the inter-personal levels that very important for the transforming of social relationships.

Unfortunately, South Africa also currently has massive political problems which stem from the abuses and corruption that rampant at the top echelons of the government.

(Insert what the problems are here) People have reported feeling that conditions are worse now for a majority of black South Africans than they were under Apartheid. This stems from figures like 40% unemployment and shanty towns that have doubled in size since 1994. The root cause of this, I believe, is that South Africa has remained under one party rule, the ANC, since 1994. With little opposition power, there has been no mechanism to check the power of the ANC. This has allowed for high levels of political corruption and cronyism. This is unfortunately why I leave South Africa towards the affect side of the scale.

### Yemen

Yemen has followed a succession of cycles of political agreements followed by violence. This started in 1972, when what was the People's Republic of Yemen (south Yemen) and the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) fought the first war against each other. The cycle of violence between the two countries continued until 1990 when the two agreed to form a single country. The agreement to form a new nation came with a new government with a parliament, President and Vice-president. It was further agreed that the leader of North Yemen would be the first President while the leader of South Yemen would be the first Vice-President. However, this political agreement would last only 4 years, and on February 20, 1994 a new civil war started between North and South. In 1999, a new constitution was signed and new elections took place with Ali Abdallah Saleh winning the presidency.

Saleh is from South Yemen and was the original president of the Yemen Arab Republic. Saleh's presidency lasted from 1999 until 2012 when he was forced to turn

power over to his vice president. Saleh's term in office saw the rise of a group known as the Houthis, named after the cleric Hussein Badreddin al-Houthi. Al-Houthi had started protesting the treatment of people from North Yemen by government forces claiming that there were high levels of discrimination. Saleh was forced from office after protests began when it was learned that he planned on changing the constitution and stay in power until he could hand over the government to his son. Saleh's Vice-president Abd Rabbuh Monsur Hadi took office after a special election in February 2012.

Violence only escalated further after Hadi took office and this led to the creation of the National Dialogue Conference (NDC). This was aimed at being a transitional justice conference with the hopes of creating an agreement that would stabilize the situation. The talks were conducted by the UN with the initial backing of both the Houthis and Salafis. The conference had started in March 2013 with the goal of reaching an agreement after 6 months. However, the NDC was unable to come to reach consensus on the question of what to do about Southern Yemen separatists, and so the conference was extended until January 2014. During this time two different Houthi representatives were assassinated in the capital city of Sana'a, leading to the Houthi delegation withdrawing from the talks. The NDC produced a final agreement, without the presence of the Houthis, calling for an evenly split power sharing government. This agreement was rejected not only by the Houthis, leading to the forceful taking of Sana'a by Houthi fighters in September 2014.

What seems clear in this case is that any sort of social cohesion between the Houthis in the North and the Salafis in the South is completely lacking. Though many agreements have been reached, none of them thus far have been able to prevent the two

sides from warring with each other. It seems that what is lacking in this context is the affective motivation from both sides to make an agreement happen. As the tension has grown, the two sides seem to be getting further apart, a new civil war seems likely.

Without any work towards the building of social cohesion or affective change, it seems unlikely that any of the agreements reached on the political structure of Yemen will be effective. It is for this reason that I have placed Yemen at the far cognitive side of the scale.

### **Direction for Future Research**

I think that this project has raised some more questions for me than I can ever hope to answer in a project of this scope. These new questions I hope can become paths for future research. These are some of the questions that I have come up with:

- The first of these is about the time frame between initial peace agreement and the creation of the affective measures of reconciliation. Also, what are the effects of a modus vivendi on the affective reconciliation process? How can power sharing governments be persuaded to allow affective reconciliation to take place? Would this answer be different for the macro affective measures and the micro measures?
- The Second question is how best to understand the actual interplay between cognitive structures, which are more concrete by necessity, and the role of affect which is more fluid by necessity.
- Thirdly, How do we account for the long process that this model could represent.

How long can the modus vivendi governments remain functional? How long until they become dysfunctional and start to become a hinderance to the affective process?

If there is one conclusion that my research has brought me to, it is this. What we need is to have cognitive solutions to cognitive problems and we need to have affective solutions to affective problems. We should not expect cognitive structures to heal the wounds of trauma nor should we expect that a focus on transforming relationships would be enough to construct the reasonable and rational structures that societies need in order to function properly. A focus on cognitive reconciliation alone would not allow for the creation of the affective motivations necessary to make the agreements sustainable. A focus on affective reconciliation alone leaves open the possibility of poor governmental structures which may fail to overcome the legitimate differing conceptions of society that people have. Therefore, I conclude that both represent individually necessary and not sufficient conditions for the transition from violence to a peaceful society.



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