Collective Emotions in Conflict Situations: Societal Implications

Daniel Bar-Tal*

Tel-Aviv University

Eran Halperin

Haifa University

Joseph de Rivera

Clark University

It is well established today that emotions are an important part of most societal dynamics. The current article focuses on the role of different collective emotional elements in creating, preserving, and resolving conflicts. The main premise is that collective emotions play a pivotal role in shaping individual and societal responses to conflicting events and in contributing to the evolvement of a social context that maintains the emotional climate and collective emotional orientation that have developed. The first part of the article provides a conceptual framework to discuss the relations between conflict, context, and collective emotions. The second part uses the conceptual framework to discuss the societal implications of the articles presented in this issue. Taken together, the parts create a platform for future research on the role of collective emotions in conflict resolution and the construction of cultures of peace.

In recent decades, social psychology (Fiske, 1981; Zajonc, 1980), as well as other disciplines such as political science (e.g., Marcus & MacKuen, 1993) and sociology (e.g., Scheff, 1990), have shifted their focus from pure cognitive research to a more integrative perspective, which combines aspects of cognition and emotion. This development took place as a result of recognition that emotions constitute a central element of the human repertoire and that the study of their

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*Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Daniel Bar-Tal, School of Education, Tel Aviv University, P.O.B. 39040, Tel-Aviv 69978 [e-mail: daniel@post.tau.ac].

functioning is a prerequisite for the understanding of individual and collective behaviors (Frijda, 1986; Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 1992; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000).

Of special importance for us is the assumption that just as individuals may be characterized by a dominant emotion, societies, too, may develop a collective emotional orientation (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006). This process occurs as a result of particular societal conditions, common experiences, shared norms, and socialization in a society (Kitayama & Markus, 1994). The understanding of the central role of emotions within social and political contexts, with the acknowledgment of their potential to become a societal phenomenon, leads almost naturally to their examination as part of intragroup and intergroup processes. This issue concerns the role of collective emotions in situations of intergroup conflict and peace making.

Yet research on the role played by emotional climate and other collective emotions in conflicts and conflict resolution is only at its primary stages. Hence, the goals of this article are twofold: first, to provide a conceptual framework to discuss further the societal implications of the articles presented in this issue, mainly in reference to the relations between conflict and emotional climate, and second, to place the resulting insights in a platform for future research on the role of collective emotions (as a general term) in conflict resolution and constructing a culture of peace.

The interrelations between context, emotions, and actions are the raw material for this framework. The main premise underlining the present view is that collective emotions (a general term) play a pivotal role both in shaping the individual and societal responses to conflicting events (i.e., collective and group-based emotions) and in contributing to the evolution of a social context that maintains the collective emotions that have developed.

Formation of Collective and Group-Based Emotions

Collective emotions have been defined in a relatively general way as emotions that are shared by large numbers of individuals in a certain society (Stephan & Stephan, 2000). Group-based emotions are defined as emotions that are felt by individuals as a result of their membership in a certain group or society (Smith, 1993). Both concepts suggest that individuals may experience emotions, not necessarily as a response to their personal life events, but also in reaction to collective or societal experiences in which only a part of the group members have taken part. But while the former concept suggests that group members may share the same emotions for a number of different reasons, the latter refers only to emotions that individuals experience as a result of identifying with their fellow group members. However, an accumulation of many group-based emotional responses to a societal event can easily turn into what we define as a collective emotion. Note, too, that

we may distinguish social groups formed by social relationships from groups that are simply based on a common attribute (such as "businessmen"). Barbalet (1998) points out that in the former a collective emotion may lead to common action with a group goal even though individual members of the group may experience different personal emotions because they occupy different roles in the group. By contrast, collective emotions in the second sort of group lead to the "common action" of individuals who are subject to the same conditions as when businessmen feel confident that there is a good business climate.

The initial work by de Rivera (1992) focused on the context in which collective emotions are evoked. He suggested that it is important to differentiate emotional atmosphere from emotional culture and emotional climate. Atmosphere refers to emotions that arise when members of a group focus their attention on a specific short-term event that affects them as a group. Emotional culture refers to the emotional relations that are socialized in any particular culture. Emotional climate, the focus of the present issue, refers to the collective emotions experienced as a result of a society's response to its sociopolitical conditions. More recently, Bar-Tal (2001) has suggested the concept of a collective emotional *orientation*, a concept that refers to the characterizing tendency of a society to express a particular emotion. He provided some criteria to identify such characterizing orientation; for example, he noted that the emotion and the beliefs that evoke a particular emotion are widely shared by society members and appear frequently in the society's public discourse, cultural products, and educational materials. These orientations may even characterize entire "civilizations," as when Moïsi (2007) refers to "cultures" of fear, humiliation, and hope in the Western, Islamic, and Eastern worlds.

A number of scholars have pointed to the important behavioral implications of collective or group-based emotions when there are conflicts between groups and societies (see, e.g., Bar-Tal, in press; Petersen, 2002; Volkan, 1997). We would like to suggest that *context* is the most important factor affecting the potential construction of these emotions. Moreover, as will be elaborated, we argue that in addition to other aspects of context, the emotional element of context has great potential to influence emotional reactions and subsequent behavior. We propose that in contrast to individual emotions, which are sometimes related to a dispositional system or physiological mechanisms, collective or group-based emotions are solely formed as a consequence of experiences in particular societal context.

Lasting and Transitional Contexts and Emotions

The claim that individuals and collectives operate within context and that their behavior is influenced by it can be considered common knowledge. Yet despite the importance that social scientists attach to context, its definition is vague and elusive (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992). In general, it loosely refers to the environment and the background in which individuals and collectives live and act. As such, context

includes not only natural physical features of the environment (e.g., mountains, sea coast, storms), or the physical environment constructed by humans (e.g., cities, roads, televisions, planes, etc.), but it also refers to more abstract social, political, economic, and cultural elements. These, in turn, include everything human beings construct, create, form, organize, and implement (e.g., ideas, regimes, economic systems, institutions, cultural products, among others).

Sociological theories have generally accepted the basic assumption that the study of *social contexts* is essential for understanding the functioning of societies (Bourdieu, 1990; Parsons, 1951). Recently, Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004) have defined social context as the "general and continuing multilay-ered and interwoven set of material realities, social structures, and shared belief system that surround any situation" (p. 103). They are "the most common source of individual feelings, thoughts, and actions" (Markus, 2004, p. 3). Focusing only on the social contexts and leaving the physical ones, we may distinguish among various social contexts on the basis of their level of temporality. On one side of the dimension are lasting cultural contexts expressed in cumulative symbols that are created to communicate a particular meaning about all that is experienced in the life of a particular society (Geertz, 1993; Keesing, 1974). The symbols consist of such tangible and intangible elements as works of art, scripts, habits, rules, narratives, myths, concepts, or knowledge relating to a group and other categories. Together they represent the shared repertoire that provides meaning and rules of practices for society members, forming the basis for what may be termed emotional culture.

In contrast to these relatively stable cultural contexts are more transitional contexts that are formed as a result of particular structural socio-political relations in a society, major events, or major information. They form the basis for emotional climates. Of special interest to us is the assumption that different contexts help to form particular emotional orientations. First, we comment on the cultural con-text and the formation of emotions, and then we focus on the relatively temporal contexts and elaborate on its effect on the formation of collective emotions

Cultural Context and Emotions

It has been known for many years that each culture has its own repertoire of emotions and norms of emotional expressions, which result from many differ-ent factors, among them the culture's particular history, economic conditions, and topographical living space. A society may be characterized by sensitization to, evaluation of, and expression of a particular emotion (see, e.g., Levine & Camp-bell, 1972). This repertoire is learned from an early age, as society members are socialized to acquire the culturally approved emotional orientation. They learn what emotions are approved, what cues to attend to in order to feel a particular emotion, and how, when, and where to express the emotion (Averill, 1990; Lewis & Saarni, 1985). This learning is also done beyond the family setting, via political,

educational, and cultural mechanisms, including the mass media and other channels of communication. Children absorb cultural information, and it shapes their perspectives of their social world, including the emotions they express. In the words of Fiske, Kitayama, Markus, and Nisbett (1998), "Children and adults actively use the locally available cultural practices to generate meaningful interactions. . . . To engage in culturally patterned relationships and practices, people must coordinate their responses to their particular social milieu" (pp. 916–917).

It is thus not surprising that like individuals, societies can become characterized by a particular emotional orientation. For example, an Inuit group called Utku, who live in the Arctic Circle, disapprove of anger and suppress it (Briggs, 1970). The Japanese have a specific emotion in their emotional repertoire called "amae," which expresses a passive object of love, a kind of helplessness, and the desire to be loved (Morsbach & Tyler, 1986). Paez and Vergara (1995) found differences in feelings of fear among Mexicans, Chileans, Belgians, and Basque Spaniards. The Chileans were found to be characterized by the highest level of fear, whereas the Mexicans had the lowest. Bellah (1967) proposed that hope characterizes American society: It is a central ingredient in what he called the "civil religion" of the United States. It is this sort of emotional orientation that de Rivera (1992) termed emotional culture.

Transitional Context and Emotions

The present issue focuses on transitional contexts that are humanly constructed—either as a result of a sociopolitical economic structure that society members have established and/or as a result of major events and/or as a result of major information. Transitional context consists of the physical, social, political, economic, military, and psychological conditions, relatively temporary in their nature, that make up the environment in which individuals and collectives function (Bar-Tal & Sharvit, in press). In transitional context we do not include events or major sets of information with limited effect on emotions that last a short time. In this context we include intractable conflicts, wars, revolutions, peace processes, regimes of terror, information about major threats, and so on that have lasting effects for at least a period of few months and sometimes even for many years.

As noted, in this type of context *psychological conditions* are also included. They emerge together with other conditions (economic, political, etc.) and become inseparable from the features of the environment. Specifically, the context provides signals and cues; when these are perceived and cognized by individuals and collectives, they create the psychological conditions that become an inherent part of the societal environment of society members. *Our fundamental proposition is that the perceived and cognized psychological conditions also include various emotional aspects.* That is, human beings can appraise a context (its psychological conditions) as being threatening, harmonious, peaceful, and so forth. In turn, the

appraisal triggers thoughts, attitudes, and emotions that lead to various kinds of behaviors (see Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This conception is in line with the view of Kurt Lewin (1947), who suggested that the behavior of a group, as that of an individual, is greatly affected by perception of the environment, which implies psychological climate.

At this point we can take a step further and refine the above proposition by suggesting that psychological conditions include an emotional field, which can be considered an emotional context that triggers particular emotions (de Rivera & Paez, this issue). That is, the emotional context transmits salient cues and signals that evoke a particular emotion among society members. When such emotional context lasts for a period of time, society members who live in this context become attuned to the cues and signals. They become predisposed to respond to them and eventually may be characterized by the particular emotion. These cues and signals are usually transmitted by societal channels of communication, including mass media, and the learning may be later generalized and automatized. With time, the society may create various cultural products (e.g., literature, films, paintings, and so on) that refer to the emotion and beliefs that evoke it. This development extends the emotional context and may lead to the development of an emotional collective orientation that characterizes a society (Bar-Tal, 2001).

The crucial premise of the above connection is that context of which emotional context is part and that evokes emotion becomes collective emotions are often *humanly constructed* and we focus on these types of contexts. That is, individuals, groups, or societies are responsible for the creation of events, institutional arrangements, political policies, or major information that serve as a context, including emotional context, that eventually evoke particular emotion. It becomes collective emotion experienced by at least a significant part of society members (see, e.g., Corradi, Weiss Fagen, & Garreton, 1992). The humanly constructed context can be of negative or positive characteristics that elicit mainly either negative or positive beliefs, attitudes, and emotions. The negative context may be of threatening, stressful, or unjust nature, while the positive context can be peaceful or harmonious. The former may evoke beliefs about insecurity and distrust, as well as emotions of fear, anger, and hatred. The latter may evoke beliefs of security and trust as well as emotions of hope and tranquility.

Evoking Collective Emotions

Emotional contexts shape the way society members frame events. More specifically, a collective response to conflict- or peace-related events is affected by the temporary collective or group-based emotional reaction to the event, which is closely related to the social and emotional context. From the perspective of appraisal theorists, the manner in which a person interprets a certain environmental stimulus has a decisive effect on the emotion that he or she will develop (see Arnold, 1960; Lazarus, 2001; Roseman, 1984).

Appraisal, or alternatively, understanding of the context, depends on past collective experiences and cultural norms, among other things. Smith (1993) and Mackie et al. (2000) have pointed out that the identification of individuals with a collective or a group influences their appraisal of events. In our view, the concepts of emotional climate and collective emotional orientation lead intuitively to the understanding that the long-term emotional context plays a major role in the appraisal process of major information and major events. In a way, the emotional climate and collective emotion orientation are part of the lens through which group members interpret conflictive or peaceful events.

Moreover, in contrast to the appraisal process of individual emotions, which takes place mostly inside the individual's "black box," most of the appraisal process of group-based and collective emotions takes place in the public sphere, including the mass media and public speeches. Hence, the potential influence of human beings both on the development of the emotional context and on the occurrence of collective emotions in response to societal events is relatively high.

Of importance is the well-established negative-positive asymmetry (Peeters & Czapinski, 1990). A number of theorists (see Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999) postulate that evaluation and action are based on an input from two separate and specialized channels: One is related to negative information, and the other deals with positive information processing. The first one is threat related, the second is appetitive. There is considerable evidence in psychology that negative events and information tend to be more closely attended and better remembered and that they strongly influence evaluation, judgment, and action tendencies (see reviews by Cacioppo & Berntson, 1994; Peeters & Czapinski, 1990). This tendency reflects adaptive behavior because negative information, especially related to threats, may require immediate adaptive reactions to the new situation. In essence the asymmetry suggests that transitional contexts, which include negative psychological conditions, are more intense than transitional contexts that include positive psychological conditions. Hence, the negative emotions may have a greater influence on human behavior than the positive ones (Jarymowicz, 2001; Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006).

But the two categories of negative and positive emotions should not be viewed in a uniform manner. The growing literature about emotions (Frijda, 1986; Lewis & Haviland-Jones, 2000) has made efforts to distinguish among different emotions and identify their exclusive antecedents, appraisals, affects, and response properties.

Specific Emotions

In addition to the collective emotions described and assessed by de Rivera, Kurrien, and Olsen in this issue, we must consider some collective emotional orientations that are particularly important in the context of conflicts.

Fear

Fear is defined as a primary aversive emotion that arises in situations of per-ceived threat and danger to organisms (persons) or their environment (the society), and it enables them to respond to them adaptively (Gray, 1989; Öhman, 1993; Rachman, 1978). Reactions of fear may be aroused through a conscious appraisal of the situation. But in many cases, they are activated automatically allowing un-conscious processing (LeDoux, 1996). A collective *fear* orientation cuts deeply into the psychic fabric of society members and becomes linked with a social ethos of conflict. The main problem with fear as a collective emotional context is its stability above and beyond the changing of the actual or social context. Collective fear orientation tends to limit the perspective of members of the society by binding the present to past experiences related to the conflict and by building expectations for the future exclusively on the basis of the past (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003). It also causes great mistrust and delegitimization of the adver-sary. In studies carried out in Israel, a negative correlation was found between collective fear and support for the peace process (Arian, 1989; Gordon & Arian, 2001; Maoz & McCauley, 2005). Finally, the collective fear orientation is a major platform for violence. A society in fear tends to fight when it copes with threatening conditions.

On the other hand, in some situations, the prolonged orientation of a society toward fear and insecurity in conjunction with acute threatening events might increase its motivation to achieve peace (Zartman, 2000). Recently, Rosler (2006) found that fear messages were central in all peace proposals within the Israeli public discourse.

Hatred

Hatred may be defined as a secondary, extreme, and continuous emotion that is directed at a particular individual or group and denounces that individual or group fundamentally and all-inclusively (Sternberg, 2003). Often, hatred is a direct reaction to protracted harm perceived as deliberate, unjust, and stemming from an inner evil character of the hated individual or group (Halperin, 2007). Hatred towards outgroups includes a wide cognitive spectrum that produces a clear distinction between the hated outgroup and the ingroup and consequently delegitimizes the hated outgroup (Bartlett, 2005). Behaviorally, hatred may lead people to a desire to remove the hated outgroup. It may involve the use of active political means against the object of hatred (Watts, 1996) or the establishment of extremist, racist parties that base their political campaigns on hatred toward outgroups (Mudde, 2005). Therefore, it would not be too far-reaching to suggest that collective hatred is one of the most influential motivational forces in every conflict (Petersen, 2002).

Besides its direct behavioral implications, hatred is closely related to inter-group or ethnic symbols, which play a significant role in the preservation or the escalation of conflicts (Kaufman, 2001). Further, the extremist, continuous, and all-inclusive nature of hatred hinders the resolution of conflicts. The fact that hatred is directed to the fundamental character of the hated society rather than to spe-cific behaviors makes a process of reconciliation or forgiveness difficult. Hence, in many ways, moderating levels of intergroup hatred is an essential part of every process of conflict resolution or reconciliation (Staub, 2005).

Hope

Hope consists of cognitive elements of aspiring and expecting a positive goal accompanied by positive feelings about the anticipated events or outcomes (Snyder, 2000; Staats & Stassen, 1985; Stotland, 1969). It refers to positive goals to which individuals and collectives aspire and believe may be attained (Averill, Catlin, & Chon, 1990). Thus, collectives may aspire to goals of equality, security, prosperity, and peace that they can achieve. Hope may arise in a context of deprivation, when individuals and collectives become aware that there is a possibility their needs may be met. It requires the use of imagery, creativity, cognitive flexibility, mental exploration of novel situations, and even risk taking (Fromm, 1968). Once hope arises, it serves as a prism for the worldview as well as a source for collective mobilization and action to achieve the set goal.

Security

Security is similar to hope in that it is also based mainly on the cognitive foundations accompanied by general good feeling (Bar-Tal & Jacobson, 1998; Smith & Lazarus, 1993). It is based on appraisal of an event(s), condition(s), or situation(s) (all are parts of a context) as an indicator of threat or danger (primary appraisal) and on an evaluation of available defenses and the ability to cope with the perceived threat or danger (secondary appraisal). Accordingly, people form beliefs about being secure when they do not perceive threats or dangers, or perceive threats or dangers that they believe they will be able to overcome. But it should be recognized that this is a multidimensional concept as individuals and collectives differentiate among different domains in which they can appraise security. Thus, as shown in this issue by Mahoney and Pinedo security may refer independently to such domains as physical survival, economic welfare, or cultural well-being. It can also refer to individual and collective security separately (Bar-Tal, Jacobson, & Freund, 1995).

Maslow (1970) viewed security as one of the basic needs that has to be satisfied for the well-being of humans. Thus, a sense of security comes with feelings of satisfaction, tranquility, contentment, and peace. In contrast, a lack of security is

accompanied by frustration, fear, and dissatisfaction and may lead to the most extreme behaviors, including violent conflicts, wars, and even genocide (Staub & Bar-Tal, 2003).

Societal Implications

In the second part of this article we point out the societal implications of the articles presented in this issue. This is done within the proposed framework that suggests that humanly constructed contexts are responsible for the formation of the most destructive emotional climates and that therefore, human beings should act to change the context to construct a positive emotional climate. We also rely on the conception proposed by the article of Fernandez-Dols, Carrera, Hurtado de Mendoza, and Oceja, who point out that emotional climates are based on formed societal conventions, which often serve as key factors in the justification and explanation of social order. First, we refer to the formation of the negative context and negative emotional climate. Second, we discuss the human intervention that aims at changing the negative context and thus improving the emotional climate. Finally, we discuss the conditions that are needed for the construction of a culture of peace that is underlined by a positive emotional climate.

Formation of a Negative Emotional Climate

It must be recognized that in many cases a negative emotional climate has developed from a negative context. In turn, the negative emotional climate evokes negative beliefs and emotions that lead to defensive or aggressive behavior. The resulting context may be dominated by beliefs that foster insecurity, threat, and stress as well as emotions of fear, anger, hatred, and so on. A number of articles in the present issue focus on humanly constructed negative contexts and the severe psychological consequences these caused.

For example, two articles describe the emotional effects of March 11, 2004, terrorist attack in Madrid that resulted in 191 deaths and more than 1,500 injuries. The article by Conejero and Etxebarria distinguishes between the personal emotions and the collective emotions that were evoked and shows how measures of emotional climate contribute to our ability to predict the behavior that resulted. The article by Páez, Ubillos, and González-Castro concentrates on the way of coping with this terrifying event. Both articles show that the terror attack in Madrid influenced collective as well as individual emotions within the Spanish society.

Another example of an extremely negative humanly constructed context is presented by Lykes, Beristain, and Pérez-Armiñan, who describe the emotional reactions of Maya communities in Guatemala after four decades of internal armed conflict, political repression, and political violence. According to the authors, between 50,000 and 100,000 people were violently killed during the nearly 40 years of conflict, most of them assassinated in group massacres aimed at destroying the

community. Moreover, throughout this horrible conflict, more than 400 villages of the Highland indigenous population were burned to the ground and more than one million people were displaced.

Finally, the article by Kanyangara, Rimé, Philippot, and Yzerbyt regarding the Rwanda genocide reminds us of the darkest side of human nature. Even in present times, humanly constructed intergroup conflicts have the potential to create the most extreme form of mass murder and killing. In Rwanda, between April and July 1994, approximately one million Tutsis were murdered, in addition to tens of thousands of Hutus (Kanyangara, Rimé, Philippot, & Yzerbyt, current issue). As in the Spanish and Maya cases, the mass killing had an enormous emotional impact on society members in Rwanda. Both survivors of the genocide and perpetrators expressed high levels of negative emotions (i.e., fear, sadness, and guilt) as well as negative assessment of their society's emotional climate.

Changing the Negative Emotional Climate

Because negative contexts are created by humans, it seems evident that people should try to change them in order to create contexts that foster positive emotional climates that lead to positive human behavior. Ruiz shows that prisons, whose employees report more positive emotional climates, have prisoners who report less negative climates, and that when a positive climate predominates amongst prisoners, there is less negative climate among employees. We know how to improve prison climates and should do so. It is becoming increasingly clear that traumatic events such as bombings, disappearances, and massacres not only injure the individuals who are most affected but also threaten the fabric of the entire community or society. But it is also been shown that a society can pull itself together so that the emotional atmosphere of fear, sadness, and anger dissipate and the emotional climate can maintain a generally positive character. At least, Conejero and Etxebarria show that this was true in the case of Spanish society, and the article by Páez, Ubillos, and González-Castro suggests that this recovery is aided by public demonstrations that reinforce feelings of collective solidarity. Participation in demonstrations was shown to be associated with the perception of a more positive emotional climate 8 weeks later, even when initial perceptions and affect are controlled.

However, a recovery of emotional climate may be more difficult when a society has been greatly weakened. A belief in justice is shattered by policies of impunity, and scars from the trauma of massacres affect the emotional climate in ways that hinder the development of a culture of peace. Thus, the article by Lykes, Beristain, and Cabrera about Guatemala shows that without community support and the ability to organize collective rituals, grief is left unresolved and people flounder. The authors implicitly argue for the necessity of support from outside the affected society and describe two attempts to restore a positive climate. The first involves a trial in which people from a community attempt to obtain justice.

Although the trial reawakened intense suffering and fear and community support was divided, the initial fear of those who participated was replaced by anger and a desire to remember rather than forget what had happened. A more positive social climate may have been obtained. The authors stress the importance of interpreting participation in the trial as an act of resistance to oppression, thus encouraging a self-image that overcomes fear and powerlessness with confidence and worth. The second attempt involves enlisting the surviving women of a community to create a photo-text of their history. Again, fear and sorrow are reawakened, and there is anxiety about the procedure, but as these negative feelings are faced the women develop self-confidence and begin to believe in the possibility of building a better future. Although it is unclear how much these attempts increased the extent of solidarity and hope in the emotional climate, they do appear to have diminished the extent of fear and despair.

The article by Kanyangara, Rimé, Philippot, and Yzerbyt describes the attempt to use Gacaca trials to rebuild society in Rwanda. In contrast to the attempt to restore a sense of justice by using criminal justice trials, the Gacaca trials attempt to further reconciliation by the public recognition of the suffering of victims and the admission of guilt by those who perpetrated that suffering. On the one hand, the trials appear to have achieved a degree of reconciliation. The authors demonstrate that the trials were successful in decreasing negative stereotypes and the perception of outgroup homogeneity in both groups of survivors and perpetrators. Furthermore, although there was an increase in the guilt of perpetrators, there was not an increase in the anger of survivors. Thus, one may argue that the trials were a successful ritual in increasing community cohesion. On the other hand, neither group reported increases in the positive aspects of the country's emotional climate, estimates of the general emotional climate declined, and the survivors who testified experienced personal increases in fear, anxiety, sadness, disgust, and shame. They also reported a sharp increase in the negative aspects of the country's emotional climate. Hence, although the trials succeeded in diminishing prejudice, they do not seem to have improved the country's emotional climate and may have even worsened the climate for victims.

All three articles show that participation in public rituals does not necessarily relieve negative affect. On the contrary, participation leads to higher levels of emotional upset. However, it also appears to support the personal growth of participants and to have generally beneficial effects for the community. At least, this is true when the design of rituals reinforces social support cohesion.

Formation of Culture of Peace via Positive Climate

A formation of a positive context that can be characterized as a culture of peace via creation of positive climate should be the objective of the international community. A positive emotional climate may be defined as one in which people's

emotional relationships are characterized by a concern for others, sensitivity to others' needs, freedom, trust, and security. This does not mean that there is no anger, fear, or dissatisfaction. However, it presumes that there is more trust and solidarity than hostility and disunity, more personal security than insecurity, more hope than despair, more confidence in institutions than dissatisfaction and anger at authority, and more tranquility than fear in public.

Under such psychological conditions, it is postulated that individuals will experience more peace in the sense of inner harmony and compassion, that communities will have norms and institutions that promote the resolution of conflicts without violence, and that there will be societal support for the sort of environment that allows people to fulfill their basic needs and support the global culture of peace endorsed by the UN General Assembly.

The findings presented by de Rivera, Kurrien, and Olsen in this issue demonstrate that nations have emotional climates with different degrees of social trust and social anger/fear. These climates are independent of an individual's social class and associated with the degree to which the nation has a culture of peace. The extent to which a nation has a culture of peace that is characterized by high liberal development and low violent inequality affects the percentage of persons in different social classes and the extent to which communities manifest differences in security. The amount of personal security can be distinguished from estimates of the collective emotions that constitute emotional climate and are more influenced by nation than by social class. It is the subjective experience of national emotional climate, rather than personal emotional experience, that appears most related to objective indices for the culture of peace in the different nations. Indeed, this observation is well documented in the study reported by Mahoney and Pinedo, who showed that the experience of human security depends more on national emotional climate than socioeconomic status and that for community samples, a large part of human security depends on support from family and friends.

Rimé's thinking reminds us that an education for peace must aim at generating a climate of hope that it is possible to win peace and not just war. Thus, the social sharing in demonstrations cannot simply be anger against war; it must also be for the cooperation needed to create a culture of peace. It must invoke the collective memory of successful nonviolent actions around the war and create a climate of hope that will reinforce the solidarity needed to overcome the political obstacles to peace.

The article by Basabe and Valencia shows that a nation's factor scores on objective measures of the culture of peace promoted by the United Nations are significantly related to subjective measures of a nation's values and emotions. Each of the four crucial factors is significantly related to important values. *Liberal development* is positively related with valuing individualism and opposing unequal power distribution, and countries with higher scores appear to have emotional climates characterized by more trust and less negative emotionality. However,

the valuing of individualism and power equality is not related to national scores on *violent inequality* and *state use of violence.* Low scores on these important factors are related to the extent to which the people of a nation value harmony. By implication, to have a society scoring well on all three dimensions of peacefulness one needs a culture that cultivates not only individualism and equality but also harmony.

In this regard, it is important to note that individualism and harmony are not opposing values. On the one hand, this means we do not have to choose between them. On the other hand, one does not imply the other and a society may need to deliberately strive to cultivate both. Finally, although the values related to *nurturance* appear similar to many of those related to liberal development, it is striking that national scores on this factor are related to higher scores on positive emotionality (rather than lower scores on negative emotionality). Certainly, the findings suggest that a fully developed culture of peace requires a blending of both competitive and cooperative capability as well as an emotional climate in which positive emotions predominate without the inhibition of negative emotions.

Rather than relating the dimensions of a culture of peace to national values and emotional climate, Diener and Tov relate the dimensional scores of nations and the subjective well-being (SWB) of individuals to the attitudes of citizens that may be related to peace. They find that liberal development and national happiness foster or reinforce ideologies that are bases for a culture of peace such as individual rights, democratic participation, and nonviolence. Thus, both national scores on liberal development and individual scores on SWB are negatively related to prejudice, and the negative relationship between happiness and prejudice increases as a nation's liberal development increases; so, happy individuals in developed nations are even less likely to be prejudiced than happy individuals in less developed nations. Congruently, a nation's scores on violent inequality are related to the endorsement of military rule and autocracy.

Diener and Tov make a convincing argument that happiness may be an important aspect of a culture of peace, a sustaining base and not simply a by-product of peace. They point out that nation-level SWB is related to prioritizing civil and political freedom over economic stability and maintaining social order, and that this is true even after one controls for person-level SWB and GDP. Thus, we may be able to speak of happiness as reflecting a national norm or being an aspect of emotional climate that supports attitudes needed for a culture of peace. However, at an individual level their argument is more ambiguous. Although individual SWB was associated with many attitudes important for a peaceful society, and some of these were not moderated by national SWB or GDP, it (unlike national SWB) was also associated with confidence in the armed forces and a greater willingness to fight for one's nation. The contradictory significant relationships between national and individual SWB raise important questions for

the psychological underpinnings of a culture of peace, specifically how people perceive state use of violence, negotiation, nonviolent attitudes, and the struggle for justice.

The dimensions of culture of peace are positively related to an emotional climate of trust and a general permissiveness toward emotions. However, the dimensions are orthogonal and it seems likely that the competitive values that promote liberal development often lead to an increasing disparity between those with ability and resources and those who lack these advantages. The achievement of both liberal development and equality in nations such as Norway appears to require policies that combine the incentives of capitalism with programs deliberately aimed at offsetting inequality by systems of progressive taxation and adult education that work toward preventing the segregation of rich and poor.

Unfortunately, the independence of the dimensions of culture of peace suggests that liberal development has little to do with either violent inequality or state use of violence; the data presented by de Rivera, Kurrien, and Olsen show that positive emotional climate is not necessarily related to state use of nonviolent means. Diener and Tov demonstrate that the extent of an individual's happiness (as opposed to the amount of national happiness) is positively related to confidence in the military and willingness to fight for one's nation. Thus, it would appear that state violence can only be controlled by the development of international norms and, ultimately, some system of world government. People seem predisposed to ingroup favoritism and have a commitment to different belief systems that make it difficult to achieve global solidarity. However, it may well be possible to separate ethnic and state identities so that conflicts can be isolated and contained by a global state identity. In the case of the United States, this development might be furthered by the creation of a Department of Peace.

Conclusions

The present issue concerns macro-level social and political psychology focusing on a particular aspect of societal behavior—its emotional repertoire. The articles in this issue clearly suggest that society members experience collective emotions not only as a result of directly experiencing events that evoke particular emotion but also by identifications with the society as a collective. Moreover, the articles suggest that societies function in a context that signals psychological conditions that include an emotional climate.

Of importance is our premise that many of the transitional contexts are humanly constructed and that they foster the development of different types of emotional climates, which lead to an experience of particular beliefs and emotions. Unfortunately, human beings in different parts of the world live under humanly constructed contexts that foster negative climates that lead to such reactions as fear, anger, hatred, insecurity, and mistrust. Among them are violent conflicts,

ethnic cleansings, terror attacks, total regimes, institutionalized exploitations and discriminations, and so on.

Living in context with such negative climates is a dreadful experience for many people, causing much misery and suffering. The question that arises is whether people living under these conditions can improve their well-being. The ability to improve depends very much on the freedom, resources, and knowledge that people have. In some situations a change in emotional climate may require the aid of those living in more fortunate contexts.

A change of emotional climate can have two distinct forms. The first, and the more modest one, includes only a moderation of negative emotional elements such as fear or hatred. In that case the parties can at best achieve a "negative" form of peace—a violence-free system (Galtung, 1996). A second form of change is mainly about the growth of positive elements of emotional climate such as hope, security, and trust between rival parties. Such a climate is a springboard for the establishment of positive forms of peace: "a cooperative system, beyond passive peaceful coexistence, one that can bring forth positively synergistic fruits of the harmony" (Galtung, 1996, p. 61).

That it may be possible to improve climates, even in cases of intractable conflict, is suggested by the peaceful resolutions of conflict in South Africa, some countries in Latin America, and hopefully, Northern Ireland. Lederach (1997) has pointed out that reconciliation requires some way of marrying truth and mercy, justice and peace, and some way of acknowledging past wrongs yet looking forward to a common future. We have only begun to explore the collective rituals that can create an emotional climate that will foster the reconciliation needed for a culture of peace. The construction of new restorative contexts with such elements as truth and reconciliation commissions, apology, public trials, economic restoration, political integration, democratization, reparation payments, and so on is an essential foundation for the formation of such a positive climate (Bar-Tal & Bennink, 2004). These acts require cooperation between the parties which were in conflict. But the present issue suggests also that some of the construction of the new context can be carried out within the framework of collective self-healing. Collective self-healing refers to acts carried by the society with the goal to reduce grief, pain, and suffering. This can be carried out via active participation in social and political activities, taking control over one's life and destiny, establishing a network of psychological services, commemorative projects, or ritualistic acts (Nets & Bar-Tal, in press).

We realize that conflicts are inseparable from human life, but we also know that they do not have to be conducted with violence and discrimination. It is thus important to construct a context that fosters peaceful conflict resolution. Human beings can learn to carry out their conflicts with nonviolent struggle, negotiation, mutual respect, and consideration. We also believe that inequality, injustice, or lack of freedom is not a necessary part of human life. These evils are humanly

constructed and therefore can be changed. It is thus important to establish and maintain emotional climates of security, trust, hope, and freedom. Cultures of peace can be established. They depend on the political culture that is maintained by our societal institutions and socialization agents. It is our hope that this will be the chosen direction.

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DANIEL BAR-TAL is Professor of Social Psychology at the School of Education, Tel Aviv University. His research interest is in political and social psychology studying psychological foundations of intractable conflicts and peace making. He has published over 15 books and over 150 articles and chapters in major social and political psychological journals and books. He served as a President of the International Society of Political Psychology and received various awards for his work.

ERAN HALPERIN is a PhD Candidate in the division of government and political theory, school of political science, Haifa University. He has a BA in Political Science and Psychology and a MA in Political Science from the University of Haifa. His PhD dissertation examines the role of hatred in politics. His research interests include political psychology, emotions and politics, emotions in conflict, and intergroup hatred. He is also a Project Coordinator of the National Resilience Project and the Psychological Aspects of Terrorism Project at the National Security Studies Center, Haifa University.

JOSEPH DE RIVERA is Professor of Psychology at Clark University and Director of its program of peace studies. He is the author or editor of a number of books (including *The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy*, and *Field Theory as Social Science: Studies of Lewin's Berlin Group*). He has edited issues on emotional experience for *American Behavioral Science*, and *Social Justice*, co-edited a prior issue for *Journal of Social Issues*, and recently edited an issue on assessing cultures of peace for *Peace and Justice*.