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Introduction

When Caribs were asked whence they came, they answered, "We alone are people." The meaning of the name Kiowa is "real or principal people." The Lapps call themselves "men," or "human beings." (...) The Tunguses call themselves "men." As a rule it is found that nature peoples call themselves "men." Others are something else - perhaps not defined - but not real men. In myths the origin of their own tribe is that of the real human race. They do not account for the others. (Sumner, 1906, p. 14)

- 1 Sumner's (1906) sociologically inspired work "Folkways" is regarded as one of the foundations of later developed social psychological theories on intergroup relations (Brewer & Brown, 1998; Brown, 2000). Sumner (1906) was the first to use the term ethnocentrism that he defined as "...this view of things in which one's own group is the center of everything, and all others are scaled and rated with reference to it" (Sumner, 1906, p. 13). The above citation contains some examples that illustrate his conceptualization of ethnocentrism. All involve the designation of one's own group as human and imply the infra-humanization of "others." Even though Sumner's work is widely cited and ethnocentrism remains at the center of social psychological theorizing, infra-humanization has been largely disregarded in explaining prejudice and intergroup discrimination. Only theories that attempt to explain extreme behaviors such as genocides, intergroup aggression, and exploitation have proposed related concepts such as delegitimization (Bar-Tal, 1989), moral exclusion (Opatow, 1990; Staub, 1989), and a lesser perceived humanity (Struch & Schwartz, 1989).

- 2 The recent theoretical and empirical work of Leyens and his colleagues (2000, 2001, 2003) revived the concept of infra-humanization and applied it to more subtle forms of bias. Their basic premise states that people tend to reserve human nature for their own group, in that they ascribe less uniquely human features to the outgroup. More specifically, Leyens and his colleagues focused on uniquely human emotions. When asked to describe their own group and a relevant outgroup in terms of different emotions, individuals were reluctant to ascribe uniquely human emotions to the outgroup.
- 3 The present article aims at summarizing the theoretical framework and the main findings of the recent infra-humanization research in intergroup relations. In addition, some preliminary data extending the infra-humanization theory will be presented that explore the human content of intergroup stereotypes.

Infra-humanization: Theory and main findings

- 4 In the last decades, racism and discrimination have not only been acknowledged in their obvious blatant, but also in their more subtle, forms (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1998; McConahay, 1986; Pettigrew & Meertens, 1995). Whereas the overt forms of racism tend to decline (Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson, & Gaertner, 1996), the more subtle forms of bias are prevalent and give rise to some of the ever-existing inequalities. In Belgium, for example, the Flemish Employment Service (i.e., VDAB) recently conducted a study on their own job web-sites that provide employers with information on potential job candidates. The results revealed that employees with foreign sounding names, even though they had equal qualifications, had 15 % less chance to be selected for further information than their more Belgian sounding counterparts. It goes without saying that these kinds of subtle biases can have a large impact in everyday life and continue to handicap an important part of our population.
- 5 A great deal of the work in social psychology tries to understand the nature and the sources of intergroup discrimination. Many of these theories (for a review, see Brewer & Brown, 1998), however, have reduced the bases of prejudice and discrimination to their evaluative nature. Discrimination can then arise from either the attribution of more positive traits, resources, facilities, help, etc. to the ingroup (i.e., ingroup favoritism) or from the tendency to ascribe more negative properties to the outgroup (i.e., outgroup derogation). In both cases, it does not really matter what these properties are; only the fact that they create differential responses and that all reflect negative evaluations is theoretically relevant. A recent extension of the traditional evaluative way of thinking comes from Leyens and his colleagues (2000, 2001, 2003). Combining the theories of ingroup favoritism (for a recent review, see Brewer & Brown, 1998) and subjective essentialism (Haslam, Rotschild, & Ernst, 2000; Rothbart & Taylor, 1992), Leyens et al. formulated the following reasoning: If people think that their group is superior to other groups, and attribute different essences to the ingroup and outgroups, then it follows that people should ascribe a better essence to their own group. As a consequence, on a dimension as fundamental as humanity, people believe that "the" human essence belongs to their ingroup and that an infra-human essence characterizes (some) outgroups.
- 6 The three most cited characteristics that constitute the human essence were: intelligence (reasoning, thinking, etc.), uniquely human emotions, and language (communication) (Leyens et al., 2000). Leyens and his colleagues concentrated on the emotional side of the human essence, because there is already ample research demonstrating that individuals discriminate against outgroups on the basis of intelligence (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998) and language (Giles & Coupland, 1991). The human essence in terms of emotions

was operationalized through people's lay conception of what they see as uniquely human emotions and emotions that they share with animals. Recent cross-cultural studies, using French-speaking, Spanish-speaking, Dutch-speaking and American English-speaking participants (Demoulin, Leyens, Paladino, Rodriguez, Rodriguez, & Dovidio, 2004), revealed that all samples similarly differentiated between "uniquely human" and "non-uniquely human" emotions. Moreover, similar dimensions to those mentioned by the emotion literature (Ekman, 1992; Kemper, 1991) as differentiating between primary and secondary emotions, were diagnostic for the difference between "non-uniquely human" emotions and "uniquely human" emotions. Therefore, the terms primary versus secondary emotions were used to refer to respectively non-uniquely versus uniquely human emotions. It is important to note, however, that the scientific view of emotions makes a clear, dichotomous distinction between a few primary and many secondary emotions, whereas the lay conception envisions emotions on a continuum going from numerous "uniquely human" (e.g., shame, resentment, love, hope, disappointment) to many "non-uniquely human" emotions (e.g., anger, pain, pleasure, surprise, fear, excitement).

- 7 If all uniquely human characteristics (i.e., intelligence, language, and secondary emotions) are necessary to be considered a human being, but none of them is sufficient, it suffices to differentiate others from ourselves to our own group's advantage on the basis of one or all of the uniquely human characteristics in order to infra-humanize the outgroup. Since Leyens et al. (2000, 2001, 2003) chose to focus on emotions, infra-humanization in their terms implies that people have the tendency to associate or attribute secondary emotions more easily to their ingroup than to an outgroup.
- 8 To date, several studies have addressed this general hypothesis (for a recent review see, Demoulin, Rodriguez, Rodriguez, Vaes, Paladino, Gaunt, Cortes, & Leyens, 2004) by focusing on the attribution of secondary emotions. Indeed, if people have a tendency to infra-humanize the outgroup, they should attribute more secondary emotions to their ingroup than to an outgroup. Primary emotions, on the other hand, are shared by all living species and should as such be allocated in a similar way to ingroups and outgroups. To test this idea, Leyens et al. (2001, Studies 1 and 2) presented participants with a list of characteristics that comprised, among some words related to competence and sociability, positive (Study 1) or positive and negative (Study 2) secondary and primary emotions. Participants had to choose the characteristics that they considered typical for their ingroup or typical of an outgroup. In these studies, a full design was obtained, in that participants came either from the Canary Islands (low status group) or from mainland Spain (high status group). Both experiments confirmed the hypothesis that participants selected more secondary emotions for their ingroup than for the outgroup, independent of the valence of the emotions or the status of the groups. These results highlight the bi-directional view of the present theory. Unlike many other theories that attempt to explain racism or discrimination only from the dominant groups' point of view, Leyens et al.'s (2000, 2001, 2003) emotional conception allows to observe the interaction of both agent and victim and shows that racism is not limited to dominant groups.
- 9 Following the reasoning that the human essence tends to be reserved for the ingroup and even denied to the outgroup, it is conceivable that people will react differently to outgroup than to ingroup members who express themselves in terms of secondary emotions. This hypothesis was confirmed by the work of Vaes and colleagues (2003, 2004). In one of their experiments, Vaes et al. (2003, Study 1) used the lost e-mail technique

(Castelli, Zogmaister, & Arcuri, 2001; Stern & Faber, 1997; Vaes, Paladino, & Leyens, 2002) to look at the different prosocial behaviors engendered by secondary emotions in a helping situation. This paradigm consists of sending manipulated messages to different e-mail accounts. Even though the message is addressed personally to each participant, it is clearly an erroneous e-mail that was destined for somebody else. Using this method, Vaes et al. manipulated the messages so that they started with either a primary or a secondary emotion and were allegedly sent by either an ingroup or an outgroup member. Content analysis on participants' returns revealed that secondary emotions induced nicer replies towards an ingroup compared to an outgroup member. Primary emotions did not induce differential responses. This general pattern of results was replicated in another set of studies using different behavioral measures. When the target expressed secondary emotions, conformity was more likely towards a target that belonged to the ingroup compared to the outgroup (Vaes et al., 2003, Studies 2 and 3); participants reported more similarities with the ingroup compared to the outgroup target (Study 3); showed a general tendency to approach or avoid ingroup and outgroup members respectively (Study 4); and the perspective of an ingroup rather than an outgroup conversation partner was accepted more easily (Vaes et al., 2004). On the other hand, as expected, primary emotions, not being a uniquely human characteristic did not result in a better treatment for ingroup, compared to outgroup members.

The human content of intergroup stereotypes

- 10 These results show the pervasiveness of the infra-humanization bias, which is subtle, but has clear, negative consequences for the outgroup. Until now, research only looked at secondary emotions as the uniquely human characteristic that was attributed differently to the ingroup and the outgroup; however, other characteristics are conceivable. Stereotypes are probably the most studied characteristics in intergroup relations (Fiske, 1998). They are used to explain differences between groups (Hegarty & Pratto, 2001), and, according to recent theorizing (Alexander, Brewer, & Hermann, 1999; Fiske et al., 2002), their content reflects the socio-structural relation between the groups at hand. Specifically, Fiske and her colleagues (2002) showed that relative status dictates the level of competence conferred on a group, and type of interdependence (i.e., cooperative or competitive) dictates the level of perceived warmth. Depending on a group's perceived position along these two structural dimensions, it may be stereotyped as both competent and warm (mostly the ingroup or a reference group), competent but not warm (high status, high conflict groups), incompetent but warm (low status, low conflict groups), or neither competent nor warm (low status, high conflict groups). Taking the socio-structural model of Fiske et al. as a starting point, a recent study explored the human content of stereotypes and aimed to show that the infra-humanization of the outgroup can manifest itself through stereotypes.
- 11 As shown above, previous research has shown that infra-humanization appears largely independent of different socio-structural variables that define the intergroup context (Leyens et al., 2003). More specifically, Leyens et al. (2001) have shown that both low (Canarians) and high status groups (mainland Spanish people) are infra-humanized to the same extent. Similarly, manipulating negative interdependence in terms of conflict or competition has shown to increase the infra-humanization bias, but it is not a necessary variable to observe it (Paladino, Vaes, & Leyens, 2001). Following previous research, we expected that outgroup stereotypes would be seen as less human than ingroup

stereotypes regardless of the socio-structural relation that exists between the ingroup and the outgroup.

- 12 A single study tested this general hypothesis in an Italian context. Given that previous work on the content of stereotypes (Fiske et al., 2002) demonstrated that the perceived status and competition between groups determine the content of their stereotypes, the present study incorporated three different intergroup situations that differed on these dimensions based on pre-test judgments. Gypsies, compared to Italians, were seen as both incompetent and not warm; Southern Italians in comparison to Northern Italians were defined as warm but incompetent; and Americans in comparison to Italians were perceived as competent but not warm. Participants were assigned to one of these three intergroup contexts and asked to judge a series of traits that were generated by naïve pretest participants. Each trait was judged on its typicality to describe the ingroup, on its typicality to describe the outgroup, on its human value, and on its valence. For each participant, two within-subjects correlations partialing out valence were calculated, one between the ingroup typicality and humanity ratings of all traits and the other between the outgroup typicality and humanity ratings of all traits. In all three conditions, this correlation for the ingroup was positive and significantly greater than zero, indicating that the more a trait was seen as stereotypic in describing the ingroup the more it was seen as human. Moreover, this correlation for the ingroup was greater than that for the outgroup, showing that ingroup stereotypes are generally seen as more human than the outgroup stereotypes. As expected, this difference occurred independently of the socio-structural relationship between the groups.
- 13 The present results indicate that the infra-humanization effect may be generalized to stereotypes. In order to be conclusive, however, more research is needed that includes more groups and different intergroup situations. In addition, the search for moderator variables that could influence the way in which the outgroup is infra-humanized should be broadened. Even though the socio-structural relationship between the ingroup and the outgroup did not alter the infra-humanization effect, it remains doubtful that people tend to infra-humanize all (relevant) outgroups to the same extent.
- 14 Together with the previous work on infra-humanization, the present study documents the importance of the human dimension in intergroup relations and shows how deeply rooted our biased thoughts and behaviors towards the outgroup really are. Even though mostly apparent in subtle biases, people show a consistent tendency to reserve the human category for their own group and to attribute a lesser degree of humanity to outgroups. A similar inference can be found in the historical thesis of Jahoda (1999) on the ancient roots of modern prejudice in Western culture. Based on an abundant amount of historical examples and testimonies, he connects the ancient "images of savages" to the endurance of modern prejudice today and concludes:

The images, (...) are of course tokens which stand for clusters of – predominantly negative – beliefs and feelings regarding outgroups. The key image in this connection, and the one that has survived most stubbornly, is that of "animality." (Jahoda, 1999, p. 243-244)

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RÉSUMÉS

Récemment, une nouvelle ligne de recherche en psychologie sociale a montré que les gens tendent à réserver l'essence humaine pour décrire leur propre groupe, percevant des membres de l'exogroupe comme "infra-humains" (Leyens et al., 2000, 2003). L'article actuel résume les résultats principaux de ce nouveau mode de penser. Spécifiquement, cette théorie s'est concentrée sur les émotions typiquement humaines. Demandés à décrire leur propre groupe et un exogroupe approprié, les individus ont attribué moins d'émotions typiquement humaines à l'exogroupe. Étant donné que toutes les caractéristiques typiquement humaines sont nécessaires mais aucune n'est suffisante pour être considérée comme entièrement humaine, Leyens et ses collègues ont interprété cette attribution différentielle d'émotions typiquement humaines en termes d'infra-humanisation. En plus, cet article présente une extension de la théorie de l'infra-humanisation au domaine des stéréotypes. Une première étude est décrite qui démontre que les stéréotypes de l'endogroupe sont plus humains que les stéréotypes de l'exo-groupe. Pris ensemble, ces travaux indiquent que les préjugés modernes sont marqués par des différences entre l'endo-groupe et l'exo-groupe en termes humains.

Recently a new line of research in social psychology demonstrated that people tend to reserve the human essence to describe their own group, perceiving outgroup members as "infra-humans" (Leyens et al., 2000, 2003). The present article summarizes the main findings of this new way of theorizing. Specifically, this theory focused on uniquely human emotions. When asked to describe their own group and a relevant outgroup, individuals ascribed less uniquely human emotions to the outgroup. Given that all uniquely human characteristics are necessary but none of them are sufficient to be considered fully human, Leyens and colleagues interpreted this differential attribution of uniquely human emotions in terms of infra-humanization. In addition, this article introduces an extension of the infra-humanization theory broadening its premises to research on stereotypes. A first study is reported that demonstrates that ingroup stereotypes bear more human meaning than outgroup stereotypes. Overall, this research shows that prejudice even today is marked by differences between the ingroup and the outgroup in human terms.

INDEX

Keywords : émotions, infra-humanization, intergroup relations, prejudice, stéréotypes

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