

## **Value Transmission of Religious-Zionists within General Frameworks of Value Transmission and Change: A Commentary on Paryente & Orr**

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Paryente and Orr's (2010, this volume) interesting article incorporates a multitude of contributions. First and most important, it integrates different theories and frameworks that usually ignore one another. Second, it adds an important aspect to the current model of value transmission from parents to children (Grusec & Goodnows, 1994). They also contribute some evidence to a recent model of value change (Bardi & Goodwin, in press). Third, it sheds light on some of the psychological processes that occur in a unique and interesting minority group – the Religious-Zionist community in Israel. Below, I address each of these contributions and link them to other bodies of literature.

### **Integrating Social Representation Theory with Values and Identity Theories**

Researchers often work within one theoretical framework and tend to ignore others. This is easier for the busy academic who typically has no time to read beyond the immediate field. It also helps in getting papers published as one does not have to convince reviewers who are not familiar with the paper's theoretical framework. Yet, Paryente and Orr have taken the difficult route of not only integrating two theoretical frameworks, but quite a few of them. The article nicely integrates various identity theories with Social Representation Theory, demonstrating the conceptual differences between the concept of identity in social identity theory (e.g., Tajfel, 1981) and self-categorization theory (e.g., Turner, 1987) and the concept of identity representations (e.g., Duveen, 2001).

This is also one of the first papers that integrate Social Representation Theory with the Schwartz (1992) value theory, even though the two seem naturally related. Indeed, Moscovici (1984) stressed the importance of the concept of values. Moscovici's (1988) conceptualization of hegemonic versus emancipated representations has implications for values, as well. Specifically, as hegemonic identity representations are strong and consensual in a given society, they seem parallel to values that have been found to be consensual in their high importance in certain groups and even universally, such as benevolence values (see Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). In contrast, emancipated representations are those that vary across individuals in a society. Values differ in their consensus in any given society. Hedonism values were found to be the least consensual universally (Schwartz & Sagie, 2000). This finding converges with Paryente and Orr's finding of these values (part of the self-enhancement values) that they conceptualized to tap on the emancipated identity representation in the studied group. Finally, Paryente and Orr's notion that "Any society

having difficulty in transmitting its values to its offspring faces disintegration” (p. 23.3) taps on Schwartz’s (1992; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001) notion that values serve survival needs of groups, and are therefore inculcated through socialization agents in the group, such as parents.

### **Paryente and Orr’s Findings on Value Transmission integrated with Related Models**

Paryente and Orr directly address Grusec and Goodnows (1994) model of value transmission from parents to their children. Grusec and Goodnows have suggested and found that in order for children to acquire the values that their parents would like them to hold they need to first perceive correctly the values their parents endorse. This model has been supported in various studies including in Israel (Knafo & Schwartz, 2001) where Paryente and Orr’s study had been done. However, Paryente and Orr contributed beyond this existing knowledge by adding a social component, namely, that identity representations can contribute to value development above and beyond parents’ values and their correct perception. This contribution broadens the scope of understanding value development by adding effects of other socialization agents, such as peers and teachers. In a broader sense, this addition is in line with models of personality development such as the model of McCrae and Costa (e.g., 1999) who suggest that characteristic adaptations (such as values) are partly influenced by external influences such as cultural norms, which are likely to be communicated by socialization agents (e.g., Schwartz & Bardi, 2001) and life events, including interactions with others or living in a certain environment. In Paryente and Orr’s model, identity representations also mediated the relations between parents’ values and children’s values, suggesting that intended value transmission from parents to children occurs not only through accurate perception of parents

values. All these effects can also be understood in light of a recent model of value change, which I outline below while linking to Paryente and Orr's findings.

Bardi and Goodwin (in press) have recently suggested a model of value change, which can be applicable also to value transmission. They suggested that the process of value change can occur through two main routes – an automatic route and an effortful route. The automatic route occurs when values are primed by the environment (conversations, symbols such as the flag, etc.). To illustrate, children of the Religious-Zionist settlers frequently see the flag of Israel on houses etc., repeatedly priming ideas of the West Bank as part of Israel. This process can occur automatically, without conscious attention, and with time strengthen a schema that includes both the religious-national identity representation and tradition and security values.

The way people are dressed is another environmental cue that can prime both identity representations and values. The religious-Zionists, unlike the ultra-orthodox Jews and similar to secular Jews, wear modern clothes. This is a constant reminder that the ingroup is similar to secular Jews. However, there are also some subtle differences from secular Jews with regard to clothing: Men wear a small head cover (yarmulke) and women wear clothes that cover their shoulders, as well as skirts and dresses, and most have a head dress (such as a hat) after getting married. Hence clothes prime the notion that 'we are modern like secular Jews but we are also not quite the same -- there are some crucial differences'. This is likely to prime the solidarity-conflict identity representation as well as values that typify secular-individualist societies, such as self-enhancement values (In Israel, see Knafo, 2003). Note that both automatic processes occur regardless of parents' values as they are primed by the

environment. They can explain routes to values of youngsters that do not require accurate perception of parents' values.

The second route to value change that Bardi and Goodwin (in press) suggest is the effortful route. In this route, the new value is brought into awareness, leading to effortful processing and evaluation of it. Whereas the automatic route to value change does not require conviction in the new value or even awareness, the effortful route requires conviction, hence will not always lead to acquiring the new value. Grusec and Goodnows (1994) model operates on the effortful route. It suggests that children first need to accurately perceive their parents' values and then possibly adopt them. However, because the process requires awareness, children might accurately perceive their parents' values yet consciously reject them. Indeed, Knafo and Schwartz (2003) demonstrated that warm and responsive parents were more successful in transmitting their values to their children. Paryente and Orr Showed this route was quite successful in religious-Zionists, although slightly more successful for mothers than for fathers. Drawing on Knafo and Schwartz's (2003) findings, it may be because mothers tend to be more and responsive than fathers. This possibility could be studied empirically in the future.

Bardi and Goodwin (in press) suggest various facilitators of value change that can operate through the automatic and/or the effortful routes. These include priming, adaptation, identification, consistency maintenance, and persuasion. The identification facilitator seems the most relevant to Paryente and Orr's new contribution to Grusec and Goodnows (1994) model of value transmission, and I will therefore address it in more detail. Bardi and Goodwin suggested that identifying with a group can lead to value acquisition. This can happen through the automatic route, as exemplified above regarding the priming of the flag

and clothes, and/or through the effortful route. The latter can occur as a result of being part of conversations that discuss issues related to values, such as conversations at home, at school, or with peers. Such conversations bring the relevant values to mind and as part of identifying with the group, the child may adopt the relevant values. To illustrate, an event in the news may trigger parents' conversation and interpretation in line with their values, and through identification, the child may adopt the reflected values as well as the identity representation. This process can explain why values that relate to the emancipated identity representation were linked more strongly to parents' values than those that relate to the hegemonic identity representation, namely because, as Paryente and Orr explain, the hegemonic-related values are probably discussed much outside the home and there are various sources of influence with regard to them, whereas the emancipated-related values are more unique to certain families and therefore there is greater variation in the value directions of conversations across families from this social group. This is likely to lead to greater scope for parents' unique influence compared to other influences of the ingroup.

### **Studying Specific Minority Groups**

The study of a unique minority group contributes interest and depth to the study of groups. As Paryente and Orr nicely explain, one of the unique features of the studied group is that it is a voluntary minority. That is, members can choose to leave it. This is in contrast to most of the researched minorities which are not volitional, such as ethnic minorities. In some ways, a volitional minority has to work harder to maintain its members as they can always choose to leave. Hence value transmission is even more crucial than in other groups, and value debates are likely to be more heated compared to such debates in non-volitional minorities. Although the study of such minority groups in social psychology is rare, other volitional minorities

exist, such as any minority that is based on ideology (e.g., the Amish), and future research could benefit from studying similar questions on such minorities and preferably even compare them to non-volitional minorities.

From a psychological point of view, a particularly interesting feature of this minority is that one of its emancipated identity representations is built on an internal conflict. That is, the solidarity-conflict identity representation sees the ingroup as part of the wider Jewish-Israeli society while at the same time perceiving this feature as conflicting with the hegemonic identity representation of religious-Zionism and therefore as problematic. Internal conflicts are likely to result with poor well-being (e.g., Emmons & King, 1988). Hence, an obvious research question for future research may be the psychological consequences of holding this identity representation. Would people who hold it be less happy than those who do not hold it?

The latter internal conflict between the two identity representations of the studied group is likely to be found in many other minority groups. In many minorities, such as ethnic minorities, one important identity representation is the one that holds the tradition of the ethnicity or culture, whereas another identity representation is the wish to be part of the wider society. With regard to certain values, the two are in conflict. Minorities may vary in the importance of each of these identity representations such that in those minorities that are more integrated into the wider society the view that they are like the wider society may be the hegemonic identity representation and the identity representation that maintains the group's unique characteristics may be the emancipated identity representation. This could be studied in future research in order to reach more generalized insights into the identity dynamics of minorities.

**Concluding Remarks**

Lack of dialogue and communication harbours suspicion and lack of respect among theoreticians of differing approaches, whereas integration of theories advances each of the integrated theories as well as the wider field. Paryente and Orrs' article is a fine example of the many merits that integrative research has and its multitude of contributions to the field of social psychology. Their example in integrating Social Representations Theory with other theoretical frameworks is one that serves the advancement of the field as a whole.



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