

Rasmus Bellmer

**LITERATURE AS A TOOL FOR
RECONCILIATION?**
A Social-Psychological Approach in Peace Research

Faculty of Social Sciences

Master's thesis

November 2019

Abstract

Rasmus Bellmer: Literature as a Tool for Reconciliation? A Social-Psychological Approach in Peace Research

Master's thesis

Tampere University

MDP in Peace, Mediation and Conflict Research

November 2019

The public often praises literature and other forms of art as powerful tools to achieve positive social change. But in which ways can art support social change, for instance in the aftermath of a violent conflict? To engage with this general question, this thesis explores the potential of literature to contribute to intergroup reconciliation. It offers a novel approach to explore the psychological foundations of the commonly ascribed reconciliatory potential of the arts.

As an exercise in inter-disciplinary thinking, the thesis approaches its research puzzle from two directions. Firstly, it analyses the academic debate in Peace Research and related disciplines around the arts and reconciliation nexus and explores the potential ascribed to the arts in general and literature in particular to contribute to reconciliation, specifically on a cognitive level. Secondly, the thesis examines how studies and theories from Social Psychology can deepen the existing knowledge in Peace Research in regard to the potential of art to contribute to reconciliation. The thesis approaches reconciliation as a cognitive process to bring unity to conflicting narratives by reconstructing both group-related and individual narratives and, consequently, explores possible pathways through which art literature can contribute to this process. Thereby, the thesis identifies possible cognitive processes that could also run on an individual's psychological level when confronted with an artistic product. An excerpt from Saša Stanišić's novel *How the Soldier Repairs the Gramophone* illustrates the theoretical elaboration.

The findings of this study suggest that from a theoretical perspective, literary arts can function as a forceful means to support a cognitive change that is required to achieve sincere reconciliation between conflicting parties. From a social-psychological point of view, literature (1) can contribute to the rehumanisation of the other in the aftermath of a violent conflict; (2) can offer a means to engage and get acquainted with other narratives and can, consequently, contribute to the reconstruction of own narratives of the past; and (3) can increase the readiness for the acknowledgement of responsibility for ingroup misdeeds by lowering the negative consequences of prevailing victimhood narratives.

Following this, the thesis encourages to think peacebuilding and the arts more closely together and advocates for the inclusion of more artistic elements in traditional public as well as private peacebuilding initiatives.

Keywords: Intergroup reconciliation, arts and peacebuilding, social psychology, narratives, literature

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	I
TABLE OF CONTENTS	II
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	III
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	3
1.2 ETHICS AND POSITIONALITY	5
1.3 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS	7
2. THE CONCEPT OF RECONCILIATION IN PEACE RESEARCH – A LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
2.1 RECONCILIATION: A MANIFOLD CONCEPT	8
2.2 IDENTITIES IN RECONCILIATION PROCESSES: APPROACHING NARRATIVES	13
2.3 RECONCILING NARRATIVES	19
3. AESTHETICS AND RECONCILIATION	24
3.1 THE ARTS AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS	24
3.2 THE CRITIQUE OF THE ‘LIBERAL PEACE’ AND THE ‘LOCAL TURN’	27
3.3 THE ART AND PEACEBUILDING NEXUS.....	29
4. HOW THE SOLDIER REPAIRS THE GRAMOPHONE	39
4.1 MUTUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE OTHER’S HUMANITY	43
4.1.1 <i>The cognitive roots of dehumanisation</i>	43
4.1.2 <i>Revisiting the Contact Hypothesis: the Common Ingroup Identity Model</i>	47
4.1.3 <i>Rehumanisation through literature</i>	50
4.2 RECONSTRUCTING THE NARRATIVE OF THE PAST	53
4.2.1 <i>Getting acquainted with the other’s narrative</i>	54
4.2.2 <i>Narrative acquaintance as a tool for changing attitudes</i>	55
4.2.3 <i>Getting to know the other’s narrative through literature</i>	58
4.3 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR INGROUP MISDEEDS	61
4.3.1 <i>The strive to be the victim</i>	61
4.3.2 <i>Acknowledging responsibility</i>	64
4.3.3 <i>Overcoming competitive victimhood through literature</i>	65
4.4 IMAGINING CONTACT: LITERARY ENCOUNTERS WITH OUTGROUP NARRATIVES	67
5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING THOUGHTS.....	70
5.1 ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	70
5.2 DISCUSSING THE FINDINGS	72
BIBLIOGRAPHY	75

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CIIM	Common Ingroup Identity Model
CV	Competitive Victimhood
DP	Discursive Psychology
ICMP	International Commission on Missing People
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IHT	Infra-Humanisation Theory
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
SIT	Social Identity Theory

1. Introduction

“I can’t think of a case where poems changed the world, but what they do is they change people’s understanding of what’s going on in the world.” – Seamus Heaney

“A house without books is like a room without windows.” – Horace Mann

“I know nothing in the world that has as much power as a word.” – Emily Dickinson

“If you only read the books that everyone else is reading, you can only think what everyone else is thinking.” – Haruki Murakami

“A book is a device to ignite the imagination.” – Alan Bennett

“A book is a version of the world. If you do not like it, ignore it or offer your own version in return.” – Salman Rushdie¹

Literature and other forms of art are often praised in the public as powerful tools to achieve positive social change. Literature is worshipped as allowing to expand one’s own horizon, as Horace Mann puts it, or described as forming and changing an individual’s perception of the world, to follow Seamus Heaney. Literature seemingly not only presents a certain reality (Rushdie), but it also supposedly creates reality (Murakami) and opens up space to discover and explore new alternative ones (Bennett). One could probably extend the list above infinitely. Moreover, one could easily find similar quotes referring to other aesthetical forms, such as films, visual art, music, and so forth.

Consequently, it is not surprising that in recent years academic disciplines such as Peace Research and related fields as International Relations or Political Science have discovered the arts as highly relevant subjects for research to gain a more comprehensive understanding of world politics in general and violent conflict in particular. This development, coined by Roland Bleiker as the “aesthetic turn in international political theory” (Bleiker, 2009, p. 3), puts aesthetics at the centre of research inquiries to explore political processes. Today, Peace Research and related disciplines use literature and other artistic endeavours in manifold ways. Hereby, it is of interest to explore what kind of knowledge art can contribute to or produce. For many scholars researching peace and conflict, the arts are influential discursive means that both reflect and shape social practices and dynamics. This is not surprising for “[...] political issues most fundamental to International Relations – war, peace, order, justice – have

¹ All quotes can be found on <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes>, accessed October 11, 2019.

always been fundamental to artists as well. Indeed, many artists are highly sophisticated analysts of the international sphere” (Danchev & Lisle, 2009, p. 775).

However, this is by far not the first time that the crucial impact of literature and art in general for social change is acknowledged. For instance, Benedict Anderson (2006, first published in 1983) in his famous book ‘Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism’ did not only point out the social constructedness of the modern nation state, but also he emphasised the decisive role of literature – or better its mass production after the invention of printing – in this process, enabling people in the first place to think and imagine the simultaneous action of separate individuals without seeing this process or its effects. Following Anderson, this was essential as it allowed the people to feel connectedness and belonging beyond real interpersonal interactions – being a building block for the eventual development of the nation state and national identities.

Recognising the essential role that the arts have played in such developments, one can ask in which way art can contribute to different processes relevant in the field of studies, for instance in reconciliation processes. As demonstrated in the following chapter, there is a far-reaching scholarship on reconciliation, concerning both theory and practice. Recognising how enmity, hatred and at times even actual violence or the prospect of it prevail in the aftermath of violent conflict, sometimes even after decades, the quest for reconciliation to achieve lasting peace occupies the thinking and working of many scholars and practitioners alike. Countries or regions that are frequently investigated for their developments in terms of reconciliation are, for example, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider post-Yugoslavian space, post-apartheid South Africa, the post-genocidal Rwanda, as well as Israel and Palestine. Nonetheless, this list is not exhaustive. While much of the work focuses on institutional dimensions of reconciliation, there is an extensive body of research that highlights the role of cognitive factors, such as identity features – factors that go beyond mere reasoning. In this regard, research on the arts and reconciliation demonstrate common features. Both fields of study recognise the importance and relevance of studying the level of the individual to gain deeper insights into the respective effects. Seeing this commonality, it seems appropriate to investigate how art in general and literature in particular can influence reconciliation processes, particularly on a cognitive level.

However, one must ask what is known in Peace Research concerning the impact that art can have on the individual level to support reconciliation. Starting point for this study was the perception that Peace Research lacks a concrete idea of the impact art can have on cognitive processes and what actual consequences it may have on the individual and its actions. Many scholars emphasise the importance of art to support social change, however, commonly they avoid concrete formulations, claims and statements that indicate straightforward connections between artistic engagements and

their effects. This is certainly understandable as causal connections are often impossible to identify. However, it would be highly relevant to explore this link more thoroughly to fill the assumptions around the relation between the arts and reconciliation with more validity. This paper bridges the gap between claims and existing knowledge by consulting a discipline that also deals with violent conflict, its resolution and its overcoming: Social Psychology. Even though it seems reasonable to assume that expertise and theories from other fields could offer some suggestions to fill this gap, yet, the information exchange across the disciplinary boundaries appears to be rather limited. Therefore, the different fields can neither profit from nor improve each other through criticism.

This thesis combines different perspectives on the interplay of the arts and reconciliation and, thereby, creates a space that allows to reflect on the practice of traditional as well as novel approaches to peacebuilding and reconciliation. By especially taking those cognitive mechanisms seriously that could spoil processes towards peace, this thesis approaches reconciliation as a more holistic societal development and offers a different angle for those peacebuilding practices that focus more strongly on the institutional side of reconciliation.

1.1 Research objective and research questions

This thesis explores and analyses the potential of literature to contribute to reconciliation in societies affected by violent conflict. It does so by, firstly, analysing the current academic discourse in Peace Research to identify existing knowledge and, secondly, introducing selected theories and concepts from Social Psychology to the discussions within the discipline of Peace Research about the role of literature in reconciliation processes. Consequently, this thesis approaches two clusters of research questions:

Cluster 1: Identifying existing knowledge

What potential to contribute to reconciliation does the academic debate in Peace Research and related disciplines ascribe to art in general and literature in particular? What impact is art claimed to have in reconciliation processes on a cognitive level?

Cluster 2: Introducing expertise from Social Psychology

How can concepts and theories from Social Psychology deepen the existing knowledge within Peace Research in regard to the art and reconciliation nexus? How can the possible impact of art on cognitive-level reconciliation be theorised from the perspective of Social Psychology?

By answering these questions, the aim of this thesis is to analyse the ongoing academic discussions and literature surrounding the arts and reconciliation and to contribute to the richness of this debate by connecting different existing theories and approaches. To the best of my knowledge, this is a novel approach to explore the possible impact that art can have for reconciliation on a cognitive level. Based on a constructivist understanding (P. T. Jackson, 2011; P. T. Jackson & Nexon, 2013), this thesis possesses an interpretative-explorative character. Therefore, it does not aim to show effects but rather mechanisms and discursive stimuli that could be received on a cognitive level.

The thesis refers to cognition² as “[t]he mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses”³ and, therefore, concerns both conscious as well as unconscious mental processes leading to “[...] internal events occurring between sensory stimulation and the overt expression of behavior”⁴.

In its underlying understanding of art, the thesis follows several scholars who advocate for a rather broad conceptualisation. For Shank and Schirch (2008, p. 218) but also Cohen (2005, p. 4), the field of art encompasses an extensive range of artistic activities that includes various forms of visual art, performance art and literary art, hereby neither differentiating in fictional or factual forms nor separating between oral and written accounts. This list, of course, can be endlessly continued. In essence, the basic understanding of art in this thesis refers to different kinds of “creative productions” (Danchev & Lisle, 2009, p. 775). In regard to the underlying understanding of literature, this thesis follows Mwikisa and Dikobe who define literature as including “[...] both the written as well as the oral and performance traditions” (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, p. 48), essentially referring to literature as a variety of forms of storytelling.

² Though frequently used in Social Psychology, the term ‘cognition’ is highly debated, and different understandings prevail of where the cognition is located. For instance, Michael Leyton (1986) developed a theory of the human cognitive system as an information structure, arguing for understanding cognition as algebraic processes that run on six levels of the cognitive system. Furthermore, Van Dijk argues that the discipline has until the 1990s widely ignored the discursive dimension of cognition, which is why he supports a concept of ‘social cognition’ (Dijk, 1990, p. 177). One dividing line in the discipline, thus, is the differentiation between cognitivists, who approach all human actions as the result of cognitive processes, and non-cognitivists, treating cognition as an aspect of discursive practices that is involved in this practice itself (Wiggins & Potter, 2017, p. 99).

³ <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/cognition>, accessed September 23, 2019.

⁴ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/cognitive%20psychology>, accessed September 23, 2019.

1.2 Ethics and positionality

Conducting research can never be a completely objective exercise and even a purely theoretical inquiry can have concrete implications on the ground as it may reflect tangible power structures (O'Leary, 2004, p. 42). Therefore, ethical aspects have to be taken into consideration for this thesis as well, even though it does not directly deal with research participants. Nevertheless, this thesis is embedded, following O'Leary, in structures of "[...] power derived from being well-educated and middle-class, power derived from being in a position to conduct research, power that comes from being in a position of control and authority [...]" (O'Leary, 2004, p. 43). With a position of power comes responsibility, and for this reason, I have to reflect on my own positionality as well as on the knowledge that is produced and reproduced through this thesis. I have to consider which assumptions and normative positions underly my academic writing and have to disclose those.

The world we live in provides us with the concepts to grasp our personal social reality, and often we are not even aware of these interpretative lenses that are given to us (O'Leary, 2004, p. 46). Therefore, every researcher is embedded in a certain interpretative framework that leads the way they approach a research subject. When writing about topics such as peace, reconciliation and art, my writing is shaped by my subjective understanding of those themes. This thesis aims to approach these concepts as broadly as possible, trying to take non-Western approaches of society, peaceful cohabitation and artistic expressions seriously. For instance, by acknowledging that literature can take various forms of oral storytelling traditions, I strive to include conceptions other than the printed book, which is positioned within a system of publishing companies, retailers and a market logic. This understanding reduces the impact of, for instance, limited literacy or restricted access to literature on the validity of this study and positions literature more in the centre of society by treating it less as an elitist project. However, due to personal socialisation and experiences, my dominant understanding of literature cannot be but the printed book as it is common in Europe. This also accounts to the production and consumption of art. Even though it is plausible to stretch the understanding of the arts to a low-threshold community event, the notion of art as an elitist project in terms of both production and consumption remains due to my social background in which this thesis is embedded.

This understanding of literature, however, is accompanied by a major limitation. Literature in the sense of reading a written and probably even published text is considered a rather private activity opposed to other formats of storytelling, such as performances, which have a public character. Literature is an ostensibly individual practice that is difficult to be socially monitored or controlled.

Other art that is intentionally situated in the public sphere can coerce the audience or the person passing by to cognitively interact with it. Therefore, to create a space for reconciliation, literature as a private act demands the willingness by the reader to actively engage with the narrative. And if the reader is unwilling to encounter the potentially stimulating (or even painful) content, he or she is free to close it and to put it aside. This fact is a major factor limiting the potential of literature to contribute to reconciliatory processes.

Moreover, this thesis underlies a normative thinking that advocates for non-violent means to deal with social conflict. Furthermore, it implies that a merely non-violent social setting that is characterised by negative sentiments towards the other group requires some sort of reconciliation and more positive intergroup relations.

A substantial part of this thesis will be dedicated to the analysis of existing academic literature exploring the art and reconciliation nexus. Yet, this leads to the possible complication of some scholars being overly represented in this work. One reason for this is that topics such as the arts are still to some extent outside of the academic mainstream, which is why only particular scholars with a certain reputation and long history of research are in the position to get their work funded and published. This, in turn, leads other authors to reference those writers repeatedly to provide sufficient legitimisation for their own research. As a consequence, a rather small number of scholars have a prioritised access to the discourse and can then influence the knowledge production. The question of who has the right to knowledge claims needs to be taken into consideration while writing as well as while evaluating the findings of this study.

Moreover, it needs to be acknowledged that the literature that this thesis references reflects the dominating power structures in academia. Most of the scholars working in the fields of reconciliation, writing about the role of art in peacebuilding, or developing the social-psychological concepts are embedded within the Western research system and mainly work in Europe, the Anglo area or in Israel. The access to resources and publications as well as the language barrier clearly limits the possibilities of scholars from outside these regions to gain attention in this system. Therefore, the question remains in which way knowledge from other parts of the world could both support as well as challenge the findings of this thesis. Also, most of the studies presented in this thesis were tested in this geographic area. The generalisability needs to be investigated in further research as “[t]he tendency to hear and represent only the dominant occurs when researchers study individuals of only one race, class, gender, etc. (often the characteristics or comfort zone of the researcher) but then present the findings as though they are applicable to a larger population” (O’Leary, 2004, p. 48).

This thesis is strongly based on other researcher's writings, which makes it even more crucial that I follow the standards of academic writing and referencing. The thesis strives to act in accordance with O'Leary who states: "Responsibility for knowledge production requires that researchers attempt to: recognize and balance subjectivities; give accurate research accounts; act within the law; and develop required expertise." (O'Leary, 2004, p. 50)

1.3 Outline of the thesis

The thesis mainly consists of four parts. First, the thesis reviews the academic debate on the definition of reconciliation and focuses particularly on cognitive processes and narrative aspects in reconciliation. The purpose of this is to identify, within the literature on reconciliation, possible entry points through which the arts can contribute to reconciliation. Secondly, the thesis analyses the literature on art and reconciliation and links this with the literature review, particularly in regard to the reconciliation of competing narratives. In this chapter, existing knowledge as well as gaps and unfilled claims are identified. Thirdly, the thesis introduces and discusses concepts and theories from the field of Social Psychology and outlines how those can deepen the understanding within Peace Research of the reconciliatory potential of art in general and literature in particular. To exemplify this step and to reduce the abstractness of the theoretical elaboration, an excerpt from the novel *How the Soldier Repairs the Gramophone* by Saša Stanišić serves as an illustration. In the fourth chapter, the findings of this thesis are presented and discussed, and further research steps are suggested.

2. The concept of reconciliation in Peace Research – a literature review

This chapter of the thesis discusses the concept of reconciliation within the academic debate in Peace Research. Firstly, it reviews the different understandings of reconciliation within the discipline and identifies the understanding used in this thesis. Secondly, it elaborates how identities can be approached through narratives. Following, thirdly, this chapter connects the two preceding sections and discusses reconciliation from a narrative perspective. By doing so, this chapter does not only serve as the theoretical basis for the following exploration of the art and reconciliation nexus, but it also provides a link between different approaches towards reconciliation in Peace Research and Social Psychology.

2.1 Reconciliation: a manifold concept

Reconciliation is a very popular term in academic fields dealing with violent social conflict. But what does it actually mean? Already in 1999, Susan Dwyer emphasised “[t]he notable lack of any clear account of what reconciliation is [...]” (Dwyer, 1999, p. 82). However, the absence of a shared definition of the concept remains even today (Hirsch, 2013, p. 168; Porter, 2015, p. 182; Quinn, 2009a, p. 5, 12; Zambakari, 2018). Yet, various scholars have clustered different approaches to reconciliation. This chapter, therefore, first presents some of these proposed clusters. Following this, the section highlights the main open questions in the discussion about reconciliation.

Starting with Ernesto Verdeja (2013), reconciliation can be approached from a minimalist or a maximalist perspective, based on the differing outreach and depth assigned to it. According to him, supporter of a minimalist approach to reconciliation aim for coexistence between former adversaries, grounded on the premise of non-violence. Proponents of a maximalist understanding, however, go beyond mere coexistence and strive for a social transformation towards the restoration of relationships between former enemies. (Crocker, 1999, p. 60; see also Rosoux, 2017, p. 21; Verdeja, 2013, pp. 168-169)

Implicitly building on a maximalist understanding of reconciliation, Tamar Hermann (2004, p. 44) suggests clustering the different understandings of reconciliation in three categories. In the first one, scholars stress a cognitive dimension, that highlights the need for change of beliefs about the nature of a conflict. This implies understanding “[...] reconciliation [as] the gradual, bottom-up reconstructing of one’s own and mutual perceptions in a different, nonconflictual cognitive framework” (Hermann, 2004, p. 45). The second category refers to the emotional-spiritual dimension of reconciliation and emphasises the importance of forgiveness and repentance, and within the third,

many writers highlight the procedural dimension and, therefore, focus on different practical arrangements of reconciliation, including concepts such as truth commissions. (pp. 44-46)

Valerie Rosoux (2017, p. 16) proposes a similar definitional differentiation of reconciliation in psycho-social and spiritual as well as structural approaches. Analogous to Hermann, with the first two conceptualisations Rosoux refers to the restoration of relationships between former enemies. The psycho-social dimension hereby deals with “[...] what they call a ‘deep change’ in the public’s psychological repertoire” (p. 17) and goes along with a change of beliefs and attitudes in the minds of most of the members of a social group. The spiritual approach highlights the importance of restoring the relationship between victims and perpetrators and includes concepts such as forgiveness. The structural understanding of reconciliation refers to changes on the institutional or structural level of a society to reduce the reciprocal feeling of threat. This can include joint institutions and close economic ties to develop a higher degree of political interdependence (p. 16). In accordance with the conceptualisations above, Elisabeth Porter states that reconciliation “[...] can be understood primarily as reconciling relationships, as a process, as a culture, or as a spectrum of possibilities” (Porter, 2015, p. 183).

The different approaches to reconciliation presented above leave a few questions unconsidered. The first open question refers to what do we actually mean when talking about reconciliation: is it a process or an outcome? Or can it be both, as suggested by Hermann (2004, p. 46)? The same question was asked already in 1999 by Susan Dwyer who later in her writings refers to “The Process of Reconciliation” (Dwyer, 1999, p. 89). Elisabeth Porter (2015, p. 183) is in line with Toshihiro Abe, who sees reconciliation “[...] as an open-ended phenomenon” (Abe, 2012, p. 787). Darweish and Rank do not only consider the processual and long-term character of reconciliation but also stress the non-linearity of this process, acknowledging the possibility of deterioration and the re-emergence of violence (Darweish & Rank, 2012, p. 5). Following Hermann’s analysis of the academic debate concerning the timing of reconciliation, it is commonly seen as a series of actions that succeed the official end of violence and hostilities. According to this understanding, reconciliation is often perceived as an instrument to achieve stable peace. (Hermann, 2004, pp. 46-47)

Moreover, a further relevant question refers to the level on which reconciliation is supposed to take place, and this is then accompanied by the scholarly level of analysis. Here, many scholars treat reconciliation either as a collective or macro-phenomenon or understand the concept as located within individuals and, thus, observable in interpersonal relations (Dwyer, 1999, p. 83; Maoz, 2004, p. 225). For instance, Elisabeth Porter refers to reconciliation as the restoration of relationships in various forms between formerly antagonistic individuals which eventually leads to some sort of attitudinal

change (Porter, 2015, pp. 184-189). Other scholars, particularly those who in their work focus on rather practical concepts that are frequently linked with reconciliation, such as restorative justice or truth commissions, look at reconciliation as a more institutionalised tool and, therefore, focus on the collective dimension (Friedman, 2000; Humphrey, 2000; la Rey & Owens, 1998; Nagy, 2002).

For other writers, the differentiation between the individual and the collective level of reconciliation is far from clear-cut. For example, Joanna R. Quinn (2009a, p. 5) states that her edited volume underlies an understanding of micro-level reconciliation as the restoration of relationships which, at the same time, is a collective process and simultaneously located within as well as embodied by the individual and performed and brought into action by it. To gain an understanding of how the two dimensions are connected, Rosoux introduces a mezzo or intermediary level in her conceptualisation that connects the micro and macro processes. Here, she refers to actors such as civil society groups, media, schools or the church that link the face-to-face actions of individuals with the larger scale political and social process. For Rosoux, reconciliation is necessarily a grassroots and a top-down, often-times even elitist movement. (Rosoux, 2017, pp. 18-22).

Following the academic literature, the individual seems to be a major actor in reconciliation processes. However, discussing reconciliation is necessarily linked to the question who is to reconcile and with whom. This shifts the attention to victimhood and perpetration in a violent conflict. Seemingly, many scholars put the victim at the centre of reconciliation, and this is visible through the emphasis of forgiveness and acknowledgement in these processes. This thesis will not go deeper in the discussion what it means to be socially constructed as a victim or as a perpetrator, the personal and political implications of this differentiation and which power structures are leading to and resulting from this process. However, the differentiation between victim and offender of atrocity is highly relevant as the approaches towards justice applied in a specific context are based on this distinction. As Okimoto and colleagues (2011) argue, traditional judicial practices rely on the retribution and punishment of the perpetrator, whereas restorative systems “[...] return the conflict to those affected by it: victims, offenders and their moral communities” (p. 255). Such processes focus on the needs of the victims and aim to restore transgressions that unsettle the power balance between perpetrators, their victims and the moral community as a whole or deal with wrongdoing that harmed moral values that the victims assumed to have in common with the offender (Goode & Smith, 2016, p. 105; Okimoto & Wenzel, 2008, p. 292). Research on reconciliation mostly underlies a restorative understanding of justice, aiming on different levels at restoration of institutions or relationships. The result of reconciliation might for many be similar to the result of restorative justice, where “[...]”

justice is restored when the affected parties reach a shared understanding about the offence, renewing consensus over shared norms and values” (Okimoto et al., 2011, p. 256).

Acknowledgement of the own misdeed is – sometimes openly, sometimes rather implicitly – described as a precondition for the victim to forgive the offender, which, in turn, is for many scholars an essential step towards personal as well as collective restoration of formerly hostile relationships (see among others Auerbach, 2009; Azar, Mullet, & Vinsonneau, 1999; Botcharova, 2007; Gobodo-Madikizela, 2002; L. R. Jackson & Ward, 1999, p. 439; Quinn, 2009b, p. 178; Schaap, 2016, p. 260; Tutu, 1996). Trudy Govier even goes one step further, emphasising that it has to be acknowledged that individuals “[...] were *wrongfully* harmed and did *not deserve* the treatment they received” (Govier, 2009, p. 40, own highlighting). On a macro level, Quinn argues that a society needs “[...] to come to terms with its past” (Quinn, 2009b, p. 179) and for this the acknowledgement for wrongdoings committed in the history is a necessary action, in addition to giving back power to individuals that were exposed to violence and suffering during the conflict.

Moreover, the aftermath of a violent conflict often renders differentiating between victims and perpetrators impossible. As Govier (2009) points out, in many conflicts, individuals experience violence and suffering from other people’s actions but are at the same time offenders of atrocities themselves. However, Govier also highlights that post-conflict societies show a trend to simplify the victim-perpetrator spectrum and only assign either victim or perpetrator roles to an individual (p. 41). This tendency is problematic and leads to a dilemma that reconciliation can only take place if both groups share the responsibility for past crimes. Following Rosoux (2017, p. 24), in conditions of one-sided oppression or in genocidal cases, reconciliation processes are unreasonable and unrealistic, though the concept and term is still applied in many of such cases. As an example, one can think of the debates in Australia or in Finland about the colonial past of the countries and reconciliation between the majority population and the indigenous people.

But what if an individual does not support but rather spoils a reconciliation process? This is a major question for theoreticians and practitioners alike. This limitation in terms of the potential scope of reconciliation leads some writers to support the minimalist understanding of the concept, as introduced above, striving rather for coexistence than for the restoration of relationships, based on remorse and forgiveness (Worchel & Coutant, 2008, p. 434). In addition to that, it has to be considered whether the people affected by a conflict even need to see a vital necessity for reconciliation. The question here is whether or not reconciliation can be achieved without the subjects’ awareness and honest support. (Little, 2011; Schaap, 2008)

Besides the more practical critique that was mentioned above, the notion of reconciliation is also criticised on a more conceptual basis. The most frequently repeated critique of reconciliation describes it as grounded on Western-centric thinking and rooted in approaches to the political, political emotions and justice that are based on ancient Greek philosophy and Christianity. Following these traditions, the victim is put at the centre of interest, and is given the possibility to be heard and gets its suffering acknowledged. However, as already outlined above, Christian ethics with its focus on remorse succeeded by forgiveness demands the victim to suppress or dismiss its emotions for the sake of 'moving on' and 'the greater social good'. All actors, in reference to Greek philosophy, undergo a process of purification and experience 'catharsis'. Consequently, advocates of reconciliation have to deal with the fact of being stuck in the dilemma to balance between justice for the victim and the perceived need for reconciliation. In the worst case, this dilemma can end up in blaming the victims of violence for impeding the reconciliation process by not giving up their legitimate emotions, such as anger and hate. (Ure, 2008) This becomes problematic when in some cultures forgiveness might not be perceived as desirable at all (Hamber & Kelly, 2009). For this critique, the appropriateness and effectiveness of reconciliation in regions outside of the Greek-Christian tradition is in doubt. Instead, several scholars suggest that indigenous reconciliation methods need to be taken more seriously (Brigg & Bleiker, 2011; Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, & T'lakwadzi, 2009; Mac Ginty, 2008; Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009).

Moreover, Adrian Little emphasises that contextual factors shape the relevance and the appropriateness of the concept. According to him, the term reconciliation is not only automatically loaded, but also develops specific connotations throughout the process. Whereas in some contexts the normative aspirations linked with the term evoke hope, in others it might create feelings of fear. Consequently, it can lead to a promise of a better future or to a perception of disappointment. (Little, 2017) The practical implications of underestimating the negative connotations of reconciliation can be seen in Little's analysis of the process in Northern Ireland. He demonstrates how the reconciliation process is loaded with the adversarial ideologies and identity notions. Here it is clearly visible that the concept should not be approached from a naïve perspective, assuming it as a universal panacea. Instead, it requires a critical stance and careful analysis of the respective context and the meaning that it might have for the people affected by it. (Little, 2011, p. 95)

Despite the lack of a clear shared and understanding of what reconciliation is or what it entails, the vagueness of the concept is not necessarily excluding aspects. Rather, different scholars focus on different dimensions of reconciliation, that are not making other features less important or valuable. Generally speaking, the writers share a vision of a post-conflict society that exists in a state of stable

peace which in itself is probably rather a process than an outcome or an end state (Auerbach, 2009, p. 291). Kenneth Boulding defines a stable peace as “a situation in which the probability of war is so small that it does not really enter into the calculations of any of the people involved” (1978, p. 13 quoted in Bar-Siman-Tov, 2004, p. 63). To reach this state of stable peace, scholars acknowledge that some form of process is demanded which encompasses all the dimensions discussed above.

Following the academic debate, this thesis applies an understanding of reconciliation that involves a process of actions, a number of “sequential approaches” (Zambakari, 2018, p. 374). It addresses reconciliation as a phenomenon that takes simultaneously place on the level of individuals (within or between them) as well as on a collective sphere. While acknowledging the complexity and importance of other aspects, such as practical cooperation, this thesis concentrates on the psycho-emotional restoration of relationships after the experience of traumatic events and focuses on the cognitive dimension to explore how literature can promote reconciliatory processes.

For this, it is first necessary to gain an understanding of how scholars of reconciliation explore the cognitive elements of this process, particularly focusing on the role of narratives and identities.

2.2 Identities in reconciliation processes: approaching narratives⁵

According to scholars such as Toshihiro Abe, reconciliation is designated to “[...] a possible mental or attitudinal status that could be achieved through certain steps of psychological transformation”

⁵ Identities can be studied from various directions and perspectives. This thesis follows a narrative approach to identities which is based on the understanding that “[...] that narratives are often used to express and negotiate both individual and collective identities” (De Fina, 2015, p. 351). The question of how identities develop is also of interest in the field of Social Philosophy. For instance, building on Hegel and George Herbert Mead, the director of the prestigious Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt, Axel Honneth developed a theory of recognition that also contains an account of how a subject develops in the first place an awareness of its own subject position (see: Honneth, A. (1996). *The Struggle for Recognition*. MIT Press.). In Today’s public debate, identities are in the centre of the so-called Identity Politics. Bernstein clusters different forms of identity politics which, according to her, have competing understandings concerning the “[...] relationship between experience, culture, identity, politics, and power” (Bernstein, 2005, p. 48). However, there are many more approaches that aim to explore identities and their creation as well development from various angles, such as the developmental psychological Identity Status Theory or the social-cognitive model of identity (Berzonsky, 2004). For an introduction to the variety of views on identity see Schwartz, S. J., Luyckx, K., & Vignoles, V. L. (Eds.). (2011). *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research*. Springer.

(Abe, 2012, p. 790). Daniel Bar-Tal (2000, p. 356) theorises along the same lines and emphasises the need for transforming existing attitudes and beliefs to those which support friendly bonds with past adversaries. According to him, reconciliation “[...] refers to a societal-cultural process that encompasses the majority of society members, who form new beliefs about the former adversary, about their own society, and about the relationship between the two groups” (p. 356). With this definition, Bar-Tal connects the level of individual society members with the collective beliefs. Individuals form and possess so-called “societal beliefs” (p. 353), understandings of crucial aspects concerning the own society which are shared by a majority of society members. These belief systems also contain a certain shared cognition on the conflict itself. Societal beliefs have a sense-making function which stimulates actions. (p. 353 f.) These beliefs that Hammack calls “master narratives” (Hammack, 2008), are manifested in group narratives⁶ that link experiences that are shared by and significant for a social group with material practices and symbolic acts (Ross, 2003, p. 193). According to Ross (2003, p. 192), these, how he calls it, “psychocultural narratives” serve as explanations for disoriented individuals to make sense of events and experiences. The fact that individuals within a society share these narratives, both in a sense of having identical accounts of these narratives and communicating them to each other, reinforces them and assigns them importance. Hereby, Ross emphasises the role of symbols and rituals that express the narratives (p. 195). Importantly, many aspects of the group narratives are relying on stories about the past which are connected with encounters with other social groups. For instance, Auerbach (2009, p. 294) highlights the relevance of trauma as well as glories in national narratives that are a result of experiences of war with other groups.

A similar instrument to make sense of the surrounding can, according to Dwyer (1999), also be assumed on the individual level. Following her, narratives play a major role in an individual’s conception of the self. Every person constantly constructs stories about the own life, based on past experiences, current events and future expectations that together form the self and its representation to fellow individuals. (p. 86) Narratives in this sense go beyond verbally, visually or in other ways

⁶ In narrative studies, there is commonly a division between biographical and interactional approaches. The former focuses on the individual life stories as subject matter whereas the latter concentrates on interactional aspects of narration as their data. This thesis is closer to the second line of research as the main research interest is rather on the “[...] process of identity construction itself – the strategies used by narrators, co-narrators, and their audience to achieve, contest, or reaffirm specific identities” (De Fina, 2015, p. 352), hereby also taking cognitive processes into consideration.

performed scripts (Andrews, Sclater, Rustin, Squire, & Treacher, 2014, p. 3). Through the construction of these narratives, the individual attempts to make sense of their own life which is not isolated but embedded in a specific environment and aims to assign meaning to their life (Baumeister & Newman, 1994; p. 677 Hammack, 2008, p. 229; McAdams & McLean, 2013, p. 233; Porter, 2015, p. 182). Hereby, narratives unite reasons, pre-existing beliefs about the world and one's society, perceptions, emotions, and experiences (Baumeister & Newman, 1994, p. 677; Humphrey, 2000, p. 10). Baumeister and Newman (1994, p. 678) write that thinking in narratives is very successful in linking these aspects in a way that the individual feels that the different dots in their life are connected. This produces a very comprehensive picture of their life while, however, simultaneously reducing its potential objectiveness. This is important as individuals have a basic need to create a stable and coherent understanding of the self, that is, narrative of the own life (Baumeister & Newman, 1994, p. 78; Dwyer, 1999, p. 86).

Following Hammack (2008, p. 222), these narratives of one's personal life are where one's identity is manifested and that is then embodied in language and in material practices. This view is supported by Paul Ricoeur (1980, p. 187) who calls it the "narrative identity". Consequently, the individual cognitively links experiences, beliefs, perceptions, and other identity components in stories and constantly reinterprets and reconstructs the narratives, following the newly arrived input. This makes identities, manifested in narratives, fluid and contingent and individuals, therefore, incorporate several attributions of identity with them (Yuval-Davis, 2010, p. 267). In addition to that, the construction of personal narratives relies strongly on the connection of events in a certain temporal order. However, this does not need to relate to occurrences in some kind of objective reality, but it rather brings them into an order that helps to make sense of them (Taylor & Wetherell, 1999, p. 41). This makes narratives also temporally dependent on a social context and discursive influences (Taylor & Wetherell, 1999, p. 39).

Furthermore, individual narratives are not functioning solely for themselves but are dependent on other's stories (J. Reynolds, Wetherell, & Taylor, 2007, p. 335). The process of how the individual's narratives, the one's from other society members, and the group beliefs mutually influence each other is highly complex. Hence, Avril Thorne (2004, p. 365) states that gaining a more detailed understanding of this interplay resumes to be a major task for all researchers dealing with identity questions.

Coming from a rather philosophical direction, Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, who are considered the founders of the post-structuralist Discourse Theory, describe identities as always being relational. Building on different theoretical building blocks, such as Marxian social theory or

Gramsci's work on cultural hegemony, the two philosophers and political theorists developed a discursive theory that rejects all essentialist and deterministic understandings of a social order. In this vein, "[...] every form of social structuration is groundless, and therefore non-necessary, contingent, and open to change, [and consequently] society has no definitive or natural form, no default mode" (Jacobs, 2018, p. 297); the social structure is 'dislocated'. The individual, then, is "a configuration of multiple discourses, so-called 'subject positions,' but those subject positions do not form a perfect unit. Like all other structures, the subject as a structure is dislocated, incomplete, and unfinished" (p. 301). Laclau (1994) argues, that if we accept such a notion of a construction of identities, the process of identification is central to this identity construction and implies "[...] a lack at the root of any identity: one needs to identify with something because there is an originary and insurmountable lack of identity" (p. 3). Therefore, Laclau maintains that the process of identification can never completely fill this lack of identity and the identification itself is merely justified "[...] because it brings in the possibility of *an* order, of a certain regularity" (p. 3, italics in original). According to him, this results in "[...] a constitutive split in *all* social identity" (p. 3, italics in original). Consequently, a political order that aims to fill the lack and overcome the constitutive split will never be able to complete an identity. Instead, it would end the differentiation between subject and object and lead to the "death of the subject" (p. 37). Following Laclau, the term politics describes exactly the process of managing the "unstable character of identity" and the "incompletion of society" (1994, p. 37).

Chantal Mouffe (1994) makes this character of identities a bit more clear when she elaborates that the construction of a sense of the own self, that is, identity, constantly relies on the so-called "constitutive other" (p. 106). This is understandable, considering the fact that from a linguistic point of view the concept of 'identity' descends from the Latin term 'idem' meaning 'same'. The roots of the word, thus, are in line with the description of identity in the Oxford Online Dictionary as "quality of being identical"⁷. Following this, something can either be identical with another thing or not, and therefore, the identical self is constituted by the non-identical other, a process called alterity. This leads to the development of binary identity pairs that simultaneously constitute and exclude the other from the self. The concentration on the differentiation between the self and the other is for this reason not optional but a required and determining element in the development of one's own identity. This view is supported by Baumeister and Newman when they state that an individual has a need to get the self-made identity claims to be recognised and accepted by other society members and translated into social practice and reality. Moreover, the authors state that narratives can be seen as a mode to

⁷ <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/identity>, accessed on March 2, 2019.

convince other individual of one's own identity claims and to achieve outside validation of it. (Baumeister & Newman, 1994, p. 680)

However, narratives are not only developed by an individual and constituted but also confirmed by others. Identity aspects are additionally assigned by other members of society through discursive means as well as concrete material practices. A good example for this is the assignment of a person's gender. As, for instance, Judith Butler elaborates in her book 'Gender Trouble', individuals oftentimes face the reality of being assigned the belonging to a certain gender group without having the opportunity to influence this assignment. Building on J.L. Austin's work⁸ on performative language, Butler describes how language in combination with dominant discourses acts performatively. For Butler, society constructs the gender identity of a person through a continuous performative process which makes the individual unconsciously want to act according to the ascribed role. The famous example is the question "Is it a boy or a girl?" (Butler, 2010, p. 151), which in Butler's understanding is more than just stating alleged facts but serves in itself as a social act of creating the regulatory framework in which the formation of the identity of the individual takes place.

Consequently, the development of a sense of the self, that is a personal narrative, occurs in exchange with a social context. The individual that develops an identity is, as Hall phrases it, already positioned in "[...] relation to cultured narratives [...]" (Hall, 1987, p. 44). This is in line with Thorne, who argues that "[...] identities are created on the spot when speaker orient or 'position' themselves and others vis-à-vis culturally available 'master' narratives" (Thorne, 2004, p. 361). The arguably unanswerable question is how much agency the individuals have in order to position themselves towards the narratives of a society and to what extent this society already assigns a position to the subject. Taylor and Wetherell seemingly ascribe the individual a rather high degree of (unconscious) control, which allows them to embed the own narratives within other collective narratives, such as the narrative of the 'strong nation' (Taylor & Wetherell, 1999, p. 44). In contrast to that, Steph Lawler states that narratives are not originating from within an individual but are rather disseminated within a cultural context to serve as a (finite) pool which a person can use to develop the own narrative (Lawler, 2002, chapter 11).

As a matter of course, processes of identification – whether with the self or with a collective – take place on an emotional level, too (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 202). Here, again, the question of the interplay between individual and group emotions is highly disputed, yet not directly the topic of this thesis. However, it is reasonable to assume, as Jonathan Mercer writes, that culture, that is, the group, effects

⁸ See: Austin, J. L. (1975). How to do things with words. Oxford university press.

the way individuals think and feel about their self as well as the group and, consequently, the other. For Mercer, thus, “[...] group emotion is an expression of group identity, a reinforcement of that identity, and a way to maintain group boundaries” (Mercer, 2014, p. 523).

It can recapitulatory be said that identities manifested in narratives are relational with regard to several aspects. Firstly, personal narratives do not only have to be acknowledged by other individuals, but they also are constituted by the existence of the other. Secondly, identity claims are developed and expressed by the owner of them but just as so assigned by other society members through discursive mean. Consequently, the identity development already takes place in exchange with society, discourses and existing master narratives.

The construction of an individual account of identity through the processes outlined above is far from being a neutral process. As already introduced above, the development of binary identity pairs and othering (‘us’ and ‘them’) is the result of the constitutive and simultaneously exclusive character of identity. However, the fact that the own personal narrative is constituted through the difference of other narratives does not exclude that those different narratives can also pose a challenge for the individual. As Chantal Mouffe (1994) emphasises, the binary pair frequently implies the assignment of hierarchical values. This can have problematic consequences when a certain self/other dichotomy becomes politicised, when agonism turns into antagonism. According to Mouffe, this is the case when a hitherto neutral binary counterpart begins to be seen by an individual as a threat to the own identity. (p. 104) Going in the same direction, Slavoj Žižek (1994) describes this process as the shift from opposition to contradiction. This transition takes place “[...] when one of the terms of the opposition starts to function as ‘marked’, and the other as ‘non-marked’” (p. 46). As an example, Žižek elaborates that the two concepts ‘woman’ and ‘man’ can be posed in opposition to each other, based on, what he calls, “neutral universality”: males and females representing two types of the human category. However, in many social contexts, the man is considered equal to the human genus whereas the woman is seen as representing a difference to this man, being a “truncated” version of the man. Through this “oppositional determination”, Žižek argues, borrowing Hegel’s terminology, the opposition turns into a contradiction. (p. 46)

As Nira Yuval-Davis (2006) emphasises, belonging to and identifying with a certain social group – may it be the profession, age, class, gender or any other identity aspect – are tied to specific “[...] social and economic locations, which, at each historical moment, have particular implications vis-à-vis the grids of power relations in society” (p. 199). Moreover, not only are there way more social divisions and groupings, Yuval-Davis reminds the reader that a subject position is constructed intersectionally, that is along various “power axis of difference” (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 200). The

meaning of belonging to a specific social group, thus, is constituted by the belonging to different other significant identity dimensions.

The power relations can change according to time and place, which is why the specific meaning of such social and economic locations can change as well. Thus, positionalities as well as the categories themselves “[...] are often fluid and contested” (p. 199). The contestedness of identities is exactly the place where, following Yuval-Davis, politics take place. In this sense, the political dimension of identities, or in Yuval-Davis’ terms the “politics of belonging”, concerns particularly the struggle over the definition of the boundaries of groups and categorisations (p. 203) as well as the social meaning and value of belonging to them (p. 205). In her words, “[...] politics of belonging is concerned with [...] the boundaries of the political community of belonging, the boundaries that separate the world population into ‘us’ and ‘them’” (p. 204), including the reproduction as well as the contestation of currently hegemonical political powers (p. 205). She highlights that rendering social divisions visible that are of high importance for subjects is a crucial political aspect of the politics of identity (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 201).

Following the understanding of identity as manifested in personal narratives, conflicting narratives can challenge the image of the self. Consequently, to reach a coherent picture of the own narrative, other narratives that do not conform the own are seen as problematic. Therefore, the individual strives for narrative unity, not only within the person itself but also in regard to other people’s narratives (Dwyer, 1999, p. 86). This will be explored in the next section.

2.3 Reconciling narratives

For Dwyer (1999, p. 96), reconciliation aims at the reduction of discomfort of an individual or a social group as a whole caused by ostensibly competing or challenging stories with the goal to achieve narrative unity. This, in theory, can be achieved through a reconstruction of both the group related as well as the individual narratives (Hammack, 2008, p. 233). Furthermore, Auerbach emphasises that successful reconciliation demands that individuals become familiar with the other’s narratives and that they recognise as well as express that the other’s narratives are legitimate. Beyond that, she argues that the individuals also have to be willing to include, at least to some extent, these narratives in their own. (Auerbach, 2009, p. 298) For Verdeja, reconciliation requires “[...] reimagining the Other as bearer of moral worth and dignity [...]” (Verdeja, 2013, p. 170), thus re-evaluating the own image of the other’s narrative and extending the own narrative which often excludes the other as an equal human being. This is in line with Herbert Kelman’s understanding that the removal of the “[...]”

negation of the other [...]” (Kelman, 2008, p. 24) as an integral part of the own narrative is essential for reconciliation.

Underlying the idea of reconstructing and re-imagining narratives is the understanding that the differentiation between the self and the other is anything but clear and the boundaries are permeable as they are highly dependent on prevailing discourses and superordinate narratives (Yuval-Davis, 2010, p. 273). Moreover, the question concerning the permeability of these boundaries is part of the identity construction (Yuval-Davis, 2010, p. 272). Therefore, Yuval-Davis argues that the recognition of the other’s existence, which is, yet again, constitutive for the own self, does not automatically lead to an act of rejecting the other and antagonistic behaviour but also opens space for acceptance. This acceptance then allows the construction of the boundaries in accordance with a non-opposing other (Yuval-Davis, 2010, p. 275). Moreover, Singer (2004, p. 443) highlights that throughout a life, individuals have changing life narratives, also due to varying degrees of ability to make sense of these narratives.

As presented in this chapter, a clear differentiation between the individual and the group identities seems to be impossible. Moreover, the individual narratives appear to be highly influenced by other people’s stories as well as superordinate group narratives. Therefore, a reconstruction of individual beliefs can only be achieved when accompanied by an adjustment of the societal beliefs. According to Hammack, not only personal narratives but also master narratives need to be reconciled. Following Ross, in a reconciliation process, narratives that are supportive for a peace process can be utilised by linking “[...] culturally available references and events on the ground” (Ross, 2003, p. 195). These links can become visible in people’s behaviour and lead to reciprocally de-escalatory measures (p. 195).

However, reconciliation as a process that results in a cognitive shift and a re-negotiation of the own narratives is far from being an easy task that everyone feels compelled to pursue. Changing long-held beliefs about the self and the other can also be perceived as a threat to the own identity (Hamber & Kelly, 2009, p. 305). The division in categories such as ‘we’ and ‘them’ have a function to order the own experiences and to reduce the complexity of a chaotic surrounding, to make sense out of it. Reconciliation as a cognitive task, therefore, renders clear-cut differentiations more difficult, which, in turn, can reduce the effect that narratives and identities have on the individual. Furthermore, reconciling identities does not mean that all individuals converge their narratives. This might not even be desirable. For instance, Adrian Little states that “[r]econciliation narratives can be just as defensive and misleading as they are transformative, unifying, and illuminating” (Little, 2011, p. 86). However, Kelman argues that reconciliation can occur in a fashion that does not weaken but rather strengthens

an individual's core identity. This means that reconciliation requires the reconstruction of peripheral aspects of someone's identity. (Kelman, 2008, p. 25) The question remains which aspects of an identity influencing the way in which individuals think about a conflict are part of the core and which are considered peripheral. Nonetheless, Kelman, among others, highlights several dimensions in which a reconstruction of narratives can, or even must take place, and which do not touch the core of someone's identity.

Firstly, reconciliation requires the reconstruction of the own identity to allow the mutual acknowledgement of the other's humanity. In many conflicts, the other is dehumanised, whereas the self or the own group get humanness ascribed. (Haslam, Loughnan, Kashima, & Bain, 2009, p. 56; Vaes, Leyens, Paladino, & Pires Miranda, 2012, pp. 64-65) For William E. Connolly, this strategy aims to protect, as he calls it, the own "established field of identity" (Connolly, 1989, p. 329). As a consequence of de-humanisation, the other is not perceived any longer as an individual that bears feelings, and therefore its suffering is, if not justified, at least not as much of an issue for the moral consciousness of the perpetrator. For Albert Bandura and his colleagues (1996, p. 366), the dehumanisation of the other serves as both a tool to morally disengage oneself from atrocities that may be exercised in times of violent conflict and a coping mechanism to deal with the emotional consequences of one's own actions.

Moreover, dehumanisation does not only play a vital role on the individual level but can also be used as a tool to achieve certain collective actions directed towards the other group (Stollznaw, 2008, p. 178). According to Stollznaw, dehumanisation is a cognitive process, a "[...] 'way of thinking' that can result in linguistic, semiotic and physical manifestations, e.g., violence or verbal abuse [...]" (Stollznaw, 2008, p. 177). In addition, assigning human traits to yourself or your own group and to negate the other's humanity has consequences for the self-image. Self-humanising as well as dehumanising of the other can have "[...] self-serving [effects on the] self-evaluation" (Haslam et al., 2009, p. 69) of the own narrative. In regard to reconciliation, Kelman argues that former adversaries need to acknowledge each other's humanity and therefore legitimate claims for rights and a life without the threat of violence. For him, re-humanisation is the prerequisite for acknowledging the other's narratives as rightful. (Kelman, 2008, p. 27)

Secondly, as already introduced earlier, personal as well as group narratives often include historic components. According to Bar-Tal, many recollections of the past are shaped by hatred towards the other group on the one hand and victimisation and glorification of the own group on the other. To create possibilities for reconciliation, a group and the individual group members have to adjust and reconstruct their versions of the past. (Bar-Tal, 2000, p. 359) For this reason, Porter describes

“coming to terms with the past” (Porter, 2015, p. 182) as a crucial aspect of reconciliation. Supporting the reconstruction of the past is based on the assumption that memory, understood as the “[...] remembrance of lived or transmitted experiences” (Rosoux, 2004, p. 160), is a fluid and contingent concept and anything but fixed. Memories are highly important for the development of a coherent narrative because they link otherwise seemingly unconnected events with each other (Zerubavel, 2012, p. 13). The importance and meaning assigned to memories can, however, change over time. The question is, then, how can individuals deal with the past? Auerbach (2009, p. 307) argues that reconciliation can be achieved by first becoming acquainted with the other’s historical narratives and thereupon acknowledging their legitimacy. The outcome of this narrative acquaintance would be, as Rosoux puts it, “[...] a basic agreement about the meanings given to the past” (Rosoux, 2017, p. 26). However, Rosoux highlights that this does not mean a complete unanimity on what happened in the past in which way and for which reason, but rather requires the development of a shared language when talking about significant events. Moreover, awareness for the plurality of views on the past needs to be raised (Rosoux, 2004, p. 162). This is in accordance with Kelman who emphasises that different versions of the past result from different experiences in the past. Therefore, Kelman argues, reconciliation does not require a joint understanding of the conflict-related history. Instead, he supports the acknowledgment of the other side’s ‘truth’ and accepting it in the own narrative (Kelman, 2008, p. 29). Much research focuses on the role of dealing with wrongdoing that occurred in the past and how this relates to existing narratives (Schaap, 2005, p. 6). This is closely linked to the third dimension of narrative reconstruction.

Thirdly, the lack of acknowledgment of responsibility for beginning and continuation of the conflict as well as for committed atrocities is a major barrier for reconciliation processes (Čehajić, Brown, & Castano, 2008, p. 196). As already discussed in the previous subchapter, the suffering of the other in the past needs to be acknowledged to allow a mutual and equal reconciliation process (Govier, 2009; L. R. Jackson & Ward, 1999; Quinn, 2009c). Beyond that, Hamber and Kelly emphasise that conflict affected individuals also need to acknowledge their own responsibility and that of their group for harm that was done to the other in order to create a space for rebuilding relationships (Hamber & Kelly, 2009, p. 292). Even though the differentiation in victims and perpetrators renders difficult or even impossible in many conflicts (Govier, 2009, p. 41), conflict parties tend to see and present themselves as victims of the other rather than as the offender. In extreme cases, this can lead to a dynamic termed ‘competitive victimhood’. Conflict parties that engage in competitive victimhood aim to establish themselves as having experienced more suffering than the other side. (Noor, Shnabel, Halabi, & Nadler, 2012, p. 351) This process can lead to a continuation of the conflict.

The analysis of existing literature on reconciliation in combination with a narrative approach to identity formation demonstrates that cognitive mechanisms play a major role in reconciliation processes. Moreover, especially if the aspects of personal and collective narratives are not addressed, it seems more likely that individuals are not supportive for any form of restoration of relationships with former adversaries. According to Kleres (2010), narratives do not only display the cognitive dimension of emotions, rather emotionality is an essential part of narratives. Personal narratives present experiences and these experiences are emotionally loaded, which assigns meaning to them. (p. 187 f.) Therefore, Nadler and Shnabel describe “[...] intergroup reconciliation as the process of removing conflict-related emotional barriers that block the way to ending intergroup conflict” (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008, p. 39). This allows the question how discursive practises such as art and literature can contribute to the removal of exactly these barriers and facilitate the reconstruction of the personal narratives that act as spoilers for reconciliation. The next chapter, therefore, explores the potential of literature to support such processes and, eventually, contribute to reconciliation.

3. Aesthetics and reconciliation

In this thesis, reconciliation is studied as a dimension of international politics. For this reason, this chapter first introduces the general discussion about the role of aesthetics as a subject matter for the analysis of global politics⁹ before the focus can be directed towards the connection between art and reconciliation. Thereupon, the chapter introduces the so-called ‘local turn’ in Peace Research as a critique of the liberal peace dogma. Following, the chapter discusses the debate concerning the role that art in general and literature in particular can play for reconciliation to identify certain claims and missing knowledge concerning the impact that the arts can have in such processes. The emphasis is hereby on the transformation of conflicting narratives and antagonistic (group) identities through art.

3.1 The arts and international politics

“Art is a fundamental component of culture and a primary vehicle of cultural expression and transmission [...]”, writes Rama Mani (Mani, 2011b, p. 549). For this reason, Premaratna and Bleiker emphasise that the arts offer individuals the means for “[...] expressing essential human experiences”

⁹ The link between arts/aesthetics and the political are, as a matter of course, also studied from other perspectives. Moore and Shepherd (2010) remind their readers of Plato and Aristotle who engaged with the question of the politics of aesthetics, but also highlight thinkers such as Immanuel Kant (his work “Critique of Aesthetic Judgment” in “Critique of Judgment” from 1790) or Theodor W. Adorno (“Aesthetic Theory”, published in 1970). Another more recent example is Jaques Rancière whose major concept of the “distribution of the sensible” becomes most clear in his writings on “The Politics of Aesthetics”. Here, he elaborates how the arts and politics are connected exactly through the distribution of the sensible. For Rancière, the distribution of the sensible characterises “[...] who can have a share in what is common to the community based on what they do and on the time and space in which this activity is performed” (Rancière, 2011, p. 12); it reveals the control of the social body of who gets visibility and the right to be heard and seen. Following him, politics is essentially about the definition of what can be seen and who has the right to be seen. Therefore, art is ultimately political as “[a]rtistic practices are ‘ways of doing and making’ that intervene in the general distribution of ways of doing and making as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility” (Rancière, 2011, p. 13). In the same line of argumentation, Chantal Mouffe states that “[p]olitics is always about the establishment, the reproduction, or the deconstruction of a hegemony [...]”. For this reason, she does not “[...] make a distinction between political art and non-political art, because every form of artistic practice either contributes to the reproduction of the given common sense – and in that sense is political – or contributes to the deconstruction or critique of it. Every form of art has a political dimension.” (Mouffe, Deutsche, Joseph, & Keenan, 2001, p. 98 f.)

(Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 82). These human experiences manifested in art, Roland Bleiker argues, provide scholars with new perspectives on global politics compared to other, more traditional sources for investigation. For him, the arts do not only concern the process of creating aesthetic goods but additionally the individual and collective knowledge that they induce and embody. (Bleiker, 2009, p. 2) Art reflects how a certain society constructs the own reality (2009, p. 8). Consequently, a growing number of scholars dedicate their work to the intersection between art and international politics, a development coined as the so-called ‘aesthetic turn in international political theory’ (2009, p. 3). This emphasis of a ‘turn’ does not implicate that the study of artistic endeavours is anyhow new or merely a current trend in connection with global political issues. Instead, it refers to a seemingly increasing acceptance of this subject matter in the discipline, which Jutta Weldes calls an internal dispute in International Relations concerning the “low data in high politics” (Weldes, 2015, p. 229).

Crucial for the question of the relevance of the arts for the analysis in international contexts is the prevailing understanding of the relationship between reality and its representations. Following the introduction of post-structuralist theories in the field of study, there apparently is strong support for understanding reality and its representation as always separated by a gap that differentiates a subject from its representation (Bleiker, 2001). However, according to Bleiker, traditional international relations theory is fundamentally based on a, as he calls it, “mimetic approach” that aims to represent reality as realistically as possible (Bleiker, 2009, p. 19). Following the post-structuralist thinking, artistic productions justifiably challenge this mimetic paradigm and create new spaces to think about political processes. Following Bleiker, artistic knowledge offers insights in political phenomena which would otherwise be sealed from social scientific inquiry. In ‘Aesthetics and World Politics’, he argues that art dealing with 9/11 reveal much about terrorist acts and the manifold effects on society as well as about security in general. Moreover, Bleiker takes the view that aesthetics “[...] are much less linked to cultural values or boundaries of sovereignty” (p. 58). This allows them also to reinterpret understandings of belonging and sameness and express understandings of security that differ from the prevailing hegemonic discourses (pp. 48-53). Furthermore, Bleiker states that the link between emotions and global politics need to get more attention in research and he suggests that the artistic sphere offers great opportunities to explore exactly this intersection (Bleiker, 2009, p. 60; Bleiker & Hutchison, 2008, p. 132). Following Bochner and Ellis (2003, p. 508), art might be described as a language that can be representational, yet it can go beyond mere mimicking and it instead expresses sensations and emotions and offers the possibility to be used to reflect on ourselves and our individual processes of knowledge production.

Kyle Grayson and his colleagues add a further layer on the discussion concerning the relationship between ‘low data’ such as art and international politics in their article on popular culture. They argue that popular culture does not only reflect a political and social system but also produces them. As they write, “[...] popular culture makes world politics what it currently is” (Grayson, Davies, & Philpott, 2009, p. 157), for art in general and in their case popular culture in particular are the spheres in which consistent social narratives are created. Moreover, Elisabeth Bronfen argues that “collective cultural imaginari[es]” (Bronfen, 2006, p. 23), as she calls these comprehensive social narratives, are the place of political competition (Bronfen, 2006, p. 23). Grayson and his colleagues, thus, emphasise that these narratives and the outcome of this political competition can become materialised in political processes (Grayson et al., 2009, p. 157). For some scholars, commercial aesthetics, for instance produced by the Hollywood industry, are oftentimes intertwined with concrete political agendas and can be used to achieve specific political goals¹⁰. Exemplary, to have an authentic military environment in movies, certain authorities have in some cases to approve scripts before movie recording on military bases or with military equipment is permitted. This approval, as a matter of course, depends on the presentation of the military in the script which has to shed a positive light on it. This, as Klaus Odds argues, is highly relevant as for many people globally, Hollywood movies are the first and possibly only contact with the country and its military. (Dodds, 2008, p. 228) Moreover, McEvoy-Levy indicates that the consumer’s view on and understanding of war highly depends on the representation of war in popular culture that maintains to normalise warfare as an instrument and fact in international politics (McEvoy-Levy, 2015, p. 204).

As the separation precision between the arts, aesthetics, and popular culture seems to be rather limited, this thesis follows Moore and Shepherd (2010, p. 305) who approach the concepts as representing a nexus together with global politics. This is not to say that these terms are all the same and that these scholars investigate the exact same phenomena. Instead, the argument is that cultural goods in its various forms are or increasingly become mainstream subjects in research on global politics as they present a more and more accepted source for knowledge production in the context of international relations.

Apart from the overall nexus between international politics and the arts, there is also diverse academic literature on the intersection of the arts and peacebuilding in general and the arts and reconciliation

¹⁰ See, among others: James Der Derian (2001). *Virtuous war: mapping the military-industrial-media-entertainment network*. Westview Press; or Roger Stahl (2009). *Militainment, Inc.: War, Media, and Popular Culture*. Routledge

in particular. This reflects an increasing interest by both academics and professionals on the relationship between art and peaceful change (Kim, Kollontai, & Yore, 2015, p. 1). However, much of the academic literature on the role of aesthetics in this context does not fully distinguish between peacebuilding and reconciliation but oftentimes deals with both issues at the same time. Therefore, the differentiation between both concepts is blurred in the following, however, the separation will be more explicit in the later part of this thesis. The interest in art and peacebuilding/reconciliation derives mainly from a shift of attention in Peace Research towards the local dimension of peace processes. Therefore, before going into the discussion on the arts and peacebuilding/reconciliation, the next chapter briefly introduces this so-called ‘local turn’ in Peace Research.

3.2 The critique of the ‘liberal peace’ and the ‘local turn’

For the past two decades, there is a far-reaching discussion surrounding the term of the ‘liberal peace’. This approach developed in reaction to the classical conceptualisation of peacemaking, in which the end of a conflict was understood as the result of a negotiated agreement that reflects current power relations and interests. The envisaged aim of the settlement matches the concept of ‘negative peace’¹¹, that is the absence of physical violence. (Chandler, 2010, p. 137) Especially during the cold war era, this model of conflict settlement dominated the activities of the international community and was seen as the most auspicious. With the end of the cold war and a rising number of non-interstate conflicts, the perceived success rate of this approach was decreasing, therefore, the peacebuilding focus shifted towards conflict resolution. This approach acknowledged the fact that a purely negotiated agreement might not be sufficient to achieve lasting peace in a conflict-torn region and proposes to address structural causes that underlie violent conflicts (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 771). The goal hereby goes beyond mere negative peace but instead aims for far reaching positive peace. Following the breakdown of the Soviet Union, in the Western-dominated international community prevailed an understanding that positive peace can be reached in conflict-affected societies through liberal policies, including the implementation of a liberal democracy, based on values linked to the human rights and surrounded by a free market economy. (Richmond, 2006, p. 292; Richmond & Franks, 2009, p. 3) This approach was connected to the principals of good governance, rule of law and economic development (Paris, 2002, p. 638). Consequently, peacebuilding was closely connected to statebuilding (pp. 642-650). Even though it must be noted

¹¹ The differentiation between ‘negative peace’ and ‘positive peace’ was first introduced by Johan Galtung in 1964 in the editorial of the first issue of the Journal of Peace Research (Galtung, 1964, p. 2).

that the early concept of the 'liberal peace' had been criticised already before the end of the cold war (Richmond & Mac Ginty, 2015, p. 173), David Chandler points out, that the liberal peacebuilding approach has been heavily criticised since the turn of the millennium, mainly from two different directions. Firstly, the liberal peace agenda is described as expressing Western interests and deepening the power hierarchy between developed and developing countries. Secondly, the so-called 'ideas-based critique' emphasises that imposing universalised Western values and concepts might not be the best-suited mechanism to establish lasting peace in war-shattered societies. (Chandler, 2010, pp. 139-144)

This critique of the liberal peace paradigm, particularly the idea-based stream, fostered in both academia and practice the debate surrounding the so-called 'local turn' or 'the everyday' in peacebuilding (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 774). The interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq showcase events that changed the perception of 'traditional' liberal peacebuilding and strengthened the local turn (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 766; Paffenholz, 2015, p. 859). The local is commonly described in academia as a set of individual experiences and practices achieved through human agency, rather than a geographical description (Hughes, Öjendal, & Schierenbeck, 2015, p. 821; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 770). Leonardsson and Rudd show in their review article that there is a far-reaching consensus among peacebuilding scholars that long-term peace can only be achieved if built on and coming from internal, local processes and if it is based on local traditions and practices (Leonardsson & Rudd, 2015, pp. 827-828).

The focus on the local can be seen as a response to inadequate state-centric interventions (Hughes et al., 2015, p. 819; Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 774). Moreover, a more comprehensive understanding of conflicts and their complexity emerged that highlights the inter-relatedness of violent conflict, development and questions of identity (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 775). Additionally, the focus on the local is also supposed to offset for some gaps and problems that the liberal peace approach creates in practice. This way, the liberal peace paradigm's deficiency in terms of legitimacy and authority is conceived to be reduced through local ownership of peacebuilding processes. Consequently, the post-colonial legacy and tendency of the liberal peace is meant to be reduced or rendered invisible. (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013, p. 775) Furthermore, the local turn in peacebuilding does not necessarily imply a rejection of the liberal peace as the ultimate goal of the efforts of the international community. Instead, some approaches to the local and the everyday dimension of peace continue to be based on liberal assumptions of how to achieve peace. In this sense, the devotion towards the local is too some extend applied as a pragmatic tool to increase the efficiency and successfulness of peacebuilding activities, while keeping up the spirit of the liberal

peace paradigm. (Hughes et al., 2015, p. 819; Richmond, 2006, pp. 297, 301; Richmond & Franks, 2009, p. 3) David Chandler (2010; 2017), therefore, criticises the critiques of the liberal peace for not being fundamental and far-reaching enough. According to him, the critiques of the concept continue to base their underlying assumption on liberal thinking, which, consequently, does not challenge the liberal peacebuilding paradigm to its fullest. The failure of liberal interventions, thus, is not regarded as a result of the means but rather as a consequence of the unreadiness or unwillingness of “[...] the non-liberal nature of the societies intervened upon” (Chandler, 2010, p. 155). Nonetheless, Roger Mac Ginty argues that a local turn that takes ‘indigenous’ and ‘traditional’ seriously might be able to overcome some of the deficiencies that the liberal peace paradigm demonstrates, without romanticising those customary approaches (Mac Ginty, 2008, p. 155). Consequently, there is an extensive debate whether ‘the local’ is opposed to ‘the international’ or whether both can be intertwined. Scholars supporting an integration of both approaches developed concepts such as ‘hybrid forms of peace governance’ (Paffenholz, 2015, p. 863; see also Richmond, 2011).

Regardless of whether the interest in ‘the local’ arises from a critique of imposing liberal concepts in war-torn societies or from a pragmatic and solution-focused approach to violent conflict, the local turn in the larger peacebuilding framework reflects an understanding that also underlies the academic debate surrounding the concept of reconciliation: addressing institutions alone is not sufficient to solve violent conflict and to achieve lasting peace. Instead, there is a need to attain a change on the grassroots level, probably even on the level of the individual. As stated above, there is an increasing awareness in theory and practice that identity questions are a highly relevant issue for peacebuilding that cannot appropriately be dealt with by merely addressing institutional factors and by imposing liberal norms on conflict-affected people. Consequently, peacebuilding as much as reconciliation is a matter that involves the individual. For Paffenholz, this does not come as a surprise, as she describes already an earlier local turn in the beginning of the 1990s, originating from John Paul Lederach’s ‘conflict transformation school’, which aimed at achieving lasting reconciliation between and within societies (Paffenholz, 2015, p. 859). The question at this point, thus, concerns the role art can play to support local peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, which will be discussed in the next section.

3.3 The art and peacebuilding nexus

As discussed above, academics and practitioners alike emphasise the crucial role of local peacebuilding approaches to achieve lasting and stable relationships between former adversaries.

Many scholars argue that art can be of central importance in this process.¹² For instance, Rama Mani highlights, among others, reconciliation and building of new identities as major peacebuilding purposes of arts (Mani, 2011a, pp. 117-118) and argues that justice can only be restored if the aesthetic dimension of post-conflict societies is taken into consideration and addressed in reconciliation processes (Mani, 2011b, p. 551). Moreover, Kim and colleagues showcase that different aesthetic endeavours have a high potential to support societies to become more peaceful and to increase the level of justice (Kim et al., 2015, p. 1). García writes that artistic goods could influence cognitive as well as sensorial processes in an individual and, thus, be a crucial tool for advancing reconciliation (García, 2014, p. 27). Shank and Schirch (2008) hold the view that aesthetics and peacebuilding are already in many cases intertwined on the ground. However, the authors state that the arts are in many cases still dismissed in peacebuilding practice. For them, art could be applied more strategically by peacebuilding initiatives, because the arts could be “[...] a tool that can communicate and transform the way people think and act. Arts can change the dynamics in intractable interpersonal, intercommunal, national, and global conflicts.” (Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 218) Therefore, the authors advocate for including artistic engagements in the traditional peacebuilding repertoire (Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 218). Several scholars support this demand, frequently based on the need for local ownership in peacebuilding activities (Zelizer, 2003). In this sense, the arts are described as grassroots peacebuilding initiatives due to its origin in a specific local environment.

In his analysis of art-based approaches to peacebuilding in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Craig Zelizer (2003, p. 67) distinguishes different ways of how art can contribute to peacebuilding. Particularly relevant is his differentiation into the process of creating art on the one hand and the final artistic product or outcome on the other hand. A major part of the academic literature focuses on the former, that is how the process of generating art can support development towards peace.¹³ Here, the academic literature highlights especially two dimensions. Firstly, the process of creating art is described as a space for different individuals to come together to get acquainted with each other’s narratives (Albayrak, 2017, p. 323; Breed, 2006, p. 512; Cohen, 2015, p. 5; Mani, 2011b, pp. 555-556; Premaratna & Bleiker, 2010, p. 377). Secondly, the arts are portrayed as offering an opportunity to engage with the own experiences and emotions (Sandoval, 2017, p. 4; Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 224).

¹² Commonly, the literature in this field does not differentiate strictly between reconciliation and peacebuilding in general. For this reason, the two terms will be used rather synonymously in this chapter.

¹³ See for instance: Rama Mani (2011b) examining community theatre groups in Peru and Rwanda.

Compared to the process of the arts as a peacebuilding exercise, little work has been conducted on how art as a product of artistic activity can support peacebuilding and reconciliation. Premaratna and Bleiker (2016) see three aspects through which many artistic endeavours can advance local peacebuilding, nonetheless, the elements overlap to a considerable extent and the distinction between them is sometimes hard to make. Even though these three dimensions could possibly also apply for the process of the creation of art, the focus here is on the artistic outcome.

Firstly, the authors argue that the arts can provide new knowledge that has relevance for peacebuilding efforts. Following Premaratna and Bleiker, many conflict settings are characterised by a narrow discourse when it comes to peacebuilding. The everyday of conflict affected societies is seemingly formed around a certain understanding of the conflict dynamics and mundane interactions and language, thus, frequently reflect conflict attitudes. Consequently, the authors emphasise that such societies oftentimes hinder communication beyond conflict-fuelling perspectives. In their view, by offering “[...] an alternative to the type of verbal discourses that have come to constitute a conflict” (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 85), artistic engagements can break communication barriers and open up discourses, which otherwise would have been locked up for incorporating different angles. Moreover, Premaratna and Bleiker suggest that aesthetics offer insights into and means to deal with emotions of individuals, especially in the aftermath of traumatic events. For them, traditional peacebuilding approaches widely ignore the emotional dimension of conflict and reconciliation. Here, the authors argue, the arts potentially trigger feelings that go beyond mere reasoning, and through this create possibilities to experience and express emotional discomfort. This can possibly serve as a pre-condition for dealing with and transforming trauma. Shared with other people, this might evoke feelings of empathy for other individuals and can eventually have humanising effects. (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, pp. 85-86) Following Michael Shank and Lisa Schirch, art can also have a healing effect for victims of different forms of violence, both on an individual and collective level (Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 224). Furthermore, Dena Hawes emphasizes the arts’ capacities to enable dialogue across psychological or emotional barriers such as trauma as they can create a space for voicing the own feelings and mental states in an artistically modified space deviating from ‘reality’ as the individuals know it (Hawes, 2007, p. 19, 23).

Secondly, and this is closely linked to the debate surrounding local ownership in peace processes, Premaratna and Bleiker ascribe art the potential to give context-specific insights and to provide strategies addressing the distinguish local needs (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 83). In their opinion, aesthetics has a crucial role in communities and derives from as well as shapes the local environment (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 88). As Cohen writes, the arts are based on collective knowledge

stemming from its community. Cultural workers use this knowledge, which is filled with social meaning that was developed and cultivated throughout centuries through processes of passing on. (Cohen, 2005, p. 4) In this way, arts are part of the local meaning making process, develop according to the local needs at a certain time and combine habits and heritage with present-day requirements (Mani, 2011b, p. 550). Furthermore, this embeddedness of art in a social context gives it also an essential importance to provide legitimacy for all kind of peacebuilding activities (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 88). Therefore, artistic goods can provide context-specific and culturally sensitive insights into a social context, leading to appropriate approaches that suit the circumstances better than “[...] more pre-determined universal models [...]” (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 87). Moreover, as Umut Albayrak elaborates, the embeddedness and rooting in local social behaviour allows the arts to enable reconciliation. Albayrak argues that political boundaries do not necessarily match with cultural one’s, hence, cultural activities have the potential to challenge politically driven conflict narratives and to provide common ground between adversarial communities. The arts are part of social practices that are shared between or at least similar in different social contexts, therefore, they could invite to dialogue and exchange on a foundation other than the dominating conflict-based identities. (Albayrak, 2017, pp. 322-324)

Thirdly, Premaratna and Bleiker highlight the potential of art to increase the inclusiveness in peacebuilding by allowing marginalised individuals as well as mindsets to be expressed and heard. This is a crucial quality of art as the authors emphasise that present peacebuilding approaches rather suppress heterogeneity and silence certain views. (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 89) Premaratna and Bleiker view art as contradictory and uncertain, not offering one way of interpretation as other forms of communication often seem to be. For them, this is exactly the asset as this ambivalence of art permits what they call ‘multi-vocality’, a space where narratives of individuals and groups that are absent from the mainstream discourse gain attention. Moreover, art shows individual “[...] narratives as what they are: stories” (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 90). Art, therefore, does not only give a voice to silenced groups (Wood, 2015, p. 2) but can provoke intensive interaction with other people’s stories, understandings and experiences and enable reflection on the own version of reality. This can support what Cynthia Cohen describes as a crucial task of reconciliation, the development of “[...] more complex narratives and more nuanced understandings of identity” (Cohen, 2005, p. 10), which might lead to what Sara Cobb calls the appreciation of ‘narrative complexity’ (Cobb, 2013, p. 108). Cohen argues that by being confronted and listening to the other’s stories, former adversaries can be forced to revise their own narratives which creates a space in which the other side’s accounts and experiences as well as the meaning attached to them can be understood (Cohen, 2005, p. 15). For

her, the ability to listen decreases during the time of conflict, however, Cohen suggests that different types of art can rebuild this capacity (Cohen, 2005, p. 17). This potentially leads to the creation of more inclusive collective narratives and a reconstruction of the collective as well as individual narratives of the person who engages with art. This way, particularly due to the fact that this initiative stems from the collective communal experience, it might have the ability to influence thinking and beliefs on both an individual as well as group level. (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 91)

Following these three aspects of artistic activities as grassroots engagement in peace processes, Premaratna and Bleiker ascribe art the potential to foster the transformation of antagonistic narratives and to contribute to durable peacebuilding (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2010, p. 377). Furthermore, as already stated above, the arts are often far from being clear and straightforward. Aesthetics is frequently rather ambiguous and puzzling and leave a lot of space for interpretation. Even though this can be seen as a weakness in terms of achieving a certain goal, in the context of this thesis reconciliation, some authors argue, thus, that this is exactly a quality of arts. Again, the question of representation of reality is crucial here. Compared to other streams of communication, such as journalistic and media reporting or official statements by the political class, the arts do not necessarily claim to represent any kind of reality as closely as possible. Instead, art oftentimes searches for abstraction up to the point of unrecognizability or blur the line between known and unknown, ending up in sheer fiction.

Following Hawes, art can create an “imaginary environment” between artist and audience. In this fictional space, the audience can experience and take the perspectives of other individuals, also of other conflict parties. (Hawes, 2007, pp. 17-18) Shank and Schirch further elaborate that art could be described as being maybe even more effective than other means of communication. The authors explain that in many cases the recipients are compelled by the message if it is too direct and clear-cut as this can trigger feelings or patronisation. Instead, they argue, the indirect and sometimes even very vague way of art to convey a message can be a strength as it allows the recipient to come to the own conclusions and to make up the own mind. (Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 238) For Premaratna and Bleiker, the perception of experiencing and being part of a fictional space does not only create space for multi-vocality that can challenge existing beliefs and mindsets, it also bears the potential to bring some degrees of distance between the audience and the narratives presented. This distance possibly allows engagements with highly emotional and even traumatic experiences. (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2010, p. 383) In this sense, the arts arguably have the capability to function as a mediator for politicized and emotionally loaded issues through the creation of an imaginary and fictional space.

Moreover, the possibility for fictionality in art can create a space for visioning a different image of reality as well as the future. As Hawes argues, the arts, especially those that use storytelling and narratives, can change how an individual perceives and sees the world around it, and offers a variety of perspectives concerning the present, past and the future of the world and possibly affects how the individual interacts with other people. (Bleiker, 2009, p. 104; Hawes, 2007, p. 18, 20; Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 237) During conflicts, the number of available narratives can be limited as most of the narratives are centred around certain ones dominating a social context (Winslade, Monk, & Cotte, 1998) and deviating ones are silenced as they are frequently perceived as a threat to the ingroup. In this situation, art may provide and express different narratives and points of view. Linked with the question of antagonistic identities, William E. Connolly argues that it is the “[...] power of the articulation of alternative possibilities [...]”(Connolly, 1989, p. 333) to extend the limited spectrum of options, allowing to imagine a reality in which narrative differences are not perceived as a threat to the self but instead leading to an appreciation of the other.

Nonetheless, many scholars, albeit ascribing art an enormous potential to contribute to lasting peace in the aftermath of violent conflict, acknowledge that the arts are not inherently and automatically peaceful. Instead, it must be recognised that aesthetics has throughout history played a major role in supporting violence and conflict. The list of examples for the destructive and conflict-fuelling capacities of arts is long. For instance, Premaratna and Bleiker remind their readers of how the movies by Leni Riefenstahl allured to the ideolog of the Nazi regime¹⁴ (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 83). Umut Albayrak describes ways in which music can be used by the political elite to achieve the own, oftentimes rather unpeaceful goals (Albayrak, 2017).

As this analysis of literature indicates, a variety of scholars researches the nexus of the arts and peacebuilding in general and reconciliation in particular. Despite the un-peaceful potential of artistic endeavours, there is a broadly shared opinion that art can support other, more conventional peacebuilding activities, especially as art is described to have the capacity to address emotional and cognitive aspects in an individual. For some scholars, this is exactly one of the strengths of the arts. (García, 2014, p. 30; Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 85; Sandoval, 2017, p. 4; Shank & Schirch, 2008, p. 224; Wood, 2015, p. 2)

¹⁴ For an thought provoking analysis of the role of aesthetics during the German national socialism in relation to the political ideology, see: Peter Reichel (2006). *Der schöne Schein des Dritten Reiches. Gewalt und Faszination des deutschen Faschismus*. Ellert & Richter

Several scholars focus in their work on specific artistic activities and art forms and possible peacebuilding functions. There is, for instance, literature exploring the peacebuilding potential of graphic novels (Michel, 2013; 2015; Ong, 2016), music (Albayrak, 2017; Cohen, 2003; García, 2014; Sandoval, 2017) or performances (Cohen, 2005; Cohen, Varea, & Walker, 2011; Hawes, 2007) and theatre (Cohen, 2003; Edwards, 2016; Premaratna, 2018; Premaratna & Bleiker, 2010). A major focus hereby is on art as a tool to bring people from formerly adversarial sides together in the same physical location. However, there appears to be surprisingly little research investigating the reconciliatory and peacebuilding potential of literary endeavours. This observation surprises because literature, as Roland Bleiker puts it with reference to poetry, represents the “[...] most explicit engagement with the very essence of who we are and what we do: language” (Bleiker, 2009, p. 4). Moreover, literature, to come to the point, can turn its greatest weakness to a major strength: literature does not need direct contact between the originator of a story and the recipient to let them engage with each other. Instead, it presents a mediated contact between actors who otherwise might not get involved with each other. Literature can, thus, present the link between the individual and collective spheres. (McGonegal, 2009, p. 27) Especially this fact makes it a relevant subject to analyse its capacity to serve as a tool for reconciliation, as discussed next.

This thesis underlies a broad conception of literature. Hereby, this approach follows Mwikisa and Dikobe who define literature as including “[...] both the written as well as the oral and performance traditions” (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, p. 48). In this sense, the essence of literature can probably be described as being some kind of storytelling. Even physically bound acts such as performance art can keep up the quality of serving as a mediated contact as the presenter does not need to be the originator of a story. Moreover, literary products are not just mimic representation of a certain perceived reality but also relate to previous artistic engagement, an artistic code or convention in a specific context (Shapiro, 1989, p. 11), therefore, reach out to abstract levels such as the symbolic and the aesthetic (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, p. 47). For Mwikisa and Dikobe, thus, artistic storytelling presents a highly influential tool for a society to re-imagine prevailing structures and dynamics (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, p. 46) and to “[...] nurture a culture of peace” (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, p. 47). Following Premaratna and Bleiker in their classification of how art can contribute to peacebuilding, as presented in the previous section, several scholars ascribe literature similar capacities.

Firstly, Veronica Kitchen argues that literature does not merely present a space to escape from the world that surrounds an individual. Instead, or maybe even particularly because of this fact, encountering fictional stories can offer means to engage with the own, sometimes even traumatic, emotions, with the big questions of the personal life and the effect of a conflict on the daily life and

relationships. (Kitchen, 2018, p. 37) This view is supported by McEvoy-Levy, who describes how the Harry Potter books and the fandom around it provided the readers a space to explore the sensitive topic of the own and other's mental health issues, equip the audience with possibilities to deal with emotional aspects such as depression or grief (McEvoy-Levy, 2015, p. 214).

Secondly, Mwikisa and Dikobe highlight in their article the role that literature can play for peacebuilding as a source of local knowledge concerning meaning of the conflict for the local every day. Moreover, the authors argue that literature can provide insights into the people's understandings of the underlying causes of a conflict and the indigenous means to address it. (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, pp. 47-48) Moreover, literature can be expected to render power structures visible, which would otherwise be disregarded or even unseen. This is exemplified in Veronica Kitchen's study of the representation of veterans in popular romance novels. Her article demonstrates that security studies and related disciplines can gain extensive insights from even unexpected forms of literature into the mechanisms that reproduce and reinforce military masculinity and militarisation. (Kitchen, 2018, p. 48) This is in line with Cynthia Enloe who reminds us that power relations are manifested in all kinds of spheres, which, therefore, need to be explored and revealed (Enloe, 1996, p. 186)

Thirdly, literature is described as offering a space for multi-vocality, where unheard voices and different perspectives can be included. For Mwikisa and Dikobe, the mere existence of literature creates the possibility for discussion and dialogue, thus, serves as a platform to listen to various perspectives and narratives and to delve into different approaches (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, pp. 48-49). According to Cohen, poetry, as one form of literary engagement, can set free creativity and enable people to encounter their social reality while using their full imagination. For her, this allows the individual to re-imagine the world, the conflict and the other. (Cohen, 2005, p. 49). As Mwikisa and Dikobe write, literature, therefore, can support a process of developing possible responses to the status quo. Such alternatives, as they write, "[...] include[e] violent ones, [allowing to assess them] without actually going to war and killing people" (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, p. 55).

Moreover, the scholars have the view that literature can reveal the fluidity and contingency of identities in general and of specific conflict-related aspects of identities in particular and allows to transcend perceived boundaries of self and the other, towards, for instance, the recognition of a shared human identity (Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, p. 55). In accordance with that, Robyn Leslie describes the ambiguity of literature as a major strength that enables individuals to imagine alternative narratives about the self, the own group and the other. Researching about the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission and critically reading writings by some South African writers, Leslie concludes that the artistic engagement with society enables resistance towards dominating (state-)

narratives and to articulate a variety of possible identity aspects. For him, literature serves as a tool to re-imagine South Africa. (Leslie, 2013, pp. 172-173)

As McEvoy-Levy shows in her writing about the Harry Potter series, literary products can be “[...] operationalised in actual discourses and practices of (resistance to) war, and cultural and structural violence [...]” (McEvoy-Levy, 2015, p. 203). Following her, literary products, albeit possessing the possibility to reinforce and strengthen certain prevailing and conflict-supporting ideas concerning, for instance, security issues, have the capacity to challenge those views and to contribute to the transformation to a culture of peace (McEvoy-Levy, 2015, p. 203). In her article, McEvoy-Levy demonstrates how literature can have a disarming and de-militarising effect on the reader. Moreover, she shows that literature such as the Harry Potter series can inspire the readers and contribute to motivate them to become politically active. As she writes, there exist manifold examples of political activism in the sphere of youth culture that consciously and actively relates their actions to the experience of being a reader of these novels, creating a sense of identity and belonging that is linked to the books. (McEvoy-Levy, 2015, p. 206) Furthermore, McEvoy-Levy’s analysis of Harry Potter fan fiction leads her to conclude that the novel series influenced some readers view on war and the self-other dichotomy, “[...] creating a politics of peace that is accessible, appealing, and empowering to young people, and that is creating bridges and partnerships between generations” (McEvoy-Levy, 2015, p. 217).

What does the analysis of the exiting literature concerning the arts and peacebuilding nexus reveal in terms of the research interest of this thesis? Firstly, following the exploration of the literature, it can be concluded that a broad variety of scholars assigns art a major role in peacebuilding and reconciliation processes. This seemingly accounts for literature as well, even though there are fewer academic texts that examine literary contributions to peacebuilding. Apparently, the arts are described to bear the potential to support the transformation to a culture of peace. It might even be argued that the cultural sphere needs to be involved in peace processes if a wider social change is aimed to be achieved.

Secondly, the major share of the academic literature focusses on the production of art and the artistic process itself and the contribution this can have for advancements of peace processes. Consequently, there is relatively little work done on the impact of the artistic outcome itself and how this can increase the effect of peacebuilding efforts. However, analysing the existing literature in regard to this aspect, one can notice that scholars highlight the role of art to create insights and knowledge into social processes, such as power relations or local understandings of social dynamics.

Moreover, the academic discourse reveals that many scholars ascribe the arts in general and literature in particular the capability to shape individual perceptions and understandings of reality and, therefore, the potential to achieve cognitive transformations that possibly strengthens peace processes. Coming to a similar perception of the academic discourse, García states that “[a]rt is considered a tool that allows people to find each other’s humanity, release and share emotions, heal personal and/or collective trauma, communicate their version of the truth, appreciate the narrative of the other, deal with identity issues, and, in general, transform relationships and bring people together” (García, 2014, p. 30). Following her, “[...] there is an overrated optimistic view of the effect of art in conflict transformation scenarios”. (p. 31) It becomes clear that many writers have a rather deterministic understanding of art which essentialises it, claiming its positive nature. Even though it belongs to the standard repertoire of almost every scientific paper on this topic to acknowledge the potential of artistic endeavours to contribute to violence, social division and repression, especially with reference to the entangled condition of the artistic sphere serving the political purpose under the Nazi regime, the ambiguity of art to potentially contribute to both peace and un-peacefulness is rarely taken very seriously. For this reason, even though this thesis focuses on the peaceful potential of artistic activity, it aims not to essentialise art as inherently ‘good’ and nonviolent.

Based on the analysis of the academic literature, the arts are described in the academic discipline to have the capability to influence the own identity, allow space for co-existence of differing or even conflicting narratives and to foster empathy between (former) adversaries. Despite the far-reaching support of these statements by a variety of scholars, little evidence and supporting theories are commonly presented to validate these hypotheses (García, 2014, p. 31). One outstanding exception is McEvoy-Levy’s analysis of youth activism shaped by the Harry Potter series. Besides this case, there seems to be a lack of concrete ideas of how the link between art and peaceful transformation can look like. The analysis of the discourse surrounding the arts and peacebuilding nexus suggest that there is a need to further explore the capabilities of artistic products to contribute to the changes on the individual cognitive level to support the transformation to a culture of peace on a larger scale. This view is supported by McEvoy-Levy who concludes from her analysis of popular cultural products that research is required to deepen the understanding of “[...] what resources popular culture provides for disarming and resisting militarisation and injustice, how they are co-opted and immobilised, and, then, reclaimed, and how to read them for peace, even when they are co-opted by other discourses and exercises of power” (McEvoy-Levy, 2015, p. 217). This call is in accordance with the underlying interest of this thesis to examine possible cognitive effects that a consumer of an artistic product might experience.

4. How the Soldier Repairs the Gramophone

At 14.22 P.M. they radioed a cease-fire through to the Bosnian Territorial Defense trenches. The third this month. At 14.28 PM the ball rose from the Serbian trench on the northern outskirts of the forest and flew through the air, tracing a high arc, toward the clearing that separated the opposing positions by about six hundred and fifty feet. The ball bounced twice and rolled in the direction of the two spruce trees, now shot to pieces, that had served as goalposts before, when hostilities were suspended. [...] General Mikado's throat flushed red with fury, and when the general, who was in fact a lieutenant, had spent most of his life laying tiles, and was married with four daughters whose first names all began "Ma," took aim to hit Gavro on the back of the head for the third time that day, the whistling man's hand seized the tiler's wrist. The csárdás swung into Spanish dance music, don't you ever do that again, said Gavro's eyes, and the flamenco sang the refrain. Gavro whistled, Mickey Mouse marched on, and Marko knocked his own goalie over and took the pistol away from him. (Stanišić, 2009, pp. 206-221)

As pointed out in the previous chapter, many scholars ascribe both the arts in general and literature in particular a high potential to contribute on a cognitive level to peaceful change. This accounts for both the process of producing a literary product and the moment of consuming or experiencing this artistic outcome. However, the academic debate seems to lack concrete ideas of what kind of cognitive processes take place in an individual that could foster reconciliatory attitudes. For this reason, this chapter presents theoretical evidence¹⁵ from Social Psychology that propose certain

¹⁵ The question certainly occurs of how much 'evidence' concerning social dynamics any scientific discipline can provide. Far-reaching limitations of the dominating ontology and epistemology of Social Psychology when engaging with the social are presented throughout this chapter. Therefore, one might need to be cautious with the term 'evidence', even though scholars aim to test their theoretical argument under more or less authentic conditions. However, inspired by the approach taken by Moore and Shepherd (2010, p. 307) when encountering mainstream International Relations, I aim to speak to and to criticise the other discipline, here Social Psychology, instead of challenging its very foundations. This, as More and Shepherd call it, 'Trojan Horse' could enable a constructive dialogue that fosters the "[...] great potential indeed for encouraging further strategies that problematise the definitional boundaries of the discipline" (p. 307) and its underlying assumptions.

cognitive procedures that commonly occur within an individual that is embedded in a (post-)conflict setting. To do so, this chapter uses the cognitive elements of reconciliation, presented in chapter 2.2, and links them with these theories from Social Psychology. Thereby, this thesis suggests possible cognitive processes that could also run on an individual's psychological level when confronted with an artistic product. The theoretical elaboration will be illustrated with a literary sample, an excerpt from Saša Stanišić's debut, the novel *How the Soldier Repairs the Gramophone*.

Next, the exemplary piece of literature, that was presented in the beginning of the chapter will be introduced, and the social context of the book will be elaborated. Following, the chapter suggests based on social-psychological theories possible ways of how the reading experience of the novel can contribute to narrative changes that support the mutual acknowledgement of the other's humanity (4.1), broaden the narratives of the past (4.2) and contribute to the acknowledgement of responsibility for personal misdeeds or the ones conducted by the own group (4.3). The guiding question for this chapter is: How can those concepts and theories extend our understanding concerning the potential of literature to contribute to reconciliation?

The novel *How the Soldier Repairs the Gramophone* by the Bosnian-German Author Saša Stanišić was first published in 2006 in German. The book, written from the perspective of the growing-up, young first-person narrator, is set in the time before, during and after the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH). The storyline is mainly based in the Eastern-Bosnian city of Višegrad which is located some eight kilometres from the Serbian border and today part of Republika Srpska, one of the two political entities of the country BiH. The narrator describes the own experiences as a child and young adolescent in the disintegrating Yugoslavia and his eventual escape with his family from Višegrad to Germany. The novel certainly contains autobiographic elements and the figures are based on the author's family members, however, Stanišić describes his writings as some sort of reality as he sees and imagines it (Stanišić, 2019, p. 19 f.). The novel has an anecdotal character and the narrator presents in 27 chapters more or less connected occurrences which construe a rather congruent picture of the narrator's family life as well as the life in the city before and during the war.

The conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina is embedded in the larger context of the secessionist wars in then Yugoslavia. Slovenia and Croatia were the first entities to leave the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and to declare independence in 1991, followed by the so-called 10-days-war between the Yugoslav army and Slovenian forces. In 1992, fighting erupted also in BiH, whose independence was recognized by the European Union in April that year. (Calic, 2013, pp. 121-130) The war in BiH lasted until 1995 and was ended by the Dayton Peace Agreement that established a power-sharing system for the federation. According to the International Commission on Missing People (ICMP),

more than 100.000 people lost their lives due to military campaigns and acts of ethnic cleansing (Bosnia and Herzegovina, n.d.). The most prominent events of that conflict are the almost four years lasting siege of the city of Sarajevo and the fall of Srebrenica in 1995. The ICMP reports that around 8000 individuals went missing during the latter event (Over 7000 Srebrenica Victims, 2012) (for timelines of the conflict see: Balkans war, 2016; Bosnia-Herzegovina profile, 2018; Chronology, 2008). One crucial factor shaping the conflict in BiH was the composition of the population, including Christian Orthodox Serbs, Catholic Croatians and Muslim Bosniaks¹⁶. The Croatian and Serbian populations in BiH were usually connected and supported by their respective groups in Serbia and Croatia. Ethnic cleansing campaigns occurred repeatedly in the Yugoslav wars, dividing the conflict parties even further (Bar-Tal & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013, p. 130). In many regions of then Yugoslavia in general and of BiH in particular, the population composition changed dramatically during the war and Calic shows in her detailed research that all three parties were involved to different degrees in ethnic cleansing campaigns but also experienced this atrocity themselves (Calic, 2013, p. 116 f.).

Until today, the country suffers from the consequences of the war and is strongly divided. The political system and constitution are in need of a reformation. However, the political elites fear a loss of control and do not make the necessary adjustments. Nationalistic forces are becoming stronger, especially in the Serbian dominated Republika Srpska. Prior to the last elections in 2018, the country was just before a constitutional crisis. Observers state that the country needs a new constitution to overcome the structural challenges. The constitution was a direct result from the Dayton Peace Accords and stipulated that the country has a power sharing mechanism that includes three presidents, one from each ethnic group, and a complex system of political bodies. Even though the constitution was created as a tool for a transitional period, it is still in place and hardly subject to change in the near future – too deep are the societal divisions. The international community is still present in BiH through, for example, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague had a mandate to resolve cases of mass atrocities until 2017. (read among others: Brezar, 2019; Ghitis, 2018; Ingrao, 2009; Sito-Sucic, 2018; Tamkin, 2018)

Different narratives in the former Yugoslavian countries as well as within BiH prevail in regard to the roots of the conflict, atrocities committed during the war and how to deal with each other in the

¹⁶ According to Calic (2013, p. 122), the population composition in BiH prior to the war was: 43.7% Bosniaks, 31.2% Serbians, 17.3% Croats, 5.5% Yugoslavs.

future.¹⁷ Especially past suffering of the own group caused by the other sides play a major role in these narratives. (Ingrao, 2009, p. 948)

It must be noted that the present novel is not explicitly written as a contribution to a reconciliatory process but a purely artistic endeavour within a specific conflict setting, based on the influences and experiences of the author. Even though Stanišić' family background challenges a clear-cut classification in one of the social groups that characterise the conflict in BiH, his father is from Serbian descend and his mother has Bosniak roots (Stanišić, 2019, p. 13 f.), he cannot be but subjective and does not aim to be impartial. Consequently, his book underlies a tenor of Serbian aggression and responsibility for the outbreak of the war in the first place. Nonetheless, far-reaching parts of the story might provide material for a narrative change on the reader's side and, therefore, bear the potential to contribute to reconciliatory processes.

To be clear about the scope and the aim of this thesis must be noted that I am not advocating that reading this or any other literary source is the solution for solving ongoing (violent) conflicts or the severe hostile relationships in their aftermath. This thesis has an interpretative-explorative character. Therefore, it does not aim to show effects but rather mechanisms and discursive stimuli that can be received on a cognitive level. Thus, the goal is to explore on a theoretical basis the potential of literary art to, inspired by Wenzel, Mummendey and Walz (2010), "[...] facilitate psychological processes that are considered beneficial for positive intergroup relations" (p. 332).

The following three sections use social-psychological theories to propose cognitive processes triggered by the beforehand presented text excerpt that could facilitate reconciliatory processes. However, as it becomes clear during the chapter, the proposed cognitive mechanisms overlap to a huge extent. For this reason, the differentiation is not always straightforward. However, to engage with different aspects of reconciliation, the distinction proves helpful, though many of the cognitive procedures are intertwined. The first subchapter deals with the mutual acknowledgement of the other's humanity.

¹⁷ For elaborations on the different narratives see: Ingrao, C. (2009). Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies: The Scholars' Initiative. *The American Historical Review*, 114(4), 947–962 as well as Bar-Tal, D., & Čehajić-Clancy, S. (2013). From Collective Victimhood to Social Reconciliation: Outlining a Conceptual Framework. In D. Spini, G. Elcheroth, & D. Corkalo Biruski (Eds.), *War, Community, and Social Change* (Vol. 130, pp. 125–136). New York, NY: Springer New York.

4.1 Mutual acknowledgement of the other's humanity

As already elaborated in section 2.3, dehumanisation is a highly common feature of violent conflict which is why Herbert Kelman describes the mutual acknowledgment of the other's humanity as prerequisite for acknowledging the other's narratives as rightful (Kelman, 2008, p. 27). In the context of this thesis, the question is how literary texts such as the excerpt above bear the potential to contribute to cognitive processes that facilitate the humanisation of the other. Before possible paths to (re-)humanisation can be proposed, the psychological foundation of dehumanisation needs to be elaborated. Much work on dehumanisation has been done in research on prejudices and intergroup biases.

4.1.1 The cognitive roots of dehumanisation

In Social Psychology, dehumanisation is commonly seen as a feature that follows social identification and categorisation processes. Following Social Identity Theory (SIT), individuals strive to maintain or improve their self-esteem. Moreover, a person's identity consists of the personal as well as the social identity. While the personal identity side stems from personal achievements and characteristics, the social identity gains its value from the membership in various social groups. The categorisation in groups, as already mentioned earlier, is seen as an unavoidable and necessary cognitive tool to reduce the complexity of the world. Through comparisons with other groups, the belonging to certain social entities is linked to the attribution of positive or negative value and, therefore, have an impact on the individual's self-concept and self-esteem. (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, p. 40; J. C. Turner, 1975; J. C. Turner & Reynolds, 2012) This seeking for positive social identity through processes of comparisons has far-reaching consequences. Tajfel and his colleagues have been early to discover that the mere creation of a sense of belonging to a group is sufficient to lead to ingroup favouritism, depending on the importance for the own identity also to the devaluation of the outgroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, p. 34, 38; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971, p. 172). Moreover, the categorisation in ingroup and outgroup leads to biases, for instance, the ingroup is perceived as more heterogenic whereas the outgroup is seen as rather homogenic (Čehajić-Clancy, Goldenberg, Gross, & Halperin, 2016, p. 77; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, p. 36). Consequently, individuals tend to ascribe wrongdoing of single outgroup members to the group as a whole while seeing it as exceptional in the case of the own group. However, studies show that good deeds of outgroup members are more likely not to be generalised to the whole group whilst this seems to happen for the ingroup. (Brown, 2000, p. 750 f.; Tajfel, 1982, p. 13, 21) This bias leads to a cognitive process of seeing the outgroup members as "[...]

‘undifferentiated items in a unified social category’ [...] and [t]he endpoint of this process is the ‘depersonalization’ and ‘dehumanization’ of the outgroup” (Tajfel, 1982, p. 21). Consequences of this bias can be the tendency to ascribe the outgroup more negative attributes such as immorality and, unfairness and aggressive behaviour, while the ingroup is seen as more peaceful (Maoz, 2004, p. 230).

The assumptions of the SIT are widely accepted in Social Psychology, however, especially scholars from outside the discipline – frequently having a post-structuralist background - while acknowledging the usefulness of the framework, criticise the theory for its ontological positioning concerning the social. Seemingly, Social Psychology has a rather ambiguous understanding of identities. On the one hand, identities are claimed to be rather contingent and the boundaries to be fluid. This is particularly obvious when the role of the salience of group identities is emphasised, that is group member’s awareness of group belongings and the consequent evaluation of their importance for them within a certain context and at a specific time. On the other hand, groups and categories are seemingly considered to exist a priori and “[...] reside in individuals and are always latently present, although they are not continuously activated” (van de Mierkoop, 2015, p. 409). The assumption that groups and categories exist pre-discursively is disputed from outside as well as inside the discipline. Van Dijk argues that research in Social Psychology lacks an interest in discursive as well as linguistic components of the construction of social categories as well as identities, leading to “[...] reductionist tendencies” (Dijk, 2009, p. 30). A consequence of the reductionism is a, by default, opposition of ingroup and outgroup, which, as Coupland (2010, p. 256) elaborates, is seemingly unreconcilable with the post-structuralist premise of never completed and fluid identities. Moreover, this reductionism renders the political dimension of the act of constructing in- and outgroup invisible.

The limited consideration of discursive practices in Social Psychology is also contested within the discipline (Dijk, 2009, p. 30, 71). As a reaction to this blindness of the discipline for discourse and interaction, scholars such as Wetherell and Potter developed a line of research called Discursive Psychology (DP). They explore “[...] how psychological notions (such as attitudes, identities and accountabilities) are made relevant and become consequential in social interaction” (Wiggins & Potter, 2017, p. 93). DP promotes an alternative methodology and established qualitative discourse research in Social Psychology (p. 94).

The discursive dimensions of social categorisations and identities, therefore, have to be taken into consideration for the remainder of this thesis. Despite the criticism of Social Psychology and particularly of SIT, by taking the discursive aspects of identity construction seriously, this thesis critically investigates in which ways the theorising of SIT researchers and other scholars in the field

of Social Psychology can enhance the existing knowledge in Peace Research concerning the art and peacebuilding nexus. Next, the cognitive roots of dehumanisation are explored. Building on the theoretical foundations especially of the SIT, vast research on prejudices and intergroup bias deal with the phenomenon of dehumanisation.

Haslam defines dehumanisation as the “[...] denial of full humanness to others [...]”, regularly followed by “[...] cruelty and suffering [...]” (Haslam, 2006, p. 252). The important questions arise what characterises a human being and which of these characteristics are denied when dehumanisation takes place. For instance, Herbert Kelman states that dehumanisation implies the denial of a person’s identity and to neglect his or her independence and distinctiveness from others (Kelman, 1973, p. 48). The developers of the ‘Infra-Humanisation Theory’ (IHT), however, define humanness through the distinction from animals. Following this theoretical concept, humans are distinguished from animals through their capability to feel so-called ‘secondary emotions’. In contrast to ‘primary emotions’ such as joy, anger or fear which can also be experienced by animals, ‘secondary emotions’ such as affection, remorse and hate are assumed to be felt only by human beings, thus, belonging to the essence of humanness. Based on a variety of studies¹⁸, IHT claims that individuals tend to ascribe or associate more secondary emotions to the ingroup than to the outgroup and more primary emotions to the outgroup than to the ingroup. This tendency to associate fewer secondary emotions to the outgroup is seen by the authors as a way to deny full humanness to the others. (Demoulin et al., 2009; Haslam, 2006; Leyens et al., 2000; Paladino & Vaes, 2010) This bias leading to infra-humanisation, therefore, is in line with the claims made by SIT that individuals have a tendency to favour the ingroup

¹⁸ Most of the social-psychological concepts were developed under laboratory conditions under a quantitative research design, within a “social vacuum” (van de Mierkoop, 2015, p. 409). Social Psychology usually underlies a positivist understanding of science (Farr, 1991). But the question arises whether psychological factors such as ingroup definition, outgroup perception and the openness to encounter the other side’s narratives can actually be investigated and measured. In addition to that, such studies frequently test on other moderating variables that could be the actual causes for the determined effects. However, the interpretation of data is always dependent on the different options that a researcher takes into considerations (van de Mierkoop, 2015, p. 410). Thus, the inclusion of possible moderating factors into an analysis will hardly ever include all imaginable aspects, hence, the actual causalities and correlations presented in such studies have to be taken with a grain of salt. Furthermore, not only but especially disciplines that are highly based on quantitative methods such as Social Psychology face the complication of the so-called file drawer problem. Studies that are not confirming existing studies and their interpretations sometimes do not get published, hence, doubts about the validity of the claimed links do not get the attention that they should get. A critical debate about the validity of claims gets stopped before it can actually start.

over the outgroup, thus, to present it in a more positive way (Demoulin et al., 2005, p. 417 f.). This can have substantial consequences on intra-group behaviour, as the authors conclude from that discovery that “[a]lmost by definition, if a group is infra-humanized, it will be discriminated against more strongly than a humanized one” (Pereira, Vala, & Leyens, 2009, p. 336).

Nick Haslam states that Infra-Humanisation Theory is a highly relevant form of dehumanisation as it does not necessarily require the equation of the other with animals. Moreover, it can be found in contexts where violent intra-group behaviour does not take place. Therefore, it allows to expand the scope of dehumanisation processes beyond the ‘traditional’ forms that can be experienced in violent conflicts and their aftermaths. (Haslam, 2006) However, following Haslam and his colleagues (2009), infra-humanisation is based on a rather debatable set of premises concerning the essence of humanness and, thus, suggest a more diverse understanding of humanness and dehumanisation. Instead of putting the distinction between and consequent attribution of primary and secondary emotions in the centre of their analysis, Haslam et al. suggest two forms of dehumanisation: a) the animalistic dehumanisation as the denial of human uniqueness; b) mechanistic dehumanisation as the denial of human nature. According to the authors, human uniqueness includes attributes such as moral sensibility and rationality, whereas the human nature is based on characteristics like emotionality and warmth. The IHT is rather closely linked to the animalistic dehumanisation. (Demoulin et al., 2009, p. 5) Testing their assumptions about the human uniqueness and human nature dichotomy, Haslam and his colleagues (2009) conclude that the participants in their experiments associate human nature characteristics more closely with the ingroup than with the outgroup. In contrary to IHT, the outgroup was associated more closely with uniquely human traits. Consequently, Haslam et al. emphasise that “[...] the implicit denial of human nature is a general phenomenon, not limited to specific social groups or specific intergroup domains” (Haslam et al., 2009, p. 77). Hence, different forms of dehumanisation effects can occur in a variety of social settings and do not necessarily need to be linked to violent conflict or its aftermath. However, as already mentioned earlier, Albert Bandura identifies dehumanisation as one mechanism for moral disengagement that can facilitate and justify actions that cause harm to others (Bandura et al., 1996, p. 366; Morton & Postmes, 2011a, p. 133).

Nevertheless, these theories and studies show that – through social categorisation and identification processes – individuals are prone to engage in ingroup-favouritism and in many cases even to outgroup derogation, which can become visible, among others, in more or less obvious forms of dehumanisation. Consequently, it needs to be explored in which ways the negative evaluation of the other and in some cases cruel consequences can be reduced. Several scholars suggested different

approaches through which the consequences of the ingroup biases are supposed to be reduced. Some of those theories are presented in the following sections.

4.1.2 Revisiting the Contact Hypothesis: the Common Ingroup Identity Model

Frequently, researchers and laypersons alike ascribe intergroup contact a tremendous potential to contribute to more peaceful relationships between antagonistic parties (Halperin et al., 2012, p. 1192) because individuals would generalise from the own (positive) contact with outgroup members to the outgroup as a whole (Miller, 2002, p. 388)¹⁹. As one example, Ifat Maoz (2011) analyses the different planned contact situations between Israelis and Palestinians, showing that contact plays a major role in the international toolbox for dealing with the conflict. Famous is Gordon Allport's so-called Contact Hypothesis, proposing certain optimal conditions under which contact between opposing groups and their members can have positive impact on their relationship, as summarised by Pettigrew: "equal group status within the situation; common goals; intergroup cooperation; and the support of authorities, law, or custom." (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 66; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, p. 752) Even though the scope of the Contact Hypothesis is highly debated within research²⁰, Samuel L. Gaertner and John F. Dovidio, starting with Allport's conditions for positive intergroup contact, were interested in the psychological mechanisms that make these conditions so important in the first place. For them, certain cognitive mechanisms based on the ingroup bias also serve as a prerequisite under which Allport's conditions have an effect (Gaertner, Dovidio, & Bachman, 1996, p. 273 f.).

Gaertner and Dovidio suggest a framework called 'Common Ingroup Identity Model' (CIIM). The goal of the research surrounding CIIM is to "[...] chang[e] these more negative, hostile intergroup attitudes [...]" and to develop "[...] a strategy that primes the acceptance of more positive feelings, beliefs, and behaviors toward outgroup members [...]" (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993, p. 3). Building on Social Identity Theory, the authors propose to restructure existing group classifications in a way that decreases existing lines of conflict and reduces the consequences of the ingroup bias. The scholars start from the premise that if individuals who initially belonged to different social groups are now encouraged to perceive themselves as members of the same group,

¹⁹ However, this assumption is highly debated. An analysis of the generalisation assumption can be found in Miller, N. (2002). Personalization and the promise of contact theory. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(2), 387–410.

²⁰ See for instance Manevska, K., Achterberg, P., & Houtman, D. (2018). Why there is less supportive evidence for contact theory than they say there is: A quantitative cultural–sociological critique. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 6(2), 296–321. Palgrave Macmillan UK. or

the relationship between the group members becomes more positive as a result of the ingroup bias in support of the new social category. (Gaertner et al., 1993, p. 5 f.) Moreover, the authors propose that this more positive perception of outgroup members due to the new shared ingroup can enable interaction and communication between the individuals. Therefore, Gaertner et al. do not suggest that the effect of the ingroup bias leads to a differentiated image of the other but this can be the result of the interaction established with support of the overlapping ingroup favouritism. (Gaertner et al., 1993, p. 6) Connected with Allport's conditions for positive intergroup contact, the researchers interpret those conditions as the creation of a shared ingroup (Gaertner et al., 1996, p. 274). As Gaertner and Dovidio point out (2012, p. 4), the recategorization of group identities with the aim to achieve a superordinate common ingroup is frequently considered as tools to push for reconciliation. Here one can think off initiatives focusing on youth, women or certain professions across the boundaries of group identities to foster cooperation between individuals. Moreover, Capozza et al. present empirical evidence²¹ that a common ingroup categorisation seems to act as a strong force to facilitate the humanisation of the outgroup (Capozza et al., 2013, p. 537).

Even though the general humanising effects of the common ingroup model are widely acknowledged in the academic debate, it is contested in which contexts the CIIM can have such positive effects and in which situations it may even have a contrary impact. A few critiques and limitations of the concept are, therefore, presented.

Gaertner et al. acknowledge already in their early works that it is a difficult task to effectively establish a common in group identity outside of laboratory environments. This seems to be even more ambitious in a context where groups have a longstanding antagonistic past. (Gaertner et al., 1993, p. 20) Moreover, it is argued that the introduction of a superordinate ingroup can be perceived by an individual as a threat to the own group identity and the own distinctiveness from the other. This, in turn, can lead to resistance towards the common ingroup and even weaken the intergroup relationship. (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2010, p. 300 f.; Riek, Mania, Gaertner, McDonald, & Lamoreaux, 2010, p. 419) Nevertheless, the developers of the CIIM maintain that a shared ingroup identity does

²¹ The scholars tested whether the presentation of decreased salience of group boundaries and the highlighting of a common identity leads to the association of more uniquely human attributes with the other than in the situation without intervention. The experiments were conducted in the context of particular intergroup relations, the relations between Italians and immigrants as well as the relations between Northern and Southern Italians. (Capozza, Trifiletti, Vezzali, & Favara, 2013, p. 530)

not necessarily require that the subgroups have to abandon their previous group categorisations completely (Gaertner et al., 1993, p. 20; Gaertner & Dovidio, 2012, p. 2).

As a response to this, the CIIM incorporated a dual identity²² approach. This concept refers to the simultaneous activation of common ingroup and the initial subgroup identities (Dovidio et al., 2010, p. 301). Following Dovidio, Gaertner and Saguy, there is empirically supported reasoning²³ that both a common ingroup identity as well as a dual identity can have positive impact on intergroup relationships. However, the authors highlight that both representations of group belongings have different effects depending whether they are presented to either majority or minority groups, here defined not only in terms of the number of individuals but also in regard to power. (Dovidio et al., 2010, p. 303) It is suggested that majority group members receive subordinate identities rather as a threat, which is why they are more likely to accept the introduction of a common identity. Simultaneously, minority groups tend to be threatened by superordinate identity categorisation and, therefore, are more open towards the insertion of dual identities. (Glasford & Dovidio, 2011, p. 1021; Hopkins, 2011, p. 253)

When speaking of activating a superordinate ingroup identity, one might think of the ultimate uniting category, that is humanity, as one such comprehensive ingroup. However, studies suggest mixed results for the intergroup relationship if humanity as a common ingroup is highlighted. While some scholars suggest that making the common humanity of the perpetrator salient increases the willingness of the victim group to forgive the perpetrators (Wohl & Branscombe, 2005), other researchers showed that members of the perpetrator group feel a sense of justification for their misdeeds when the common humanity is activated as a superordinate ingroup and, therefore, do not gain a more positive image of the outgroup (Greenaway & Louis, 2010; Greenaway, Louis, & Wohl, 2011; Morton & Postmes, 2011b; 2011a). Thus, showing the shared humanity of in- and outgroup members can have negative effects on the intergroup relations, depending on the context and subjects.

²² The dual identity approach showcases the critiques of the ontological assumptions of Social Psychology presented in chapter 4.1.1. While acknowledging a certain degree of fluidity of social categorisations and groups, the dual identity approach reveals the premise of a priori and pre-discursively existing identity categories.

²³ Dovidio et al. base their statement on a study conducted by Gonzáles and Brown (2003) for which they invited 114 undergraduate students to participate in an experiment consisting of three phases. The researchers used different strategies to make various group perceptions salient (one-group, two-groups, separate-individuals, and dual-identity). After a situation of contact under a specific situation of salience, their attitudes towards the other were measured through a questionnaire and symbolic reward allocations.

After introducing some psychological mechanisms that can lead to dehumanisation and offering a few concepts for the rehumanisation of the outgroup, the next section suggests possible ways in which literature can support on a cognitive level a process of rehumanisation of the other.

4.1.3 Rehumanisation through literature

Do the arts have the capacities to contribute to the rehumanisation of the other in the aftermath of a violent conflict? Many scholars would say so. For instance, after reviewing literature in peace research on art and reconciliation, García comes to the conclusion that many scholars ascribe art the capability to enable individuals “[...] to find each other’s humanity [...]” (García, 2014, p. 30) and consequently convert their relationships. This view is supported among others by Mani (2011b, p. 551), Hawes (2007, p. 18), or Wood (2015, p. 2). What all these scholars share is the assumption that art has the possibility to show individual stories and to give a face to the otherwise unknown other. These and further scholarly perspectives on the introductory question will be discussed in this section. To illustrate this theoretical and hypothetical elaboration, one can ask how the excerpt from the novel by Saša Stanišić can contribute to a rehumanisation of the other. It obviously demands a certain interpretation and perception of the content, as it is not particularly written to achieve this specific outcome. Obviously, it is hardly unlikely that two individuals read, interpret and perceive the same literary source in the exact same way. The perception of such information is always context specific and highly subjective. Therefore, the same text can cause different effects on different individuals. Two frequently considered moderators of such an effect concern the different degrees of ingroup identification or the type of the conflict itself (Noor et al., 2012, p. 366). Such and other factors influence not only the way a person perceives such literary narratives but also has an impact on the readiness to encounter them in the first place.²⁴

²⁴ Moreover, the studies used in chapter 4 of the thesis are overall lacking an intersectional perspective, yet, they claim generalisable effects across different identity aspects. However, the perception of another person’s individual narratives might be highly dependent on the own intersectionally shaped positionality. One needs to acknowledge that the presented text fragment from Stanišić’ novel presents a scenario highly characterised by war-driven masculinity. For instance, the moral standards that Dino Safirović alias Dino Zoff demands from General Mikado are based on heroism and male proud, as expressed it in: “And if we turn the game around, and you’re still man enough, then no one here gets executed.” (Stanišić, 2009, p. 216) Acknowledging the gendered tone of the text excerpt, one needs to ask whether this affects how different individuals experience the encounter with such a narrative, depending on their own gendered positionality.

Moreover, it has to be acknowledged that the novel is not only written from a certain perspective but also the prospective readership is rather limited. It was originally written for the German literature market, making it rather unlikely that it can possibly reach anyone outside this environment. Also, the interpretation of events and practices depicted as well as the language in which the novel was published rely on the condition that they are shared and understood by the potential reader. These limitations make the generalisation of cognitive effects that an individual could have after reading this book even more problematic. However, for this thesis, the novel serves merely as an illustration for the theoretical elaboration which, in turn, need context specific verification, taking different cultural practices and understandings into considerations.

For these undeniable reasons, this chapter does not want to suggest a straightforward interdependency between reading Stanišić' novel and a universal perception as well as procession of the information. The thesis does not offer a psychological analysis. Instead, this chapter has an interpretative-explorative character and argues based on experimentally tested psychological concepts for thinkable effects of the consumption of a specific piece of literature. Therefore, an understanding of the text is offered, which will be interpreted in the light of the previously discussed social-psychological concepts.

Premaratna and Bleiker write that art can offer a more personal and more comprehensive form of presentation of the outgroup, in contrast to media or political communication (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 106). In this sense, the excerpt introductory to this chapter provides a view on the conflict at stake that is highly unlikely to be found in official reporting. Though fictional, this literary piece equips the reader with a more nuanced image of the participants in the conflict. The text shows the cruelty and suffering of a violent conflict not only, as Mani puts it, in terms of a statistic of victims or discusses the conflict merely on a political level. It gives individuals on different sides of the dividing lines a name and a face and, thus, "[...] renders palpable the anguish of unknown victims and transforms them from overwhelming faceless numbers to individual humans deserving empathy" (Mani, 2011b, p. 552). An outstanding example for this is the character Milan Jevrić, called Mickey Mouse. He is described as a young adult of imposing stature who went to fight for the Serbs not because of ideological conviction but to leave his desperate and unpromising life as well as his violent father in the country behind. (Stanišić, 2009, p. 210) His counterpart on the Bosniak side is Dino Safirović, nicknamed Dino Zoff, an alcoholic school dropout who joined the forces as he hoped to fight his alcohol addiction at the front (Stanišić, 2009, p. 216). These are just a few examples of rather detailed descriptions of fighters, personalising the war situation and contributing to a reduction of anonymity on both sides of the conflict line.

Moreover, the narrator does not only present the characters as morally neutral. Instead, some of them are assigned with moral qualities. This particularly accounts for some of the Serbian ‘players’. At some point, they speak out against their commander, General Mikado, and his acts of brutality and arbitrariness. They insist on the compliance of certain rules and fairness, even though they are navigating in system defined by war and violence. Starting with Mickey Mouse and a Serbian striker named Marko, the situation reaches the scope of a large-scale refusal to obey the orders of their commander and eventually almost the whole Serbian squad stops to follow their leader. (Stanišić, 2009, p. 221) Consequently, the reader can see them in a different light and develop a more differentiated image of the enemy. Using the terminology of the Social Identity Theory, the literary sample can render the boundaries between ingroup and outgroup invisible by providing points of identification between ingroup and outgroup members. By showing individual stories, the generalised image of the outgroup member can be reconstructed in more nuanced terms. This can possibly lead to a broadening of the dominating definition of the ingroup.

In the specific case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, one little detail in the novel is highly relevant. Introducing the shared past between the Bosniak Kiko and his Serbian friend Mickey Mouse (Stanišić, 2009, p. 209), the narrator refers to the common phenomenon in the multinational Yugoslavia that former neighbours and friends ended up being ‘on different sides’ of the conflict lines. The excerpt, therefore, serves as a reminder of this shared past between the conflict parties. This shared past further complicates a clear-cut division between ingroup and outgroup and allows thinking the commonalities between those groups, which could in turn make imagining a shared ingroup more likely. In a similar vein, the Bosniak fighter called Meho presents another example of the difficult differentiation of group classifications in the aftermath of the collapse of the Yugoslavian state. Even though he is fighting for the Muslim population, he is a passionate supporter of the football team Red Star Belgrade, which celebrated some major success shortly before the breakout of the first fighting in Yugoslavia. Despite the fact that Belgrade represents the Serbian enemy, he continues to be a Red Star enthusiast who comes to the conclusions: “I don’t mind you being Serbian either. Just as long as you don’t shoot me or sleep with my wife, who cares?” (Stanišić, 2009, p. 214)

Furthermore, this detailed description of a war-situation, shows that violent conflict always produces victims in all parties involved. The excerpt clearly shows traumatising encounters for all fighters, leaving most likely a deep mark in the individuals’ psyches. The novel highlights that war is a cruel activity that cannot but affect everyone who has to experience it. The best example for this is, again, Meho. After him shooting a ball into a forest that is mine-infested, he has the responsibility to bring the ball back. In the aftermath of this incident, Meho is described as being mentally absent, trembling

and wandering around, looking at the sky. Apparently, the walk in the minefield had a traumatising effect on him. (Stanišić, 2009, p. 218 f.) The story shows that a simple differentiation between victims and perpetrators is impossible to draw and that suffering unites all actors. It supports an understanding of the other not as a part of the enemy group but as an individual who suffered in a similar way from the consequences of the violent conflict as the ingroup members did and still do. Also, the excerpt does not only humanise the other through the individual suffering but also allows the reader to think in- and outgroup as one group, the group of individuals who experienced traumatic encounters.

To sum up, a reading of the novel in the light of the previously presented theories can suggest a few ways through which the presented excerpt could contribute to the rehumanisation of the other. Not only does it personalise the conflict situation and reduces the anonymity of the conflict by presenting a more nuanced image of the individual fighters, it can also offer ways to rethink the ingroup vs. outgroup differentiation in line with the Common Ingroup Identity Model. The novel bears the potential, speaking with Gaertner et al. to “[...] expand the inclusiveness of one’s ingroup to include people who would otherwise be regarded as outgroup members may have beneficial consequences for promoting more positive intergroup attitudes and behaviors” (Gaertner et al., 1996, p. 273), consequently lowering the tendency to dehumanise outgroup members. This literary encounter with the other might set the ground for a more positive confrontation, in case that personal contact with members of the outgroup takes place one day.

4.2 Reconstructing the narrative of the past

In chapter 2.3, it is discussed that for many scholars, rethinking the own narrative of the past and, as Herbert Kelman puts it, “[...] admitting the other’s truth into one’s own narrative” (Kelman, 2008, p. 29) is a crucial precondition for coming to terms with the past and, eventually, for reconciliation (see also Ben David et al., 2017). Bar-Tal and Čehajić-Clancy argue that the “[a]cknowledgement of the past implies that the parties recognise that there are at least two narratives of the conflict” (Bar-Tal & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013, p. 131, italics in original). How, then, can a literary piece contribute to this process? To provide possible paths to deal with this question, the next section explores Auerbach’s ‘Reconciliation Pyramid’ and suggests potential effects of the so-called narrative acquaintance. Afterwards, the thesis links the narrative acquaintance with the research field of emotion regulation and the cognitive reappraisal framework in conflict resolution. Finally, an interpretation of the text excerpt from Stanišić’ novel is offered and discussed in light of the previous theoretical elaboration.

4.2.1 Getting acquainted with the other's narrative

It is well established that conflicts are embedded in a variety of different narratives. This includes narratives on various different levels and covering diverse events and accounts of the past. Individual as well as collective narratives are intertwined and shape each other. (Maoz, 2004, p. 227) Since probably most of the ongoing conflicts contain not only a material but also an identity dimension, Auerbach argues that for reconciliation to be realised, those narratives need to be engaged with on which conflicts are based (Auerbach, 2009, p. 294).²⁵ For Auerbach, looking at the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, the different conflict parties perceive the conflict within their respective framework of national meta narratives, which she defines as “[...] all-encompassing, interpretive frameworks which incorporate the basic symbols, values, beliefs, and behavioral codes of a collective, and serve, therefore, as the symbolic representation of the national ethos” (Auerbach, 2009, p. 297). Within these meta-narratives, conflict-related narratives as well as those of individual experiences are embedded, interpreted accordingly and in turn also shape the meta-narrative. This way, the oftentimes traumatic experience of one or some group members that took place in the past can become “[...] woven into the canvas of the ethnic or large-group tent” (Volkan, 2001, p. 88). According to Volkan, these, as he calls them, ‘chosen traumas’ are not necessarily all the time relevant for a social group but can be highly significant for a social group once a ‘time collapse’ takes place, that is, they are reactivated through for the group stressful events. This reactivation of such chosen traumas can make them an ethnic marker and possibly contribute to cruel acts that can be observed in conflicts all over the world. (Volkan, 2001, p. 88 f.) In line with the argument made by Volkan, Auerbach highlights the importance of past suffering of the ingroup and the perception of being the victim of the conflict (Auerbach, p. 295) but also emphasises the transformability and malleability of these narratives (p. 301).

²⁵ It has to be acknowledged that Auerbach mainly develops a theoretical and terminological framework that aims to combine “[t]he ‘cold’ narrative concept and ‘warm’ moves such as empathy, remorse, and forgiveness” (Auerbach, 2009, p. 293). It rather has to be considered to do the theoretical groundwork before its practical appropriateness can be further explored. For this reason, the concept must be considered to some extent as being naïve and lacking a critical evaluation of its underlying assumptions about reconciliation and the role of narrative acquaintance for it. However, it is not designed to describe all sorts of reconciliation processes. Instead, the author describes its aim as presenting “[...] a tool for studying the psycho-political processes involved in climbing the rungs of an imaginary reconciliation ladder” (Auerbach, 2009, p. 304).

Building on these assumptions concerning the tremendous importance of different forms of narratives for the outburst and continuation of a conflict, Auerbach (2009) suggests a framework towards reconciliation, in which getting acquainted with the other side's narratives takes a crucial position. The scholar argues that if members of a conflict party are not aware of the other side's narratives of the conflict, they are not able to acknowledge those narratives as legitimate accounts and even less likely to take responsibility for harm done by the own group and to be open towards a reconciliatory process. (p. 304) Accordingly, getting acquainted with the other's narratives is a precondition to adjust the own image of the outgroup and to create more cooperative relationships instead of hateful stereotypes (p. 298).

However, Auerbach does not elaborate in what way the acquaintance with the outgroup's narratives can make an individual more willing to cognitively reimagine its own and the ingroup's narratives surrounding the conflict. In the following, the next section will discuss different approaches that indicate possible forms in which narrative acquaintance can have an effect on an individual. The start will make an approach derived from mediation practice, and a few more theoretical concepts are presented afterwards.

4.2.2 Narrative acquaintance as a tool for changing attitudes

Experiences presented by practitioners mediating with a narrative method provide some relevant insights into the mode of action of narrative acquaintance. This approach underlies the assumption that for many conflicts on an interpersonal or intergroup level "[...] there are different versions of meaning to be explored, rather than sets of facts to be discovered" (Winslade et al., 1998, p. 25). Moreover, it is assumed that narratives do only evolve through interaction between people which then are constructed in line with hegemonic meta-narratives. Following these premises, the practitioners report from various occasions in which narrating the own account as well as being exposed to the other side's narrative were highly effective and considered moments of breakthrough for the conflict at stake. These explanations for the effectiveness of narrative acquaintance are certainly circumstantial and not necessarily generalisable, nonetheless, they provide useful starting points to explore precise effects.

Winslade and colleagues (1998) experienced in their work that conflict parties narrow their repertoire of existing narratives and focus on a dominating conflict narrative. This spotlight on a certain narrative limits the options for possible actions and frames some alternatives as deficient. (p. 26) However, Winslade reports various accounts in which the other side's narrative constituted a breach

of the expected and, thus, interrupted the dominant conflict narrative (Winslade, 2009, p. 563). The interruption of the dominant narrative that occurred because of the exposure of the other's view can open the space to move on to a different narrative. For instance, it can remind of positive encounters or stress cooperation and even relations of friendships that existed before the breakout of the conflict. Therefore, Winslade ascribes narratives the potential to remind the other conflict party of alternative existing stories. Using the experience of an interpersonal conflict in his family, he concludes that "[f]rom within this different relational narrative, they [the conflict parties] could find a way to go forward in a way that did not allow the conflict narrative to dominate the moment" (Winslade, 2009, p. 560).

Moreover, for Winslade, the telling and retelling of narratives and being exposed to them forces all individuals involved to constantly rethink the narratives. This also includes to recall ways of how the parties managed to resolve similar previous conflicts. This allows the individuals, as Winslade writes, to "[...] think about a new situation in an old way and proceed forward along a narrative trajectory" (Winslade, 2009, p. 563). Finally, the exposure to the other's narrative opens space for renegotiation of the own dominant narratives as the other's story can provide inspiration for the self. For Winslade, individuals have the capability to borrow from other people's narratives if they are acquainted with it and to extend the own toolbox to deal with challenges. (Winslade, 2009, p. 564)

On a more theoretical level, Maoz (2004) describes the "mutual disclosure of the side's views" as one possible path that can support reconciliation. Building on the research concerning the ingroup bias, she describes a phenomenon called 'false polarisation bias', that is, an individual perceives the own group's position as realistic and moderate whereas the other group is seen as more extreme. According to Maoz, revealing the own and hearing the other's ideological views increase under certain circumstances the likelihood of finding a substantial agreement between the parties. Moreover, following this method, the scholar discusses a technique of disclosing beliefs about the other party's views. By presenting what a group believes the other group thinks, the group members are confronted with complexity and uncertainty. This method seemingly increases the willingness of individuals to take part in reconciliatory measures. (pp. 234-236)

A further line of research is concerned with the role of individual as well as collective emotions in reconciliation processes and investigates how emotions can be a barrier but also an entry point for the improvement of intergroup relations. This branch of social-psychological inquiry promotes a so-called 'emotion regulation' and it explores how on an individual level, group-based emotions can be influenced (Gross, 1998, p. 271). In terms of reconciliation, this research is based on two assumptions. It is assumed that "[...] any attempt to let go of past anger, fear, and hatred must go through a process

of emotional change on the individual and group level, a process referred to as emotion regulation” (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 74) and that even very forceful emotions can be modified and changed. According to the ‘process model of group-based emotion regulation’ (Goldenberg, Halperin, van Zomeren, & Gross, 2015, p. 128), emotions can be manipulated on different stages. Common points for emotion regulation present adjustments of the cognitive appraisal of the situation itself or the self-categorisation. The latter is in line with the discoveries made by the scholars working on the Common Identity Identification Model, as presented in chapter 4.1.2. Usually, emotion regulation takes place directly by the individual itself, in laboratory settings the person is instructed to do so (Halperin, Cohen-Chen, & Goldenberg, 2014, p. 6). However, as this is unrealistic to take place outside of the laboratory situation, indirect forms of emotion regulation have been widely tested. Hereby, the emotion regulation is the consequence of the manipulation of underlying belief systems instead of the direct instruction to regulate the own emotions. (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 76; Halperin et al., 2014, p. 9) To achieve a change of appraisal and, consequently, a change of group-based emotions, a person has to get in touch with a counter message, that can potentially challenge the pre-existing appraisal and attitudes (Halperin et al., 2014, p. 10). The forms through which such counter messages can be disseminated are various. For Halperin, actors such as the education system, media or even popular culture and social media can fulfil this role (Halperin, 2013, p. 72, 74). Following this, one can assume that, generally speaking, narratives conveyed in a variety of forms can have such effects. Therefore, getting acquainted with different narratives may have the potential to regulate group-based emotions if they are perceived in that way.

There is a comprehensive set of studies investigating links between certain group-based emotions and the individuals’ attitudes towards outgroup members or reconciliatory processes, including action tendencies (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016; Halperin, 2013; see for a review of several of these studies Halperin et al., 2014). However, it is not in the scope of this thesis to discuss the manifold studies in detail. Instead, it discusses findings that suggest certain cognitive reappraisals following the indirect emotion regulation, in this case through the acquaintance with other narratives.

In their article on ‘Social-Psychological Interventions for Intergroup Reconciliation’, Čehajić-Clancy and colleagues review a variety of studies that demonstrate how indirect interventions aimed at the cognitive reappraisal of the situation. Following their review, the authors suggest a few aspects of such interventions that proved to be particularly promising. For instance, increasing the perception of the outgroup’s variability can lessen an individual’s generalised negative beliefs concerning the other. They write: “Exposing people to such individualized and personalized stories of moral outgroup members could influence current relations between historically conflicted groups by

decreasing the negative emotion of hatred, thereby facilitating reconciliation.” (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 77) Therefore, narratives that reveal moral acts by the other can change the perception of the outgroup as one homogenic entity that is negatively judged. Moreover, this is linked to the question of how the outgroup is presented. Is the other described as evil and immutable by nature or is the outgroup shown as a diverse group of individuals that is pliable? The same question accounts for the conflict itself. Following Čehajić-Clancy et al., “[...] by emphasizing the dynamic, malleable nature of groups and conflicts in general, we can indirectly affect people’s beliefs about the rival group and the specific conflict in particular” (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 78). In line with Auerbach’s observation that individuals tend to see only the own group as victims of the conflict (Auerbach, 2009, p. 295), this can also include the dominating classification into victim or perpetrator. Showing the suffering of the other can render a clear-cut framing of the other as evil by nature impossible. Finally, the scholars highlight the importance of perspective taking on emotion regulation and, eventually, reconciliation and that conflicting groups have to face the other side’s narratives (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 82).

After introducing some psychological mechanisms that can follow the acquaintance with the outgroup’s narratives, the next section suggests possible ways in which literature can support on a cognitive level a narrative acquaintance.

4.2.3 Getting to know the other’s narrative through literature

According to Auerbach, reconciliatory processes are oftentimes advanced and pushed by various social elites such as authors (Auerbach, 2009, p. 303). This statement is not surprising as other scholars see a tremendous potential in different artistic products to engage with narratives related to the conflict. Among others, Premaratna and Bleiker describe arts as a means to re-negotiate dissenting narratives (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 84). Moreover, the authors ascribe art the possibility to engage with emotional and political consequences of a violent conflict (p. 86). Writing about theatre as one narrative tradition, they highlight the space that such artistic endeavours can create, a space that invites people to reflect on their group experiences and that simultaneously offers the possibility for voices to express themselves that are otherwise unheard. Through such means, theatre may have the potential to transform existing narratives. (p. 91) As a result, “[t]he expression of different voices and perspectives and the consequent co-creation of inclusive narratives allow communities to ‘restore through re-enactment’ the fragmented meaning and lives in post-conflict contexts”. (p. 91) But this seems not to be limited to theatre. García ascribes music a similar potential to serve as a tool to communicate personal narratives and through which one can get to know the other’s (García, 2014,

p. 30). Hawes expands this view to all sort of transmitted narratives. According to her, narratives and storytelling offer a way to realise that there exist more than one version of truth and reality and, thus, allow the spectator to reflect on existing narratives related to both the past and the future. (Hawes, 2007, p. 18)

In what way, then, can the excerpt from Stanišić' novel serve in terms of getting acquainted with other existing narratives? As elaborated above, Winslade et al. conclude from their experience as mediators that the confrontation with other people's narratives can interrupt the dominating conflict narrative. In this context, the text passage with its description of this almost surreal seeming football match between the trenches of the respective sides in this short moment of a ceasefire does probably not fit in the prevailing image that a reader may have of a violent conflict and its fighting. It could make the spectator stumble and challenge the usual perception of such a situation. Moreover, as already discussed in relation to its effects on rehumanisation (chapter 4.1.3), the literary text reminds the reader of the shared past between the actors involved in the conflict. By showing the friendly relationship between the Bosniak Kiko and his Serbian friend Mickey Mouse alias Milan Jevrić (Stanišić, 2009, p. 209) but also by presenting the adoration of Red Star Belgrade by the Bosniak fighter Meho (Stanišić, 2009, p. 214), the narrator provides a reminder of positive interaction between the conflict parties in the past.

Furthermore, following Maoz, the text excerpt can be interpreted as a way of disclosing prevailing narratives. On the one hand, the fragment can serve as one possible narrative of the conflict that is disclosed to the other. On the other hand, it reveals a possible belief concerning the views of the other side. In this sense, the text can act as a tool to provide insights into the perspective of a conflict party. Moreover, Maoz highlights the importance of cognitively replacing the perception of the relationship between the conflict parties as win-lose to win-win situation (Maoz, 2004, p. 233). This change of perception can be supported in the case of this text excerpt by presenting more nuanced and detailed images of individual persons in the story instead of presenting an anonymous mass. By providing information about the person background of characters such as Dino Safirović, nicknamed Dino Zoff, and again Mickey Mouse, the narrator gives several individuals on different sides of the conflict line a face and a story. By doing so, these figures representative for their respective groups may become possible partners for cooperation, the dominant framing of win-lose situation could be shifted closer to a win-win perception.

Additionally, one can look at the text excerpt from an emotion regulation perspective. As presented above, revealing the outgroup variability can have positive effects on the ingroup members. Here, Čehajić-Clancy and colleagues emphasise the high impact of presenting particularly the moral

variability of (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 77). In line with this, the novel excerpt presents several characters of each side and also assigns them different moral qualities. For instance, General Mikado, the leader of the Serbs, is presented as a cruel, unfair and violent person who would not hesitate to kill unarmed opponents. In contrast to him, Mickey Mouse is shown as a rather simple but likeable character, despite him being a volunteer for the conflict and a killer. Even though he was presented as the person who shot a Bosniak called Ćora (Stanišić, 2009, p. 211), the reader may develop compassion and sympathy for him. Eventually, it is Mickey Mouse who keeps up a moral standard within the context of war and steps in to prevent even more injustice and arbitrary killings of unarmed individuals (Stanišić, 2009, p. 221 f.). Thus, this narrative presents the conflict parties in a rather nuanced way and shows moral actors, highlighting the moral variability of the different sides.

Furthermore, the text shows the conflict and the actors in a dynamic and malleable way and, thus, may break with prevailing conflict narratives. As already discussed earlier, the setting of the scene, this initially innocent football match in the middle of a cruel conflict, is probably not consistent with the common image that people may have of such an exceptional situation such as a war. Moreover, as already elaborated, the conflict is not presented as something that was always there and will last forever, previous relationships crossing the conflict lines can remind the reader of that. Coming along with this, the novel challenges the perception of the ingroup as the main, if not the only victim by revealing traumatic experiences on all sides of the conflict. Exposing people to individualized and personalized stories of moral outgroup members in combination with this interruption of the dominant image of violent conflict, the excerpt suggests that the other is not evil by nature and the conflict not an everlasting and unavoidable necessity.

As a consequence of these different threads of interpretation of the novel excerpt, the narrator invites the reader to take a different perspective and to rethink dominating narratives, including the own conflict narratives as well as the image of the outgroup. This acquaintance with other narratives through art, in this case a novel, does, obviously, not necessarily directly lead to a reconstruction of own narratives of the past. However, as Auerbach writes, “[f]amiliarity with the narratives paves the way to full *acknowledgement* of them and may prepare the ground for a “warmer” move, like the expressions of *empathy* toward the other” (Auerbach, 2009, p. 303, italics in original) and eventually lead to the incorporation of the other’s narrative. This can have far reaching consequences in practice. For instance, on the one hand, Brown and Čehajić-Clancy discovered that Serbian youth who show the readiness to take on the point of view of the Bosniaks are more open for reparations such as apologies or material rectifications (Brown & Čehajić, 2008; Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 82). On the other hand, the scholars also showed in their studies that taking the perspective of the other side

also increased the readiness to forgive the outgroup for misdeeds in the past (Čehajić et al., 2008; Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 82).

4.3 Acknowledgment of responsibility for ingroup misdeeds

In many conflicts, a straightforward categorisation of conflict parties in either the victim or the perpetrator category seems to be impossible. Too complex are the reasons for the breakout of large-scale violence and the participation in a war is frequently accompanied by actions that would be under peaceful conditions evaluated as highly immoral (Bar-Tal & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013). Therefore, it does not come as a surprise that researchers find a lack of acknowledgement of responsibility for own wrongdoing or misdeeds to the ingroup in the aftermath of many violent conflicts. However, many scholars identify the lack of such acknowledgement as a main barrier for reconciliation processes (Bar-Tal & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013, p. 131; Čehajić et al., 2008, p. 196; Hamber & Kelly, 2009, p. 292; Kelman, 2008, p. 29). But why is it so difficult for individuals and groups to acknowledge the own responsibility for wrongs that they have committed and what can be done to overcome this barrier?

This section first discusses some cognitive roots for this phenomenon as well as the role of victimhood narratives in it and then provides a few discoveries related to how one can get past this blocking element. These theoretical discussions, then, will be illustrated with the text excerpt from Stanišić' novel.

4.3.1 The strive to be the victim

Victimhood²⁶ narratives play a major role in many conflicts. One example for this is the case of Nazi-Germany. Using the German defeat during the first World War was one tool that the Nazi propaganda applied to mobilise their followers. A crucial aspect in this was the outcome of the peace treaty of

²⁶ It needs to be emphasised that victimhood is a highly complex phenomenon. This section does not argue that victimisation merely serves as a strategy to avoid acknowledging the own responsibility. In possibly a majority of the cases, victims do not carry any responsibility for the harm that they experience. Thus, discussing responsibility in this section does not aim to assign victims guilt for their own suffering. At the same time, the assignment of the victim role from outside frequently serves, intendedly or unintendedly, as tool to strip off someone's agency. For space reasons, this cannot be discussed in full detail. However, the potentially ambiguous meaning of the term depending on the situatedness of the conflict at stake has to be highlighted.

Versailles, which was in parts of the German population considered a disgrace and seen as an unfair treatment of Germany. Bar-Tal and Čehajić-Clancy describe such phenomena as “[c]ollective victimhood [that] can be defined as a group mindset resulting from the perceived intent of another group to inflict harm on the collective. The harm also must be viewed as undeserved, unjust and immoral and one that the group was not able to prevent.” (Bar-Tal & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013, p. 127) Such victimhood narratives are verbally reproduced by the ingroup members (Pilecki & Hammack, 2014, p. 823). Analysing the conflict on the Balkans, Bar-Tal and Čehajić-Clancy (2013) describe how the different nationalist movements in their propaganda prior to the outbreak of mass violence constantly referred to elements of collective memory that had at the time it took place a negative impact on their respective ingroups. This appeal to past events was accompanied by perceptions of threat, especially in the Serbian part (p. 126). After the eruption of violence, the harmful act inflicted on each party, in turn, served as further validation for the victimhood narratives (p. 129). Following Bar-Tal and Čehajić-Clancy, if groups have a strong sense of collective victimhood, this can serve as a justification for all sorts of cruel acts, as this is supposed to prevent de novo violence against the ingroup (p. 129). Bandura and colleagues describe this as one possible mechanism to morally disengage from immoral acts by blaming the other for it and presenting him- or herself as innocent victims (Bandura et al., 1996, p. 366).

Moreover, collective victimhood is certainly not ended after the termination of a violent conflict. Instead, victimhood narratives are seen as a major socio-psychological barrier to the reconciliation between former adversaries (Noor, Brown, González, Manzi, & Lewis, 2008a, p. 822; Shnabel, Halabi, & Noor, 2013, p. 867).

Observing different intractable conflicts, a group of scholars discovered a phenomenon that they call ‘Competitive Victimhood’ (CV).²⁷ The researchers noticed that in many long-lasting conflicts, the different groups tend to see themselves as the main victims of the conflict who suffered the most and the outgroup as the perpetrators. The groups are motivated to establish this victim-perpetrator classification on a discursive as well as practical level and strive for acknowledgement of this attribution also from third parties. The consequence of this dynamic frequently is the continuation or

²⁷ For a more comprehensive explanation of the psychological mechanisms behind Competitive Victimhood see: Noor, M., Shnabel, N., Halabi, S., & Nadler, A. (2012). When Suffering Begets Suffering. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 16(4), 351–374.

For a review from 2016 of different studies about Competitive Victimhood see: Young, I. F., & Sullivan, D. (2016). Competitive victimhood: a review of the theoretical and empirical literature. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 11, 30–34.

escalation of the conflict as well as the obstruction of processes to end the conflict and to achieve reconciliation. (Noor et al., 2012, p. 351) Even individual experiences of victimisation can have significance on a socio-political level through the incorporation of such accounts of suffering into a collective narrative about the conflict, for instance by political and social elites (p. 352 f.). The groups apply different mechanisms in the competition over the question of who experienced more suffering. For instance, they can either present their torments as larger in terms of quantity compared to the other or they try to devalue the experiences of the outgroup. This does not only account for physical but also for cultural or material violence. Moreover, rivalry can also exist over the legitimacy of the other group's suffering caused by the own group. (Noor et al., 2012, p. 356 f.; Noor, James Brown, & Prentice, 2008b, p. 484)

The fact that CV can be observed in various settings leads to the recognition that positioning as the victim must provide certain psychological functions to the group and its members. Noor et al. (2012) suggest that victimhood can increase the bond between the group members, serve as a justification for violence and self-defence, decrease the legitimacy of outgroup demands and increase the legitimacy for ingroup demands for reparation, and mobilise third-party support. (p. 358 f.) However, the authors acknowledge that different power positions and experiences provide different groups with distinct psychological motivations for engaging in CV, depending on what aspects of their identities are perceived as being threatened. (p. 360)

To identify the specific cognitive motives, they differentiate between the groups that are commonly ascribed the perpetrator role in a conflict and the groups that are usually seen as the victims. According to laboratory experiments²⁸, perpetrators, on the one hand, have a need for being accepted by the other members of the social community (moral-social dimension). On the other hand, victims have a need for empowerment (agency dimension) as this addresses the fact that they oftentimes experienced feelings of lacking power and decreasing social status as well as honour during the times of harm. (Nadler & Liviatan, 2016, p. 460; Shnabel et al., 2009, p. 1022; Shnabel & Nadler, 2008, p. 117; 2015, p. 477) Following this discovery, being acknowledged as the victim satisfies the needs of both the perpetrator and victims, therefore, the individuals compete over the question 'who is the

²⁸ For instance, Shnabel et al. (2009), inviting 122 Israeli-Jewish and Israeli-Arab participants to their study, presented both empowering and accepting messages in relation to the Kfar Kasem killings supposedly coming from the participants' outgroup. Following, the perception of both messages was evaluated through certain questions. Finally, the participants had to answer questions, such as to which extent the messages made them perceive the outgroup as humans just like the ingroup, using a five-point scale to evaluate their motivation to reconcile.

victim'. (Shnabel & Nadler, 2015, pp. 477-480) From this perspective, the victimhood narrative and the competition for it serves as a tool to restore those aspects of identity that are the most threatened as a result of the conflict (Noor et al., 2012, p. 360).

How, then, can conflict parties that are actively engaged in competitive victimhood be motivated to take steps towards reconciliation? The discovery of the specific motivations of actors to establish themselves as the major victims of a conflict led the scholars to the development of the 'Needs-based model of reconciliation'. This way of approaching "[r]econciliation as an Act of Social Exchange" (Shnabel & Nadler, 2008, p. 116) will be elaborated in the next section.

4.3.2 Acknowledging responsibility

Following the needs-based model of reconciliation, the researchers suggest two strategies through which the group member's unwillingness to take steps towards reconciliation could be reduced. These strategies are based on the assumption that acknowledging the different needs and helping to fulfil them may increase the likelihood that individuals acknowledge the ingroup's responsibility for harm and suffering of the other.

Firstly, Noor et al. propose the removal of threats to a group's identity as one possible path. Taking a perpetrator's fear of moral exclusion and the victim's need for acknowledgment and recognition of their torment, the scholars suggest the reciprocal exchange of empowering messages for the victim group and accepting ones for the perpetrators may help fulfilling the needs of both groups. (Noor et al., 2012, p. 362 f.; Shnabel et al., 2009, p. 1027) By doing so, all actors receive the confirmation that they belong to the moral community, a confirmation that victims of violence frequently lack and perpetrators fear to get withdrawn (Noor et al., 2012, p. 360).

Secondly, based on the concept of the common ingroup identity model (CIIM), which was already discussed in chapter 4.1.2, the recategorization into a common victimhood identity seems to be a promising tool (Shnabel et al., 2013, p. 875). According to Noor and colleagues, when an individual is exposed to outgroup members' suffering, a recategorization into the superordinate identity of 'victims' could be possible, "[...] whereby conflicting groups maintain their experience of unique victimhood but simultaneously extend their focus onto their common, shared victimhood [...]" (Noor et al., 2012, p. 364). They argue that despite the groups having different narratives concerning the conflict itself, it may hardly be possible to deny that also the other group suffered severely from violence. The recognition of harmful effects of the conflict on all conflict parties, then, can be framed in terms of a superordinate group identity of common victimhood. (Pilecki & Hammack, 2014, p. 825)

Consequently, the authors hold the view that making salient and reminding individuals of that shared identity “[...] will reduce groups’ efforts to compete over their in-group suffering and foster inter-group forgiveness and reconciliation attitudes” (Noor et al., 2012, p. 364).

It must be said, however, that a simple division of conflict parties into the categories of perpetrators and victims is anything but straight forward in most of the cases. In many cases, all parties were victims to violence and simultaneously harmed their opponents. Nonetheless, acknowledging at least the fact that all parties were victimised and did victimise could be a first entry point for acknowledging the suffering of the other as well as to articulate this. (Noor et al., 2012, p. 360 f.) Generally speaking, Noor et al. report that individuals who cognitively engage in CV are less open to provide acts of forgiveness towards their outgroup compared to those persons who are manipulated to be in the condition of a share victimhood identity (Noor et al., 2012, p. 362).

Following the introduction of the importance of the victimhood narrative as a barrier to acknowledge the own group’s responsibility for the suffering of the other, the next section will provide a view of how the excerpt from Stanišić’ novel can support the process of overcoming the consequences of the competitive victimhood.

4.3.3 Overcoming competitive victimhood through literature

The question now is whether literature can serve as a means to achieve the acknowledgement of guilt. Following the previous discussion of strategies to overcome competitive victimhood, a frequently very influential barrier to the acknowledgement of the ingroup’s responsibility for harm directed towards the outgroup, there are several theoretical considerations that would suggest that literature also bears the potential to contribute to the recognition of harm committed against the other.

Firstly, the text excerpt can be perceived as a message addressing the moral dimension of the parties. As described in the two previous sub-chapters, some of the Serbian group members resist the arbitrary, cruel and humiliating conduct of their leader, General Mikado. They make a stand against their commander who violates the rules of the football match that the two conflict parties established during previous ceasefires. With the depiction of this scene, the novel assigns moral qualities to these actors. The same applies to the Bosnian side where their commander Dino Safirovič insists on the compliance to those previously performative established rules when General Mikado threatens to kill the other groups’ members. (Stanišić, 2009, p. 216) By doing so, the text fragment can be perceived as providing a message of recognising the morality of all group members. Thus, the narrator acknowledges that all actors from both sides belong to the moral community.

Secondly, the text excerpt presents suffering, trauma and resignation on both sides of the line dividing the parties. It shows the lasting consequence of war. This accounts especially but not only for the Bosniak fighter Meho who seems to carry deep traumatic experiences from the conflict and its violent excesses (Stanišić, 2009, p. 218). But also large parts of the Serbian squad seem to end up in resignation after experiencing the violence and humiliation of their Bosniak counterparts (Stanišić, 2009, p. 221 f.). Generally speaking, the text fragment reminds the reader of the fact that all parties of a conflict experience traumatic events, regardless of their group affiliation. In this sense, the text may bear the potential to create a shared ingroup of victimhood. By showing the suffering on all sides, a differentiation in victim and perpetrator becomes impossible as the victimhood encompasses everyone effected by the conflict. Moreover, as the suffering of the other cannot be denied, the way is paved for an acknowledgment of the suffering of the other group. This, in turn, could satisfy the needs of the victims to become recognised as such. Consequently, the narrator addresses not only the moral-social dimension but also provides the resources to restore the agency dimension of the victims and may empower them. This view is supported by a study conducted by Shnabel and colleagues who created a common victim identity by showing their Israeli and Palestinian participants an article that presented both parties as victims of the conflict. The scholars discovered that the creation of a common victim ingroup lowered competitive victimhood and increased the readiness for forgiveness. (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016, p. 84; Shnabel et al., 2013)

Thirdly, the text excerpt presents an example of one conflict party of committing a severe war crime. General Mikado, the Serbian commander, seizes the opportunity that the sudden end of the ceasefire presented to capture the Bosniak group. Because his group was faster to take up their arms again after the mutually established break of the fighting, the Serbian side can dominate their opponents and forces them to surrender. In a position of power, General Mikado threatens several times to kill the unarmed and surrendered Bosniaks. He merely does not suit the action to the word because of the Bosniak leader, Dino Safirović, who appeals to Mikado's moral consciousness and because of the later resistance by his own group (Stanišić, 2009, p. 215) Following Čehajić et al. (2009), reminding someone of ingroup responsibility for war-time atrocities can have two contrasting effects. On the one hand, the perception of ingroup responsibility can lead a person to morally engage with this reminder which, in turn, promote feelings of guilt as well as shame and, eventually, lead to a support of reparation policies. In this sense, the reminder of such ingroup responsibility for atrocities and immoral behaviour can be a tool to reconstruct existing narratives of the past. On the other hand, the authors argue that this reminder of harm committed by the ingroup can have the opposite effect. In this case, an individual may not accept this part of the past and instead morally disengage from that

happening, with different negative result such as the derogation of the victim. Nevertheless, the scholars conclude that in cases when a reminder of ingroup responsibility is connected to the stories and experiences of harm of particular individuals instead of the outgroup in general, the feeling of ingroup blame may rather lead to a moral reaction and not to moral disengagement. (p. 725 f.)

Consequently, the description of the conduct of severe atrocities such as the (almost) killing by General Mikado may lead to an acknowledgement of ingroup responsibility. However, this case presents a narrow ridge as such a reminder of harm conducted by the ingroup could reverse feelings of collective guilt with positive impact on the intergroup relationship to the potentially detrimental mental state of collective shame (Brown, González, Zagefka, Manzi, & Čehajić, 2008, p. 88).

To conclude, from a theoretical perspective, the presented text excerpt may bear the potential to fulfil both the perpetrator's need for being acknowledged as a member of the moral community and the victim's demand for getting the own suffering recognised from other parties. Moreover, the text fragment presents the suffering of all sides involved in the conflict and can pave the way for the construction of a common victimhood identity. Finally, the presentation of unmoral behaviour of one of the groups might lead to the acknowledgement of ingroup responsibility, however, it can possibly increase moral disengagement processes within ingroup members.

4.4 Imagining contact: literary encounters with outgroup narratives

As outlined earlier, contact between conflicting parties is often seen as some kind of panacea to solve ongoing conflicts. Even though it is widely acknowledged that mere contact is not sufficient for the lasting resolution of a conflict and reconciliation, Čehajić and Brown argue that under condition of “[g]ood-quality and (frequent) contact with members of the victim group seems to assist the process of acknowledgment through promoting an other-oriented social orientation (hence perspective-taking ability) and decreasing the biased belief (however functional it might be) that the in-group has suffered more than the out-group (perceived victimhood)” (Čehajić & Brown, 2010, p. 194). In their understanding, contact with the outgroup affects the capacities to adjust the own narratives of the past by taking on a different perspective. By doing so, conflicting actors have to learn and acknowledge that there is always more than one narrative concerning a dispute (Bar-Tal & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013, p. 131). According to Čehajić-Clancy and colleagues (2016), good quality contact²⁹ is associated with

²⁹ Unfortunately, the authors do not precisely elaborate their understanding of good quality contact. In their study from 2010 (p. 193), they measure the quality of contact between members of different groups with the

the acknowledgement of ingroup accountability (p. 80) as well as willingness to forgive the outgroup for harm that it brought on the ingroup (p. 83).

Nevertheless, one limitation to the impact of contact is very simple: what if high quality contact between rivalling groups is unlikely or impossible to occur due to the societal divisions as a consequence of violence or even ethnic cleansing campaigns? In such situations, the different parties rarely encounter the other side's narratives, thus, a process of adjusting the own narratives becomes improbable. (Miles & Crisp, 2014, p. 4)

However, not only actual intergroup contact can have positive effects on how the ingroup sees the outgroup.³⁰ For instance, it had been found³¹ that individuals who have acquaintances who are friends with outgroup members show lower levels of prejudices towards the other party (Paolini et al., 2004). Moreover, Crisp and Turner suggest that "imagined contact", that is, the "mental simulation" of intergroup contact can also improve how ingroup members perceive the outgroup. (Crisp & Turner, 2009, p. 233) According to them, imagining the contact with members of the outgroup cognitively activates the same concepts as real life contact. Studies showed that the mere instruction to imagine a positive encounter with outgroup members leads the participants in the experiment to ascribe more positive characteristics to the other group. (p. 234) Consequently, the imagined contact theory proposes that this form of contact can increase individual's willingness to engage with the outgroup and to encounter them with an open mind. Therefore, it is suggested that imagined contact "[...] might be highly effective as a first step on the route toward reconciliation and reduced prejudice" (p. 238). For this reason, it is proposed to use the concept of imagined contact outside of laboratory settings and to apply in real life scenarios (Crisp, Stathi, Turner, & Husnu, 2009, p. 13).

In this sense, literature could be a potential facilitator for imagined contact between groups. As already discussed earlier, literature does not need any direct contact between writer and reader. A

following set of questions: 'I often spend time with my friends from the other groups,' 'I feel close to my friends from the other groups,' and 'My friends who are members of the other groups are very similar to me.'

³⁰ See also Miles Hewstones (2015) theoretical elaborations concerning intergroup contact through social networks.

³¹ Paolini et al. (Paolini, Hewstone, Cairns, & Voci, 2004, p. 774) explored "[...] whether (a) direct and indirect cross-group friendship predicts reduced prejudice and increased perceived outgroup variability toward a rival group and whether (b) intergroup anxiety mediates such friendship-to-group relationships". To do so, the scholars did their research in the context of intergroup contact in Northern Ireland between Catholics and Protestants, inviting more than 300 University students to participate in a questionnaire-based study.

novel, therefore, can transmit a narrative from one person to another and create the space for contact through imagination.

Moreover, Husnu and Crisp conclude from their experiments in the Turkish-Cyprus context that facilitating a repeated and more diverse and detailed imagined contact was more effective in increasing motivations to be involved with the outgroup than just a homogeneous imagining of contact (Husnu & Crisp, 2010, p. 106; 2011, p. 115). Miles and Crisp draw the conclusion that more extensive elaborations can lead to more cure rich simulations of contact (Miles & Crisp, 2014, p. 6).

Consequently, literature might be a tool to reach such more elaborate and detailed imagined contact that, in turn, can influence attitudes and intentions and be a facilitator of more peaceful intergroup relations.

5. Discussion and concluding thoughts

This thesis investigated the potential of literature to contribute to reconciliatory processes. It approached its research puzzle from two directions. Firstly, the thesis analysed the academic debate in Peace Research and related disciplines around the art and reconciliation nexus and explored the potential ascribed to the arts in general and literature in particular to contribute to reconciliation, especially on a cognitive level. Secondly, the thesis examined how studies and theories from Social Psychology can deepen the existing knowledge in Peace Research in regard to the potential of art to contribute to reconciliation. This chapter, firstly, summarises the findings and, secondly, discusses them in light of the academic literature on reconciliation and the arts and peacebuilding nexus and suggests further research steps.

5.1 Answering the research questions

In regard to the first set of research questions, the analysis of existing academic literature concerning the potential of art and literature to contribute to reconciliation shows that many scholars ascribe them a far-reaching impact in terms of influencing the own identity, allowing space for the co-existence of differing or even conflicting narratives and to foster empathy between (former) adversaries. Therefore, many researchers and practitioners alike advocate for the closer incorporation of artistic projects in peacebuilding processes. However, the research frequently provides only little evidence and supporting theories in support of these statements. Thus, the analysis of the literature revealed that there is a need to further explore the capabilities of artistic products to contribute to the changes on the individual cognitive level to support the transformation to a culture of peace on a larger scale.

Concerning the second cluster of research questions, the examination of various theories and concepts from Social Psychology suggest different ways through which literary art can contribute to cognitive processes of adjusting existing narratives and to be open for the outgroup's ones and, consequently, "[...] facilitate psychological processes that are considered beneficial for positive intergroup relations" (Wenzel et al., 2010, p. 332).

The thesis explored the potential impact that literary art can have on the adjustment of narratives. For this, it focuses on three key dimensions of cognitive processes of reconciliation in which a reconstruction of narratives can, for some scholars even must take place:

- The mutual acknowledgement of the other's humanity
- The reconstruction of the narrative of the past

- The acknowledgment of responsibility for ingroup misdeeds

These dimensions are, of course, overlapping and intertwined. The thesis first discussed the cognitive foundations of these phenomena and their reoccurring consequences as barriers to reconciliation or even forces for the continuation of the conflict. Then, social-psychological concepts were presented that suggest possible strategies to overcome these negative effects and, thereupon, the potential of literature to facilitate such processes was explored. To reduce the abstractness of the theoretical elaboration, for the last step the thesis used a text excerpt from the novel *How the Soldier Repairs the Gramophone* by the author Saša Stanišić to illustrate the argumentation.

Firstly, the theoretical discussion of social-psychological concepts suggests several ways through which literature may have an impact on the rehumanisation of the outgroup. The generalised image of the outgroup member can be reconstructed in more nuanced terms, by showing individual stories. Moreover, the text excerpt creates a space to rethink the ingroup vs. outgroup differentiation. This is in accordance with the Common Ingroup Identity Model which proposes that an expansion of “[...] the inclusiveness of one’s ingroup to include people who would otherwise be regarded as outgroup members may have beneficial consequences for promoting more positive intergroup attitudes and behaviors” (Gaertner et al., 1996, p. 273). This way, the literary encounter may lower the tendency to dehumanise the outgroup member and pave the way for a more positive attitude towards the other when a personal meeting takes place.

Secondly, the novel bears the potential to get acquainted to the other group’s narratives surrounding the conflict. This is a crucial step as Bar-Tal and Čehajić-Clancy argue that the “[a]cknowledgement of the past implies that the parties recognise that there are at least two narratives of the conflict” (Bar-Tal & Čehajić-Clancy, 2013, p. 131, italics in original). In line with the experiences from professionals working with narrative mediation, the text excerpt may serve as a confrontation with the other side’s narratives which can interrupt the dominating conflict narrative. In the instance of the illustrative case for this thesis, the literary piece additionally can be perceived as a reminder of positive interaction between the conflict parties in the past. Moreover, based on Maoz’ writings, the text excerpt can be interpreted as a way of disclosing prevailing narratives. On the one hand, the fragment can serve as one possible narrative of the conflict that is disclosed to the other. On the other hand, it reveals a possible belief concerning the views of the other side. In this sense, the text can act as a tool to provide insights into the perspective of a conflict party. Furthermore, the text may function as an emotion regulator. The fragment of the novel presents the outgroup’s variability as well as ascribing moral qualities to the actors. Moreover, it shows the conflict at hand and the actors involved in a dynamic and malleable and, thus, may break with prevailing conflict narratives. Following

Čehajić-Clancy and colleagues (Čehajić-Clancy et al., 2016), this may prove as promising tools to achieve the cognitive reappraisal of the situation. Following these different approaches to narrative acquaintance, literature may be a useful tool to take a different perspective and to rethink dominating narratives, including the own conflict narratives as well as the image of the outgroup.

Thirdly, literature might increase the readiness of conflict parties to acknowledge harm committed by the own group. The text excerpt can be interpreted as a tool that addresses the identity threats of conflict actors by addressing the providing messages of acceptance to the moral community for perpetrators as well as of recognition of the suffering of the victims and, thus, reducing the negative consequences of Competitive Victimhood. Moreover, the excerpt depicts the suffering and traumatic experiences of all actors involved in the conflict, thereby, creating the space to perceive a shared ingroup of victimhood across the dividing lines of the conflict.

In more general terms, literature can serve as a tool to simulate encounters with the outgroup in a context when personal contact between in- and outgroup is highly restricted due to the conflict and its aftermath. In this sense, literature can serve as a facilitator of imagined contact by transmitting narratives from one person to another without direct personal interaction. This can influence attitudes and intentions and promote peaceful intergroup relations.

To sum up, from a theoretical perspective, literary art can serve as a tool to adjust the own narratives of a conflict by getting acquainted with the outgroup's views. Moreover, the encounter with other narratives can give a face and story to the other and, thereby, provide the means to reconstruct existing narratives and group definitions and create more inclusive group categories.

5.2 Discussing the findings

The findings of this thesis are very much in accordance with previous research conducted on reconciliation. Firstly, the literature on reconciliation highlights the importance of cognitive processes to achieve reconciliation and advocates to take psychological barriers to reconciliation seriously. Exemplary, Nadler and Shnabel describe “[...] intergroup reconciliation as the process of removing conflict-related emotional barriers that block the way to ending intergroup conflict” (Nadler & Shnabel, 2008, p. 39).

Secondly, the analysis of literature on both art and reconciliation as well as on social-psychological theories of intergroup reconciliation confirm the importance of cognitive processes to achieve reconciliation and suggests taking psychological barriers to reconciliation seriously. Moreover, the exploration of the academic literature concerning the arts and peacebuilding nexus shows that many

scholars ascribe art the capacity to engage with existing narratives of a conflict and to create a space where alternative narratives can be articulated. For instance, García stresses that in the academic debate, “[a]rt is considered a tool that allows people to find each other’s humanity, release and share emotions, heal personal and/or collective trauma, communicate their version of the truth, appreciate the narrative of the other, deal with identity issues, and, in general, transform relationships and bring people together” (García, 2014, p. 7).

Thirdly, the findings of the thesis support the growing academic body concerning the art and peacebuilding nexus. As one example, it is proposed that art in general and literature in particular can show the fluidity and contingency of identities and allows to transcend perceived boundaries of self and the other. (Leslie, 2013, pp. 172-173; Mwikisa & Dikobe, 2009, p. 55) One reason for this, as Premaratna and Bleiker argue, can be that arts can offer a more personal and more comprehensive form of presentation of the outgroup, in contrast to media or political communication (Premaratna & Bleiker, 2016, p. 106). This view is supported by many scholars from Social Psychology. Here, it is proposed that group identities manifested in narratives are not fixed and unchangeable and that engaging with outgroup’s narratives can lead to a reconstruction of group belongings. This can have consequences on the evaluation of the outgroup, rehumanising the other, putting the outgroup in a more positive light, and fulfil the specific needs of victim as well as perpetrator groups that are required for them to acknowledge responsibility for the own misdeeds.

Therefore, the outcome of this study suggests that the arts can support reconciliatory processes on a cognitive level and is, therefore, very much in line with an increasing number of articles and books that put art as a tool for peacebuilding and reconciliation in the centre of the work.

Nonetheless, this thesis offers a, to the best of my knowledge, novel approach to explore the psychological foundations of the commonly ascribed reconciliatory potential. By exploring social-psychological concepts, the thesis argues that many cognitive processes that were experimentally tested and confirmed by a broad number of scholars can also be triggered by encounters with literary narratives. This way, literature can potentially facilitate cognitive processes that promote intergroup contact and reconciliation. As a matter of course, it is not argued that literature alone can serve as a panacea for all conflict and the thesis does not want to suggest a straightforward interdependency between reading a certain literary text and a universal perception as well as procession of the information. The thesis does not offer a psychological analysis. Instead, this thesis has an interpretative-explorative character and argues based on experimentally tested psychological concepts for thinkable effects of the consumption of a piece of literature. To achieve more generalisable claims, further interdisciplinary studies are needed. For example, many social-

psychological studies work with manipulations. In these cases, one could think of using literature as a type of intervention which could achieve testable outcomes. Possible effects on the outgroup perception, ingroup definition, or the readiness to encounter opposing narratives could be examined. However, the engagement with concepts from Social Psychology regarding identity reconstruction also showed that the different ontologies and dominating philosophies of science in both Peace Research and Social Psychology compromise a constructive interdisciplinary dialogue. Not only does Peace Research broadly ignore the other discipline – preconceptions are based on reciprocity. (see for the debate concerning the integration of Social Sciences and Social Psychology: Dijk, 2009)

Even though further testing is necessary, there is substantial reason to believe that literature can contribute as one piece of the puzzle to a societal transformation towards a culture of peace. Yet, the question remains how to facilitate in practice such a societal transformation with the help of literature? One possible channel could be the educational system in which such literature could be used. However, novel and creative approaches need to be developed and discussed. Following this, it makes sense to advocate, as Shank and Schirch (2008, p. 217 f.) do, to think peacebuilding and arts more closely together and to advocate for including more artistic elements in traditional both public as well as private peacebuilding initiatives. However, this demand leads to a highly important question: should art play such a crucial role in official reconciliation processes? One might argue that the incorporation and instrumentalization of artistic projects into the larger peacebuilding scheme creates the risk of the arts losing some of its greatest qualities. Art can be the place where protest against superordinate narratives can be articulated, resistance towards existing structure can be expressed. It might be a thin line for arts to keep this function while being in the service of a planned peacebuilding concept. It needs to be reflected and discussed whether art should be included in official processes or should rather keep its independence. This dilemma needs to be taken seriously.

Bibliography

- Abe, T. (2012). Reconciliation as Process or Catalyst: Understanding the Concept in a Post-conflict Society. *Comparative Sociology*, 11(6), 785–814.
- Albayrak, U. (2017). Cultural Reconciliation and Music: Musical Dialogues Direction to Reconciliation between Turkish and Greek Communities in Cyprus. *Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 3(4), 321–340.
- Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities*. London, New York: Verso.
- Andrews, M., Sclater, S. D., Rustin, M., Squire, C., & Treacher, A. (2014). Introduction. In M. Andrews, S. D. Sclater, C. Squire, & A. Treacher (Eds.), *Lines of Narrative*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Auerbach, Y. (2009). The Reconciliation Pyramid-A Narrative-Based Framework for Analyzing Identity Conflicts. *Political Psychology*, 30(2), 291–318.
- Austin, J. L. (1975). *How to Do Things with Words*. Harvard University Press.
- Azar, F., Mullet, E., & Vinsonneau, G. (1999). The Propensity to Forgive: Findings from Lebanon. *Journal of Peace Research*, 36(2), 169–181.
- Balkans war. (2016, March 18). Balkans war: a brief guide. Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17632399>
- Bandura, A., Barbaranelli, C., Caprara, G. V., & Pastorelli, C. (1996). Mechanisms of moral disengagement in the exercise of moral agency. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(2), 364–374.
- Bar-Siman-Tov, Y. (2004). Dialectics between Stable Peace and Reconciliation. In Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (Ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation* (pp. 61–80). Oxford University Press.
- Bar-Tal, D. (2000). From Intractable Conflict Through Conflict Resolution To Reconciliation: Psychological Analysis. *Political Psychology*, 21(2), 351–365.
- Bar-Tal, D., & Čehajić-Clancy, S. (2013). From Collective Victimhood to Social Reconciliation: Outlining a Conceptual Framework. In D. Spini, G. Elchereth, & D. Corkalo Biruski (Eds.), *War, Community, and Social Change* (Vol. 130, pp. 125–136). New York, NY: Springer New York.

- Baumeister, R. F., & Newman, L. S. (1994). How Stories Make Sense of Personal Experiences: Motives that Shape Autobiographical Narratives. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20(6), 676–690.
- Ben David, Y., Hameiri, B., Benheim, S., Leshem, B., Sarid, A., Sternberg, M., et al. (2017). Exploring ourselves within intergroup conflict: The role of intragroup dialogue in promoting acceptance of collective narratives and willingness toward reconciliation. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 23(3), 269–277.
- Bernstein, M. (2005). Identity Politics. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 31(1), 47–74.
- Berzonsky, M. D. (2004). Identity processing style, self-construction, and personal epistemic assumptions: A social-cognitive perspective. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 1(4), 303–315.
- Bleiker, R. (2001). The aesthetic turn in international political theory. *Millenium*, 30(3), 509–533.
- Bleiker, R. (2009). *Aesthetics and World Politics*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Bleiker, R., & Hutchison, E. (2008). Fear no more: emotions and world politics. *Review of International Studies*, 34(S1), 115–135.
- Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. (2003). An Introduction to the Arts and Narrative Research: Art as Inquiry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(4), 506–514.
- Bosnia and Herzegovina. (n.d.). Bosnia and Herzegovina. Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://www.icmp.int/where-we-work/europe/western-balkans/bosnia-and-herzegovina/>
- Bosnia-Herzegovina profile. (2018, October 8). Bosnia-Herzegovina profile - Timeline. Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17212376>
- Botcharova, O. (2007). Justice or Forgiveness? In Search of a Solution. *Cardozo Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 8(623), 623–649.
- Breed, A. (2006). Performing Reconciliation in Rwanda. *Peace Review: a Journal of Social Justice*, 18(4), 507–513.
- Brezar, A. (2019, May 29). Bosnia is close to the edge. We need Europe's help. Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/29/bosnia-europe-economy-ethnic-nationalist>
- Brigg, M., & Bleiker, R. (Eds.). (2011). *Mediating across difference: oceanic and Asian approaches to conflict resolution*. University of Hawai'i Press.

- Bronfen, E. (2006). Reality Check: Image Affects and Cultural Memory. *Differences*, 17(1), 20–46.
- Brown, R. (2000). Social identity theory: past achievements, current problems and future challenges. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 30(6), 745–778.
- Brown, R., & Čehajić, S. (2008). Dealing with the past and facing the future: mediators of the effects of collective guilt and shame in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 38(4), 669–684.
- Brown, R., González, R., Zagefka, H., Manzi, J., & Čehajić, S. (2008). Nuestra culpa: Collective guilt and shame as predictors of reparation for historical wrongdoing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94(1), 75–90.
- Butler, J. (2010). *Gender Trouble*. New York, London: Routledge.
- Calic, M.-J. (2013). Ethnic Cleansing and War Crimes, 1991-1995. In C. W. Ingrao & T. A. Emmert (Eds.), *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies* (pp. 114–153). Purdue University Press.
- Capozza, D., Trifiletti, E., Vezzali, L., & Favara, I. (2013). Can intergroup contact improve humanity attributions? *International Journal of Psychology*, 48(4), 527–541.
- Chandler, D. (2010). The uncritical critique of “liberal peace.” *Review of International Studies*, 36(S1), 137–155.
- Chandler, D. (2017). *Peacebuilding*. Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Chronology. (2008, July 22). CHRONOLOGY-What happened during the war in Bosnia? Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL21644464>
- Cobb, S. B. (2013). *Speaking of Violence*. Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, C. (2003). Engaging with the Arts to Promote Coexistence. In *Imagine coexistence restoring humanity after violent ethnic conflict* (pp. 1–17).
- Cohen, C. (2005). Creative Approaches to Reconciliation. In M. Fitzduff & C. E. Stout (Eds.), *The Psychology of Resolving Global Conflicts From War to Peace* (pp. 1–61).
- Cohen, C. E. (2015). Arts and Building Peace: Affirming the Basics and Envisioning the Future. *United States Institute of Peace Insights*, 5–7.
- Cohen, C. E., Varea, R. G., & Walker, A. P. O. (2011). Acting Together I: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict.
- Connolly, W. E. (1989). Identity and Difference in Global Politics. In J. Der Derian & M. J. Shapiro (Eds.), *International/intertextual relations* (pp. 323–342). Lexington Books.

- Corntassel, J., Chaw-win-is, & T'lakwadzi. (2009). Indigenous Storytelling, Truth-telling, and Community Approaches to Reconciliation. *ESC: English Studies in Canada*, 35(1), 137–159.
- Coupland, N. (2010). “Other” representation. In J. Jaspers, J.-O. Östman, & J. Verschueren (Eds.), *Society and Language Use* (pp. 241–241). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Crisp, R. J., & Turner, R. N. (2009). Can imagined interactions produce positive perceptions? Reducing prejudice through simulated social contact. *American Psychologist*, 64(4), 231–240.
- Crisp, R. J., Stathi, S., Turner, R. N., & Husnu, S. (2009). Imagined Intergroup Contact: Theory, Paradigm and Practice. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 3(1), 1–18.
- Crocker, D. A. (1999). Reckoning with Past Wrongs: A Normative Framework. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 13, 43–64.
- Čehajić, S., & Brown, R. (2010). Silencing the Past. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 1(2), 190–196.
- Čehajić, S., Brown, R., & Castano, E. (2008). Forgive and Forget? Antecedents and Consequences of Intergroup Forgiveness in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Political Psychology*, 29(3), 351–367.
- Čehajić, S., Brown, R., & González, R. (2009). What do I Care? Perceived Ingroup Responsibility and Dehumanization as Predictors of Empathy Felt for the Victim Group. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 12(6), 715–729.
- Čehajić-Clancy, S., Goldenberg, A., Gross, J. J., & Halperin, E. (2016). Social-Psychological Interventions for Intergroup Reconciliation: An Emotion Regulation Perspective. *Psychological Inquiry*, 27(2), 73–88.
- Danchev, A., & Lisle, D. (2009). Introduction: art, politics, purpose. *Review of International Studies*, 35(04), 775–779.
- Darweish, M., & Rank, C. (2012). Introduction. In M. Darweish, C. Rank, & S. Giles (Eds.), *Peacebuilding and Reconciliation*. Pluto Press.
- De Fina, A. (2015). Narrative and Identities. In A. De Fina & A. Georgakopoulou (Eds.), *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis* (pp. 351–368). Wiley Blackwell.
- Demoulin, S., Cortes, B. P., Viki, T. G., Rodriguez, A. P., Rodriguez, R. T., Paladino, M. P., & Leyens, J.-P. (2009). The role of in-group identification in infra-humanization. *International Journal of Psychology*, 44(1), 4–11.

- Demoulin, S., Leyens, J.-P., Rodriguez-Torres, R., Rodriguez-Perez, A., Paladino, P. M., & Fiske, S. T. (2005). Motivation to support a desired conclusion versus motivation to avoid an undesirable conclusion: The case of infra-humanization. *International Journal of Psychology*, 40(6), 416–428.
- Derian, Der, J. (2001). *Virtuous War*. Westview Press.
- Dijk, T. A. V. (1990). Social Cognition and Discourse. In W. P. Robinson & H. Giles (Eds.), *Handbook of language and social psychology* (pp. 163–183).
- Dijk, T. A. V. (2009). *Society and Discourse: How Social Contexts Influence Text and Talk*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dodds, K. (2008). Screening terror: Hollywood, the United States and the construction of danger. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 1(2), 227–243.
- Dovidio, J. F., Gaertner, S. L., & Saguy, T. (2010). Another view of “we”: Majority and minority group perspectives on a common ingroup identity. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 18(1), 296–330.
- Dwyer, S. (1999). Reconciliation for Realists. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 13, 81–98.
- Edwards, S. (2016). *Reconciliation as a form of Cultural Catharsis: The Role of Theater in Revitalizing Kosovo-Serbian Relations*. Independent Study Project ISP Collection (pp. 1–42).
- Enloe, C. (1996). Margins, silences and bottom rungs: how to overcome the underestimation of power in the study of international relations. In S. Smith, K. Booth, & M. Zalewski (Eds.), *International Theory* (pp. 186–202). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Farr, R. M. (1991). The long past and the short history of social psychology. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 21(5), 371–380.
- Friedman, M. (2000). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa as an Attempt to Heal a Traumatized Society. In A. Y. Shalev, R. Yehuda, & A. C. McFarlane (Eds.), *International Handbook of Human Response to Trauma* (pp. 399–411). Boston, MA: Springer US.
- Gaertner, S. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (2012). Common Ingroup Identity Model. In D. J. Christie (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Peace Psychology* (pp. 1–4). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., & Bachman, B. A. (1996). Revisiting the contact hypothesis: The induction of a common ingroup identity, 20(3-4), 271–290.

- Gaertner, S. L., Dovidio, J. F., Anastasio, P. A., Bachman, B. A., & Rust, M. C. (1993). The Common Ingroup Identity Model: Recategorization and the Reduction of Intergroup Bias. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 4(1), 1–26.
- Galtung, J. (1964). An Editorial. *Journal of Peace Research*, 1(1), 1–4.
- García, M. E. P. (2014). Music and Reconciliation in Colombia: Opportunities and Limitations of Songs Composed by Victims. *Music and Arts in Action*, 4(2), 1–28.
- Ghitis, F. (2018, May 28). Is Bosnia heading back to the dark old days of the 1990s? Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2018/05/28/is-bosnia-heading-back-to-the-dark-old-days-of-the-1990s/?noredirect=on>
- Glasford, D. E., & Dovidio, J. F. (2011). E pluribus unum: Dual identity and minority group members' motivation to engage in contact, as well as social change. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 47(5), 1021–1024.
- Gobodo-Madikizela, P. (2002). Remorse, Forgiveness, and Rehumanization: Stories from South Africa. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 42(1), 7–32.
- Goldenberg, A., Halperin, E., van Zomeren, M., & Gross, J. J. (2015). The Process Model of Group-Based Emotion. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 20(2), 118–141.
- González, R., & Brown, R. (2003). Generalization of positive attitude as a function of subgroup and superordinate group identifications in intergroup contact. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33(2), 195–214.
- Goode, C., & Smith, H. J. (2016). ScienceDirect Retribution or restoration: symbolic justice concerns shape how victim group members react to intergroup transgressions. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 11, 105–109.
- Govier, T. (2009). A Dialectic of Acknowledgment. In J. R. Quinn (Ed.), *Reconciliation(s): Transitional Justice in Postconflict Societies*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Grayson, K., Davies, M., & Philpott, S. (2009). Pop Goes IR? Researching the Popular Culture—World Politics Continuum. *Politics*, 29(3), 155–163.
- Greenaway, K. H., & Louis, W. R. (2010). Only human: Hostile human norms can reduce legitimization of intergroup discrimination by perpetrators of historical atrocities. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49(4), 765–783.

- Greenaway, K. H., Louis, W. R., & Wohl, M. J. A. (2011). Awareness of Common Humanity Reduces Empathy and Heightens Expectations of Forgiveness for Temporally Distant Wrongdoing. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3(4), 446–454.
- Gross, J. J. (1998). The Emerging Field of Emotion Regulation: An Integrative Review. *Review of General Psychology*, 2(3), 271–299.
- Hall, S. (1987). Minimal selves. In L. Appignanesi (Ed.), *Identity: The Real Me. Post-modernism and the question of identity* (pp. 44–46). London.
- Halperin, E. (2013). Emotion, Emotion Regulation, and Conflict Resolution. *Emotion Review*, 6(1), 68–76.
- Halperin, E., Cohen-Chen, S., & Goldenberg, A. (2014). Indirect emotion regulation in intractable conflicts: A new approach to conflict resolution. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 25(1), 1–31.
- Halperin, E., Crisp, R. J., Husnu, S., Trzesniewski, K. H., Dweck, C. S., & Gross, J. J. (2012). Promoting intergroup contact by changing beliefs: Group malleability, intergroup anxiety, and contact motivation. *Emotion*, 12(6), 1192–1195.
- Hamber, B., & Kelly, G. (2009). Beyond Coexistence: Towards a working definition of reconciliation. In J. R. Quinn (Ed.), *Reconciliation(s): Transitional Justice in Postconflict Societies*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Hammack, P. L. (2008). Narrative and the Cultural Psychology of Identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 12(3), 222–247.
- Haslam, N. (2006). Dehumanization: An integrative review. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 10(3), 252–264.
- Haslam, N., Loughnan, S., Kashima, Y., & Bain, P. (2009). Attributing and denying humanness to others. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 19(1), 55–85.
- Hawes, D. L. (2007). Crucial Narratives: Performance Art and Peace Building. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 12(2), 17–29.
- Hermann, T. (2004). Reconciliation: Reflections on the Theoretical and Practical Utility of the Term. In Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (Ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation* (pp. 39–59). New York City: Oxford University Press.

- Hewstone, M. (2015). Consequences of Diversity for Social Cohesion and Prejudice: The Missing Dimension of Intergroup Contact. *Journal of Social Issues*, 71(2), 417–438.
- Hirsch, A. (2013). *Theorizing Post-Conflict Reconciliation*. Routledge.
- Honneth, A. (1996). *The Struggle for Recognition*. MIT Press.
- Hopkins, N. (2011). Dual Identities and Their Recognition: Minority Group Members' Perspectives. *Political Psychology*, 32(2), 251–270.
- Hughes, C., Öjendal, J., & Schierenbeck, I. (2015). The struggle versus the song – the local turn in peacebuilding: an introduction. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 817–824.
- Humphrey, M. (2000). From Terror to Trauma: Commissioning Truth for National Reconciliation. *Social Identities*, 6(1), 7–27.
- Husnu, S., & Crisp, R. J. (2010). Imagined intergroup contact: A new technique for encouraging greater inter-ethnic contact in Cyprus. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 16(1), 97–108.
- Husnu, S., & Crisp, R. J. (2011). Enhancing the Imagined Contact Effect. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 151(1), 113–116.
- Ingrao, C. (2009). Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies: The Scholars' Initiative. *The American Historical Review*, 114(4), 947–962.
- Jackson, L. R., & Ward, J. E. (1999). Aboriginal health: why is reconciliation necessary? *The Medical Journal of Australia*, 170(9), 437–440.
- Jackson, P. T. (2011). *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations*. Routledge.
- Jackson, P. T., & Nexon, D. H. (2013). International theory in a post-paradigmatic era: From substantive wagers to scientific ontologies. *European Journal of International Relations*, 19(3), 543–565.
- Jacobs, T. (2018). The Dislocated Universe of Laclau and Mouffe: An Introduction to Post-Structuralist Discourse Theory. *Critical Review*, 30(3-4), 294–315.
- Kelman, H. C. (1973). Violence without Moral Restraint: Reflections on the Dehumanization of Victims and Victimizers. *Journal of Social Issues*, 29(4), 25–61.
- Kelman, H. C. (2008). Reconciliation From a Social Psychological Perspective. In A. Nadler, T. Malloy, & J. D. Fisher (Eds.), *Social Psychology of Inter-Group Reconciliation: From Violent Conflict to Peaceful Co-Existence*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Kim, S., Kollontai, P., & Yore, S. (2015). Introduction. In S. Kim, P. Kollontai, & S. Yore (Eds.), *Mediating Peace: Reconciliation through Visual Art, Music and Film* (pp. 1–13). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Kitchen, V. (2018). Veterans and military masculinity in popular romance fiction. *Critical Military Studies*, 4(1), 34–51.
- Kleres, J. (2010). Emotions and Narrative Analysis: A Methodological Approach. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 41(2), 182–202.
- la Rey, de, C., & Owens, I. (1998). Perceptions of psychosocial healing and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 4(3), 257–270.
- Laclau, E. (1994). Introduction. In E. Laclau (Ed.), *The Making of Political Identities* (pp. 1–10). London, New York: Verso.
- Lawler, S. (2002). Narrative in Social Research. In T. May (Ed.), *Qualitative Research in Action*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Leonardsson, H., & Rudd, G. (2015). The “local turn” in peacebuilding: a literature review of effective and emancipatory local peacebuilding. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 825–839.
- Leslie, R. (2013). Truth Will Set You Free: Implications of a Creative Narrative for the “Official” Discourse of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In L. Bisschoff & S. Van de Peer (Eds.), *Art and Trauma in Africa*. I.B.Tauris.
- Leyens, J.-P., Paladino, P. M., Rodriguez-Torres, R., Vaes, J., Demoulin, S., Rodriguez-Perez, A., & Gaunt, R. (2000). The Emotional Side of Prejudice: The Attribution of Secondary Emotions to Ingroups and Outgroups. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4(2), 186–197.
- Leyton, M. (1986). Principles of Information Structure Common to Six Levels of the Human Cognitive System. *Information Sciences*, 38, 1–120.
- Little, A. (2011). Disjunctured narratives: rethinking reconciliation and conflict transformation. *International Political Science Review*, 33(1), 1–17.
- Little, A. (2017). Fear, hope and disappointment: Emotions in the politics of reconciliation and conflict transformation. *International Political Science Review*, 38(2), 1–13.
- Mac Ginty, R. (2008). Indigenous Peace-Making Versus the Liberal Peace. *Cooperation and Conflict*, 43(2), 139–163.

- Mac Ginty, R., & Richmond, O. P. (2013). The Local Turn in Peace Building: a critical agenda for peace. *Third World Quarterly*, 34(5), 763–783.
- Manevska, K., Achterberg, P., & Houtman, D. (2018). Why there is less supportive evidence for contact theory than they say there is: A quantitative cultural–sociological critique. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 6(2), 296–321.
- Mani, R. (2011a). Creation amidst destruction: Southern aesthetics and R2P. In *Responsibility to Protect* (pp. 96–129). Routledge.
- Mani, R. (2011b). Women, Art and Post-Conflict Justice. *International Criminal Law Review*, 11(3), 543–560.
- Maoz, I. (2004). Social-Cognitive Mechanisms in Reconciliation. In Y. Bar-Siman-Tov (Ed.), *From Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation* (pp. 225–237). Oxford University Press.
- Maoz, I. (2011). Does contact work in protracted asymmetrical conflict? Appraising 20 years of reconciliation-aimed encounters between Israeli Jews and Palestinians. *Journal of Peace Research*, 48(1), 115–125.
- McAdams, D. P., & McLean, K. C. (2013). Narrative Identity. *Current Directions in Psychological Scienc*, 22(3), 233–238.
- McEvoy-Levy, S. (2015). Disarming “Militainment”: reading peace and resistance. *Peacebuilding*, 3(2), 200–217.
- McGonegal, J. (Ed.). (2009). *Imagining Justice*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- Mercer, J. (2014). Feeling like a state: social emotion and identity. *International Theory*, 6(03), 515–535.
- Michel, C. C. (2013). Panels for Peace: Contributions of Israeli and Palestinian Comics to Peace-Building. *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, (5), 205–230.
- Michel, C. C. (2015). The Art of Persuasion and Propaganda: The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict in Comic Books and Graphic Novels, 1–20.
- Miles, E., & Crisp, R. J. (2014). A meta-analytic test of the imagined contact hypothesis. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 17(1), 3–26.

- Miller, N. (2002). Personalization and the promise of contact theory. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(2), 387–410.
- Moore, C., & Shepherd, L. J. (2010). Aesthetics and International Relations: Towards a Global Politics. *Global Society*, 24(3), 299–309.
- Morton, T. A., & Postmes, T. (2011a). Moral duty or moral defence? The effects of perceiving shared humanity with the victims of ingroup perpetrated harm. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(1), 127–134.
- Morton, T. A., & Postmes, T. (2011b). What does it mean to be human? How salience of the human category affects responses to intergroup harm. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41(7), 866–873.
- Mouffe, C. (1994). For a politics of nomadic identity. In J. Bird, B. Curtis, M. Mash, T. Putnam, G. Robertson, & L. Tickner (Eds.), *Traveller's Tales Narratives of home and displacement* (pp. 102–109).
- Mouffe, C., Deutsche, R., Joseph, B. W., & Keenan, T. (2001). Every Form of Art Has a Political Dimension. *Grey Room*, (2), 98–125.
- Mwikisa, P. W., & Dikobe, M. M. (2009). Stories and Literature in Culture as Sources of Indigenous Insights in Peacebuilding and Development. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 4(3), 46–56.
- Nadler, A., & Liviatan, I. (2016). Intergroup Reconciliation: Effects of Adversary's Expressions of Empathy, Responsibility, and Recipients Trust. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32(4), 459–470.
- Nadler, A., & Shnabel, N. (2008). Instrumental and Socioemotional Paths to Intergroup Reconciliation and the Needs-Based Model of Socioemotional Reconciliation. In A. Nadler, T. Malloy, & J. D. Fisher (Eds.), *Social Psychology of Inter-Group Reconciliation: From Violent Conflict to Peaceful Co-Existence*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Nagy, R. (2002). Reconciliation in Post-Commission South Africa: Thick and Thin Accounts of Solidarity. *Canadian Journal of Political Science/Revue Canadienne De Science Politique*, 35(02).

- Noor, M., Brown, R., González, R., Manzi, J., & Lewis, C. A. (2008a). On Positive Psychological Outcomes: What Helps Groups With a History of Conflict to Forgive and Reconcile With Each Other? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(6), 819–832.
- Noor, M., James Brown, R., & Prentice, G. (2008b). Precursors and mediators of intergroup reconciliation in Northern Ireland: A new model. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 47(3), 481–495.
- Noor, M., Shnabel, N., Halabi, S., & Nadler, A. (2012). When Suffering Begets Suffering. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 16(4), 351–374.
- O'Leary, Z. (2004). *The Essential Guide to Doing Research*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Okimoto, T. G., & Wenzel, M. (2008). The symbolic meaning of transgressions: Towards a unifying framework of justice restoration. In K. A. Hegtvædt & J. Clay-Warner (Eds.), *Justice* (Vol. 25, pp. 291–326). Bingley: Emerald (MCB UP).
- Okimoto, T. G., Wenzel, M., & Feather, N. T. (2011). Retribution and Restoration as General Orientations Towards Justice. *European Journal of Personality*, 26(3), 255–275.
- Ong, J. M. (2016). “I’m only a dog!”: The Rwandan genocide, dehumanization, and the graphic novel. *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, 51(2), 211–225.
- Over 7000 Srebrenica Victims. (2012, July 11). Over 7,000 Srebrenica Victims have now been recovered. Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://www.icmp.int/press-releases/over-7000-srebrenica-victims-recovered/>
- Paffenholz, T. (2015). Unpacking the local turn in peacebuilding: a critical assessment towards an agenda for future research. *Third World Quarterly*, 36(5), 857–874.
- Paladino, M. P., & Vaes, J. (2010). Ours is human: On the pervasiveness of infra-humanization in intergroup relations. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 48(2), 237–251.
- Paolini, S., Hewstone, M., Cairns, E., & Voci, A. (2004). Effects of Direct and Indirect Cross-Group Friendships on Judgments of Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland: The Mediating Role of an Anxiety-Reduction Mechanism. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 30(6), 770–786.
- Paris, R. (2002). International peacebuilding and the “mission civilisatrice.” *Review of International Studies*, 28(04), 637–656.

- Pereira, C., Vala, J., & Leyens, J.-P. (2009). From infra-humanization to discrimination: The mediation of symbolic threat needs egalitarian norms. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45(2), 336–344.
- Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup Contact Theory. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 49(1), 65–85.
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 751–783.
- Pilecki, A., & Hammack, P. L. (2014). “Victims” Versus ‘Righteous Victims’: The Rhetorical Construction of Social Categories in Historical Dialogue Among Israeli and Palestinian Youth. *Political Psychology*, 35(6), 813–830.
- Porter, E. (2015). Connecting peace, justice & reconciliation. Boulder, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Premaratna, N. (2018). Theatre for peacebuilding: transforming narratives of structural violence. *Peacebuilding*, 00(00), 1–16.
- Premaratna, N., & Bleiker, R. (2010). Art and Peacebuilding: How Theatre Transforms Conflict in Sri Lanka. In O. P. Richmond (Ed.), *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding* (pp. 376–391).
- Premaratna, N., & Bleiker, R. (2016). Arts and Theatre for Peacebuilding. In O. P. Richmond, S. Pogodda, & J. Ramović (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Disciplinary and Regional Approaches to Peace* (pp. 82–94). London: Palgrave Macmillan UK.
- Quinn, J. R. (2009a). Introduction. In J. R. Quinn (Ed.), *Reconciliation(s): Transitional Justice in Postconflict Societies* (pp. 3–13). Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- Quinn, J. R. (2009b). What of Reconciliation? Traditional Mechanisms of Acknowledgment in Uganda. In J. R. Quinn (Ed.), *Reconciliation(s): Transitional Justice in Postconflict Societies* (pp. 174–206). Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- Quinn, J. R. (Ed.). (2009c). *Reconciliation(s): Transitional Justice in Postconflict*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- Rancière, J. (2011). The Politics of Aesthetics. London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Reichel, P. (2006). *Der schöne Schein des Dritten Reiches*. Ellert & Richter.
- Reynolds, J., Wetherell, M., & Taylor, S. (2007). Choice and Chance: Negotiating Agency in Narratives of Singleness. *The Sociological Review*, 55(2), 331–351.

- Richmond, O. P. (2006). The problem of peace: understanding the “liberal peace.” *Conflict, Security & Development*, 6(3), 291–314.
- Richmond, O. P. (2011). A post-liberal peace. *A Post-Liberal Peace* (pp. 1–277). Routledge.
- Richmond, O. P., & Franks, J. (2009). Liberal Peace Transitions Between Statebuilding and Peacebuilding. In *Liberal Peace Transitions* (pp. 1–11).
- Richmond, O. P., & Mac Ginty, R. (2015). Where now for the critique of the liberal peace? *Cooperation and Conflict*, 50(2), 171–189.
- Ricoeur, P. (1980). Narrative Time. *Critical Inquiry*, 7(1), 169–190.
- Riek, B. M., Mania, E. W., Gaertner, S. L., McDonald, S. A., & Lamoreaux, M. J. (2010). Does a common ingroup identity reduce intergroup threat? *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 13(4), 403–423.
- Rosoux, V. (2004). Human rights and the “work of memory” in international relations. *Journal of Human Rights*, 3(2), 159–170.
- Rosoux, V. (2017). Reconciliation as a Puzzle: Walking Among Definitions. In V. Rosoux & M. Anstey (Eds.), *Negotiating Reconciliation in Peacemaking* (pp. 15–26).
- Ross, M. H. (2003). Competing Narratives and Escalation in Ethnic Conflicts: the Case of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem. *Sphera Publica*, (3), 189–208.
- Sandoval, E. (2017). Music in peacebuilding: a critical literature review. *Journal of Peace Education*, 13(3), 200–217.
- Schaap, A. (2005). Political Reconciliation. Routledge.
- Schaap, A. (2008). Reconciliation as Ideology and Politics. *Constellations*, 15(2), 249–264.
- Schaap, A. (2016). Agonism in divided societies. *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 32(2), 255–277.
- Schwartz, S. J., Luyckx, K., & Vignoles, V. L. (Eds.). (2011). Handbook of Identity Theory and Research (pp. 1–983). New York, Dordrecht, Heidelberg, London: Springer.
- Shank, M., & Schirch, L. (2008). Strategic Arts-Based Peacebuilding. *Peace & Change*, 33(2), 217–242.
- Shapiro, M. J. (1989). Textualizing Global Politics. In J. Der Derian & M. J. Shapiro (Eds.), *International/intertextual relations* (pp. 11–22). Lexington Books.

- Shnabel, N., & Nadler, A. (2008). A needs-based model of reconciliation: Satisfying the differential emotional needs of victim and perpetrator as a key to promoting reconciliation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94(1), 116–132.
- Shnabel, N., & Nadler, A. (2015). The Role of Agency and Morality in Reconciliation Processes. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 24(6), 477–483.
- Shnabel, N., Halabi, S., & Noor, M. (2013). Overcoming competitive victimhood and facilitating forgiveness through re-categorization into a common victim or perpetrator identity. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 49(5), 867–877.
- Shnabel, N., Nadler, A., Ullrich, J., Dovidio, J. F., & Carmi, D. (2009). Promoting Reconciliation Through the Satisfaction of the Emotional Needs of Victimized and Perpetrating Group Members: The Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 35(8), 1021–1030.
- Singer, J. A. (2004). Narrative Identity and Meaning Making Across the Adult Lifespan: An Introduction. *Journal of Personality*, 72(3), 437–460.
- Sito-Sucic, D. (2018, May 2). Bosnia risks constitutional crisis over voting rules row: EU. Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-bosnia-election/bosnia-risks-constitutional-crisis-over-voting-rules-row-eu-idUSKBN1I3289>
- Stahl, R. (2009). *Militainment*, Inc.. Routledge.
- Stanišić, S. (2009). *How the Soldier Repairs the Gramophone*. Open Road + Grove/Atlantic.
- Stanišić, S. (2019). *HERKUNFT*. Luchterhand Literaturverlag.
- Stollznaw, K. (2008). Dehumanisation in language and thought. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 7(2), 177–200.
- Tajfel, H. (1982). Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 33(1), 1–39.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1979). An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–47).
- Tajfel, H., Billig, M. G., Bundy, R. P., & Flament, C. (1971). Social categorization and intergroup behaviour. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 1(2), 149–178.

- Tamkin, E. (2018, March 21). Bosnia Is Teetering on the Precipice of a Political Crisis. Retrieved September 16, 2019, from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/03/21/bosnia-is-teetering-on-the-precipice-of-a-political-crisis-balkans-election-law-dodik/>
- Taylor, S., & Wetherell, M. (1999). A Suitable Time and Place. *Time & Society*, 8(1), 39–58.
- Thorne, A. (2004). Putting the Person into Social Identity. *Human Development*, 47(6), 361–365.
- Turner, J. C. (1975). Social comparison and social identity: Some prospects for intergroup behaviour. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 5(1), 1–34.
- Turner, J. C., & Reynolds, K. J. (2012). Self-Categorization Theory. In P. A. M. Van Lange, A. W. Kruglanski, & E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology* (pp. 399–417). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Tutu, D. (1996). Healing a nation. *Index on Censorship*, 25(5), 38–44.
- Ure, M. (2008). Post-Traumatic Societies: On Reconciliation, Justice and the Emotions. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 11(3), 283–297.
- Vaes, J., Leyens, J.-P., Paladino, M. P., & Pires Miranda, M. (2012). We are human, they are not: Driving forces behind outgroup dehumanisation and the humanisation of the ingroup. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 23(1), 64–106.
- van de Mierkoop, D. (2015). Social Identity Theory and the Discursive Analysis of Collective Identities in Narratives. In A. De Fina & A. Georgakopoulou (Eds.), *The Handbook of Narrative Analysis*. Wiley Blackwell.
- Verdeja, E. (2013). The Elements of Political Reconciliation. In A. K. Hirsch (Ed.), *Theorizing Post-Conflict Reconciliation*. Routledge.
- Volkan, V. D. (2001). Transgenerational transmissions and chosen traumas: An aspect of large-group identity. *Group Analysis*, 34(1), 79–97.
- Weldes, J. (2015). High Politics and Low Data Globalization Discourses and Popular Culture. In *Interpretation and Method* (pp. 228–238). Routledge.
- Wenzel, M., Mummendey, A., & Waldzus, S. (2010). Superordinate identities and intergroup conflict: The ingroup projection model. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 18(1), 331–372.
- Wiggins, S., & Potter, J. (2017). Discursive Psychology. In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research in Psychology* (pp. 93–109). London, UNITED KINGDOM: SAGE Publications.

- Winslade, J. (2009). The Secret Knowledge of Peacemaking. *Negotiation Journal*, 25(4), 559–568.
- Winslade, J., Monk, G., & Cotte, A. (1998). A Narrative Approach to the Practice of Mediation. *Negotiation Journal*, 14(1), 21–41.
- Wohl, M. J. A., & Branscombe, N. R. (2005). Forgiveness and Collective Guilt Assignment to Historical Perpetrator Groups Depend on Level of Social Category Inclusiveness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88(2), 288–303.
- Wood, K. (2015). The Arts and Peacebuilding: An Emerging Approach. *United States Institute of Peace Insights*, 1–4.
- Worchel, S., & Coutant, D. K. (2008). Between Conflict and Reconciliation: Toward a Theory of Peaceful Coexistence. In A. Nadler, T. Malloy, & J. D. Fisher (Eds.), *Social Psychology of Inter-Group Reconciliation: From Violent Conflict to Peaceful Co-Existence*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Young, I. F., & Sullivan, D. (2016). Competitive victimhood: a review of the theoretical and empirical literature. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 11, 30–34.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Belonging and the politics of belonging. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 40(3), 197–214.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2010). Theorizing identity: beyond the ‘us’ and ‘them’ dichotomy. *Patterns of Prejudice*, 44(3), 261–280.
- Zambakari, C. D. (2018). Conceptualizing Reconciliation in Transitional Processes. *Peace Review: a Journal of Social Justice*, 30(3), 373–381.
- Zelizer, C. (2003). The Role of Artistic Processes in Peace-Building in Bosnia-Herzegovina. *Peace and Conflict Studies*, 10(2), 62–75.
- Zerubavel, E. (2012). *Time Maps: Collective Memory and the Social Shape of the Past*. University of Chicago Press.
- Žižek, S. (1994). Identity and Its Vicissitudes: Hegel's ‘Logic of Essence’ as a Theory of Ideology. In E. Laclau (Ed.), *The Making of Political Identities* (pp. 40–75). London, New York: Verso.