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"Social Representations, Collective Memory and Socially  
Shared Emotions: narrative and experimental approaches"

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## Group-based Guilt, apologies and social identity on the remembering of negative events of the past

- 14th International S. S on SR&C
  - Rome, 2008
  - Valencia, J. F.
  - University of the Basque Country

## RITUAL& EMOTIONS: collective guilt & shame

- Rituals are highly stereotyped, stylized and repetitive behaviors that takes place at a set time and place
- This orderliness serves to create a sense of security, ensuring that the participants feel that they know what is going on
- Rituals support the basic religious or secular values basis of an ordered universe

## RITUAL& EMOTIONS: collective guilt & shame

- Malinowski-Freud version
- Magic, religion and rituals reduces the tension and anxieties that result from the uncertainties of life: the case of funeral rites
- In a funeral ceremony, the behaviors of the bereaved (e.g. lamentations) is interpreted as a custom functioning to alleviate the tensions created in this individuals by the death

## RITUAL& EMOTIONS: collective guilt & shame

- Durkheim-Radcliffe-Brown Version
- Institutions function to maintain social order and equilibrium
- In a funeral ceremony the behavior of the bereaved (e.g.lamentations) serves to reaffirm the values of the society and promote the solidarity of group members
- Funeral rites fulfill the needs of the social system, not of individuals

## INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

- Social and individual functions are not mutually exclusive but a matter of analytical differences and emphasis
- Cultural tools like rituals clearly have functions for individuals, as well as for dyads, groups and societies

## INDIVIDUAL FUNCTIONS

- Signal function: inform the individual about conditions, needing to be acted upon and changed
- prepare the individual to respond to problems and opportunities
  - sadness: loss and changing plans;
  - fear/ anxiety: threat and plan/flight;
  - hate/anger: obstacles and fight;
  - hope future success; joy pride, current success

## INTERPERSONAL FUNCTIONS

- Communicative function: help individuals to know others' beliefs and intentions, coordination social interactions
- evokes complementary and reciprocal emotions in others (anger elicits fear; sadness/fear or distress elicit sympathy)
- incentives for other individuals behavior (sadness: needs help; anxiety: needs protection; anger; avoidance or helping)

## GROUP FUNCTIONS

- Help individuals to define group boundaries:
- Sharing collective pride in commemorative rituals, sadness or awe or guilt in expiatory rites give groups members the sense of communal identity
- Sharing disgust, anger & fear towards nongroup members sharpen group boundaries
- Expressing shame and guilt reconstruct ingroup positive image if:

## GROUP FUNCTIONS

- a) self-categorization but not direct implication nor high identification (related to defensive mechanism);
- b) truth apologies;
- b) possibility of reparation;
- c) out-group acceptance and validation
- help individuals to define and negotiate group related roles and statuses, group related problems
- derogating traitors and blacksheeps, upgrading heroes and define role expectations; deferential emotions (embarrassment) define status

## GROUP FUNCTIONS

- derogating traitors and blacksheeps, upgrading heroes and good members reinforces social cohesion, social identity:
- celebratory affiliation solidify social that might be threatened by conflict (related to rewards) or deviations (related to punishments)
- Expressing shame and guilt reconstructs in-group positive image and reduces inter-group conflict

## SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AT CULTURAL LEVEL

- Play a role in the processes by which individuals assume cultural identities, learn the norm and values of their culture and reproduce cultural ideologies and social structures
- Social representation of manhood (related to expressed anger and inhibited fear-guilt) and womanhood (related to inhibited anger, including anxiety-guilt)
- Social representation of independent person (egocentric and intense internal emotional reactions, that might be expressed) versus interdependent person (socio-centric emotions, low internal intensity, focused on context and relational concerns)

## Collective guilt and shame

- Guilt as a feeling that can arise after recognition of own in-group's transgressions committed in the past
- Antecedents of collective guilt (Branscombe et al., 2002):
  - Identification with the group: guilt is experienced on behalf of the group membership
  - Acceptance of group responsibility for the past wrongdoings
  - Acceptance of immorality
  - Costs and probability of reparation



## Collective guilt and shame

- However, high identification is related to defensive reactions (denial or minimize collective violence)
- Direct implication in misdeeds or collective violence is related to lower guilt (justification and rationalization of own actions)
- Guilt and shame goes together – however shame is higher also among victims ( Marques et al, 2006; Paez et al, 2006; Dresler-Hawke & Liu, 2006)
- Ingroup identification  $- .14$  with Coll. Guilt (Cehajic, 2006)

## Collective guilt and shame

- Self-categorization and middle level identification
- Acceptance of group responsibility but psychological distance (third generation)
- Probability of reparation (no reparation possible, just world reaction)
- Consequents of collective guilt and shame:
  - Reinforces derogation of in-group deviant and reparation behavior and efforts
  - Rituals reparation can helps to reconstruct collective self-esteem and a positive self-concept
  - Free spontaneous, in group elicited, “authentic”, some effectiveness, and validated



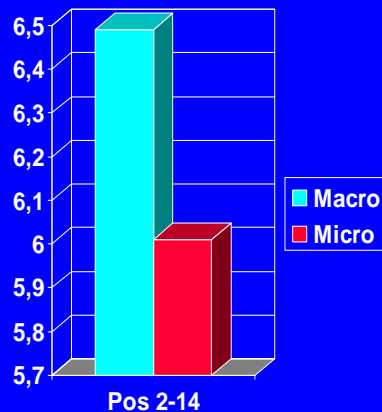
## Study 1: Repentance rituals in Spain

- The extent to which repentance ritual by Spaniard Archbishop Blasquez in 2007 Apologizing for the role played by Catholic church in the Spanish Civil War
- Aim: to analyze the role of Apologizing on group harmony and reconciliation, Forgiveness between perpetrators and victims and common identity
- N= 120 students and relatives following declarations that provokes an important discussion in mass media – in fact ambivalent apology but framed as a repentance ritual by center left newspapers
- Quick survey to evaluate impact

## Blasquez Apology helps to

- Macro level questions
- 6.- Increases harmony in society
- 7.-Helps to reinforce social reconciliation
- Micro level questions
- 9.- ...between families y relatives of victims of the Spanish civil war
- 10.- Helps to reconciliation between perpetrators and victims, sons and grandsons
- 1= Not at all to 7= A lot

## Blasquez Apology less positive at micro than macro level



Repentance rituals:

- Helps more to societal reconciliation and cohesion
- Than to interpersonal and personal improvement
- Subjects perceive a low effect  $M=3$  micro and  $3,25$  macro

Below theoretical mean  $1-7=4$

## Why the benefits of macro perspective?

- Rituals as tools helping to cope with personal negative affect : Freud and Malinowski
- However, participation in funerary rituals did not decrease grief nor sadness
- Rituals as collective coping: helps to reinforce social cohesion: Durkheim and Radcliffe Brown
- Participation in funerary rituals reinforce social support and pro-social behavior

## Study 2: Group-Based Guilt, Apologies and Social Identity

- In two studies we analyze the functioning of group-based guilt over the past of political violence and how this is related to apology.
- the implications of in-group identification for feelings of group-based guilt as result of one's group members past of political violence.
- when people feel a strong attachment to their group, they are motivated to search for and use strategies of avoiding feelings of guilt about their group's past behaviours. It is expected that ingroup identification will play an important role both in terms of interacting with antecedents and consequences of group guilt.

## Study 2: Group-Based Guilt, Apologies and Social Identity

- In study 1, it is examined how the antecedent source of the historical information (in-group or out-group source of information) interacts with group identification to affect the acceptance of group based guilt.
- In study 2, it is examined the interactive role of the consequences of group-based guilt in terms of past reparation the victims (apologies or financial restitution) and in-group identification.

## Study 2: Group-Based Guilt, Apologies and Social Identity

- Collective guilt has tested its role more than in promoting more positive intergroup attitudes (Powell, Branscombe, & Schmitt, 2005) in actually inhibiting the desire for aggressive intergroup behavior (Branscombe & Doosje, 2004; Branscombe, Doosje, & McGarty, 2006) as well as to a desire to make apologies or reparations to the offended group (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998; Iyer, Leach, & Crosby, 2003; Mallett & Swim, 2004;

## Study 2: Group-Based Guilt, Apologies and Social Identity

- Although personal responsibility for an immoral behavior has been found to be central to the experience of guilt (Weiner, 1995), research has now shown that people can experience group-guilt even when the individual has no direct responsibility for the group's action (e.g. Branscombe et al., 2002).
- Research has found, for example, that Australians feel collective guilt for the harsh treatment of Aborigines, Dutch feel collective guilt for the colonization of Indonesia, and white Americans feel collective guilt for the historically harsh treatment of African Americans (Branscombe et al., 2002; Iyer et al., 2003; Powell et al., 2005).

## Study 2: Group-Based Guilt, Apologies and Social Identity

- The Study by Doosje et al. (1998):
  - Colonization history of the Netherlands
  - Link between guilt and pro-social behaviours (e.g. material compensation, apology, forms of reparation etc.)
  - In-group Identification as a moderator of the guilt-behaviour relationship
- The Study by Brown et. (2005), Cehajic et 2006:
  - Guilt as a predictor for historical wrongdoings in Chile (longitudinal study) as well as for forgiveness in Bosnia (experimental study)

## Study 2a: Group-Based Guilt and Social Identity

- Study 2a analyzes the role of identification by manipulating the source of the history of political violence in the Basque Country (Basque TV vs Spanish TV). It is argued that highly identified people will dismiss negative information about one's group when comparing to low identified people

## Study 2a: Group-Based Guilt & SI

- **Subjects:** 69 undergraduates, 61 % female and their mean age was 21 years (SD = 1,3).
- **Overview and design** 'Questionnaire about the Remembering of recent historical events in the Basque Country: an empirical investigation'. First, an ingroup identification scale. Afterwards, the source of the historical information was manipulated by presenting participants with a message with the effects of the political violence in the recent history of the Basque Country: "Concretely the political conflict in the Basque Country has observed the following characteristics (Number of dead people, injured, victims of terrorism, detained, tortured, etc either by ETA and similar organizations as well as parapolicial groups and similar organizations). Half of the subjects were presented with the message being broadcasted by the Basque Television (ETB) while the other half by the Spanish Television (TVE). Finally a group-based Guilt scale, their intention to favour financial compensation to the victims of political violence, their evaluation of the credibility of the source of information as well as the manipulation checks.

## Study 2a: Group-Based Guilt & SI

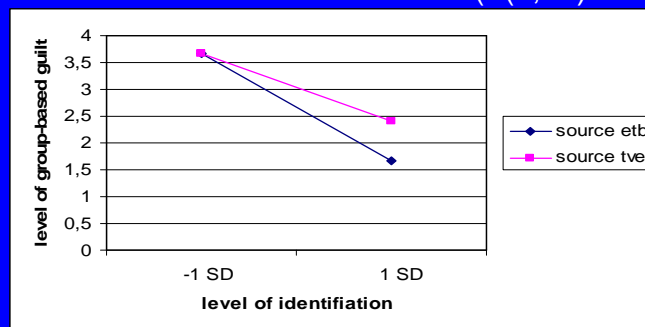
- *group-based guilt* (Based on Doosje et al (1998) and Branscombe et al (2004, 2006) a four-item measure ('I feel guilty about what the victims of political violence have suffered during the last years', 'I feel regret and grief for the harmful actions inflicted to the victims of political violence during the last years; "The fact of thinking about how we have treated the victims of political violence during the last years makes me feel guilty" "When I think about how we have treated the victims of political violence during the last years, it makes me feel shame") scales from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). (Alpha = .71).
- *Financial compensation* one item ('I think the Basque government should make more money available to the victims of political violence because of the suffering they have been inflicted during the last years'), answered on a scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) (see Doosje et al 2006).

## Study 2a: Group-Based Guilt & SI

- **Moral Compensation:** one item ('I think the Basque government should make more official declarations of apologies and moral reparation to the victims of political violence because of the suffering they have been inflicted during the last years'), ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) (see Doosje et al 2006).
- **Perceived credibility of the source of the message** was assessed by four items (see paez et al 2006): (1) "In your opinion, the message you read ...". Each question four seven-point scales ranging from "1" (= "stems from an unreliable source", "is biased", "is deceitful", and "does not stand for a true fact", respectively) to "7" (= "stems from a reliable source", "is unbiased", "is trustworthy", and "stands for a true fact", respectively). These items were collapsed to a credibility score (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.80$ ).

## Study 2a: Results

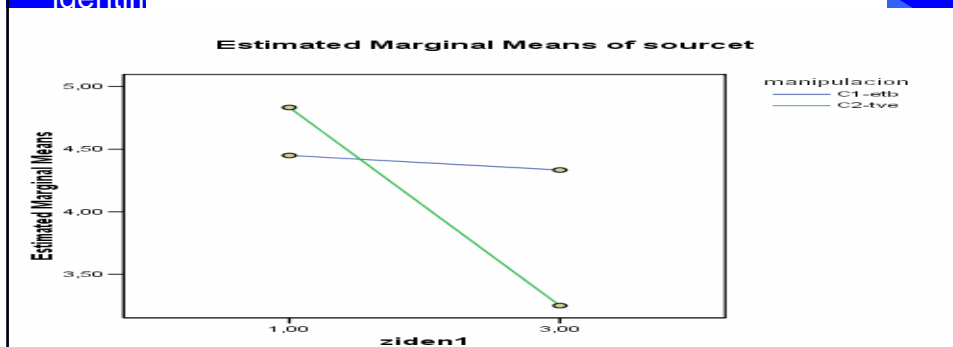
- **Manipulation check.** the message was perceived as negative ( $M = 2,42$ ,  $SD = 1.46$ ), deviating significantly from the scale midpoint 4 ( $t(63) = 13.30$ ,  $p < .000$ ).
- **Identification and Guilt.** The analysis provided no main effects for the Basque identification measure ( $F(1,63)=2.296$ ,  $p=.94$ ), but the source of information a significant main effect ( $F(1,63)=6.78$ ,  $p=.01$ ), : TVE's message produced a higher level of group-based guilt ( $M=2,81$ ;  $SD=0.99$ ) than the ETB's message ( $M=2,19$ ;  $SD = 0.86$ ). Moreover, interaction between identification and source of information ( $F(1,63)=5.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ).





## Study 2a: Results

- **Financial compensation** identification measure only ( $F(1,63)=7.29, p < .007$ ). interaction between identification and source of information ( $F(1,63)=4.14, p < .02$ ). As expected this relationship was negative: high identification co-occurs with low levels
- **Perceived credibility of the source** found no effects of identification ( $F(1,63)=1.58, p = .21$ ), source of information was significant ( $F(1,63)=8.14, p < .006$ ). ETB source ( $M=4.76$ ) more credible than the TVE source ( $M=3.95$ ). interaction between identification and source ( $F(1,63)=6.95, p = .009$ )



## Study 2b: Group-Based Guilt, Apology & SI

- Study 2b examines the influence of identification by manipulating reparations made by the Basque Parliament (apologies, financial reparation, control) on group-based guilt. It is argued that highly identified people will avoid feelings of guilt when one's group has dealt with the past negative behaviour in terms of financial reparation rather than apologies, because apologies constitute an explicit acknowledgment of the wrongs of the ingroup

## Study 2b: Group-Based Guilt, Apology & SI

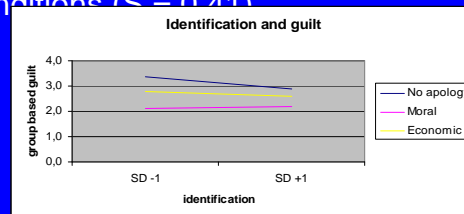
- Subjects: 84 students. 54 % were female and their mean age was 21 years (SD = 2.3).
- Overview and design. The design consisted of 3 between-subjects conditions: past ingroup behavior in terms of reparations (not specified, apologized, gave money). The manipulation involved information about the way in which the Basque Parliament had made their apologies.
- In the *not specified* condition, the historical account was similar as the presented in the Study 1 (i.e. control condition).
- In the *apology* condition, after the historical account, it was stated that the Basque Parliament have launched a law apologizing to the victims of political violence: *The parliament recommends to the Basque Institutions and to the society in general to promoting and taking part in an active way in the initiatives of homage and moral, social and political recognition to the victims of the terrorism*".

## Study 2b: Group-Based Guilt, Apology & SI

- In the *money* condition, after the historical account, it was stated that the Basque Parliament have launched a law apologizing to the victims of political violence *"The Chamber urges the Basque Government to continue and penetrate into the funding of the infrastructure and the activities of the Associations and Foundations of Victims of the terrorism"*
- **Dependent Measures**
  - *Manipulation check*
  - *group-based guilt (Alpha, .80)*
  - *Financial compensation*
  - *Moral compensation*
  - *Perceived credibility of the source*

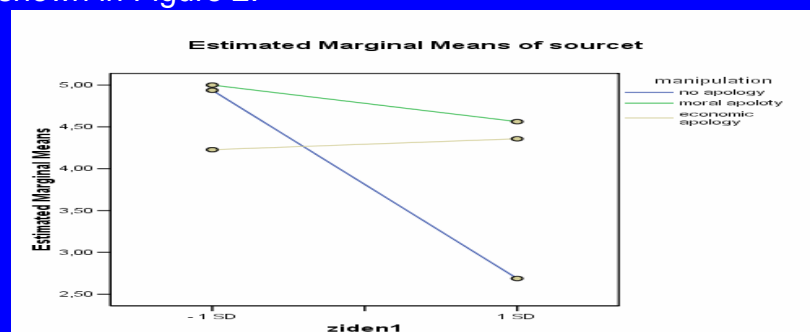
## Study 2b: Results

- **Manipulation check.** the message was perceived as negative ( $M = 2,52$ ,  $SD = 1.60$ ), deviating significantly from the scale midpoint 4 ( $t(84) = 14.30$ ,  $p < .000$ ).
- **Identification and Guilt.** The source of information a significant effect ( $(F(2, 80)=4.61$ ,  $p < .01$ ), the No Apology condition produced a higher level of guilt ( $M=3,28$ ;  $SD=1,05$ ) than the Moral Apology condition ( $M=2,38$ ;  $SD=1,12$ ) and that the Money Condition ( $M=2,75$ ;  $SD=1,0$ ). Moreover, interaction between identification and source of information ( $F(1, 63) = 5.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The pattern is displayed in Figure 1
- Tuckey analysis show control condition differed from the apology contition ( $S = 0.01$ ) and no differences were found between control and money condition ( $S = 0.14$ ) and apology and money conditions ( $S = 0.41$ )



## Study 2b: Results

**Perceived credibility of the source** no significant main effects of identification ( $F(1,84)=1.58$ ,  $p=.21$ ), but effect of source of information ( $F(2,84)=3,076$ ,  $p < .05$ ). the Moral Reparation manipulation ( $M= 4.67$ ) was perceived as more credible than the Economic Reparation manipulation ( $M=4.03$ ) and than the no Reparation ( $M = 3.91$ ). A significant interaction between identification and source ( $F(3, 80) = 2.82$ ,  $p < .04$ ). The patterns are shown in Figure 2.



## Study 2b: Results

