



UNIVERSITY OF  
LIVERPOOL

Management  
School

**Working Paper in Economics**

**# 201901**

May 2019

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Post traumatic growth:  
Mass rapes, secrecy, and cultural change**

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**Abstract**

This article extends the three-phase framework of war atrocity, female agency, and disappointment, to a case where mass rapes were followed by rushed mass weddings to unknown new husbands, and a deliberate attempt to keep it all secret was only partially successful. The article introduces a new case study of managing 'spoiled' identity and posttraumatic growth, under different circumstances, in relation to previous examples. The article makes three key contributions. First, it examines barriers to women's progress after atrocity and potential stigma in a new, different context, and extends and enriches conclusions of previous studies. Second, it reviews the conditions for secrecy to make a positive contribution to victims' wellbeing, and explores reasons why a secret may remain undisclosed (or an open secret partially undisclosed) for a very long time. Third, it explicitly introduces cultural change, relates cultural change to posttraumatic growth, and examines how such cultural change towards cooperation and trust may force shifts in traditional attitudes and cleavages. The article also identifies a possible link between cultural change and economic development, opening a path to women's long-term progress. Methodological and substantive insights apply to other case studies.

**Keywords**

War rapes, Open secret, Cognitive dissonance, Prisoner's dilemma, Cooperation, Managing 'spoiled' identity

**Author's Note**

I am grateful to Supriya Garikipati and the participants in the Philosophy, Politics and Economics Research Showcase 2018, University of Liverpool. Address: David E. Hojman, University of Liverpool Management School, Liverpool L69 7ZH, UK; e-mail: [JL33@liverpool.ac.uk](mailto:JL33@liverpool.ac.uk)

The horrific consequences of war upon female civilian populations, often including mass rapes, are well documented. Rape by the enemy is sometimes followed by lifelong punishment of the victim by her own community. Some war rape consequences may be culture-specific, but they usually include stigma, shame, humiliation, isolation, guilt, discrimination, psychiatric and psychosomatic problems, abortion, infanticide and suicide, primary physical injuries and secondary physical attacks, rejection by the husband and his family, abandonment, charges of promiscuity and prostitution, or being forced to marry the rapist (Ba & Bhopal 2017; Eramian & Denov 2018; Ibrahim et al 2018; Kuwert et al 2014; Mark 2005; Neill 2000; Porter 2019; Riley et al 2017; Roberts 2012; Zarni & Cowley 2014). Berry (2017) uses examples from Rwanda and Bosnia-Herzegovina to argue that after atrocity, women may show a remarkable capacity for agency, collective action, and new forms of participation and political mobilisation. These group activities may correlate at the individual level with posttraumatic growth ('positive psychological change experienced as a result of the struggle with highly challenging life circumstances', Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004, p. 1). However, sometimes these positive developments are hampered, or cancelled, by the emergence of new inequalities and hierarchies of victimisation, and a revitalisation of patriarchy. The double horrors of war and wartime sexual violence are followed by women's increased public engagement and political participation and mobilisation, which are then followed by disappointment. Despite their importance, there are no studies of how the long-term outcome may be affected by total or partial secrecy, or of the extent to which cultural change may be part of such outcome.

This article aims at bridging this gap by examining the extent to which Berry's insights (and others', Berry & Lake 2017; Hughes 2009; Hughes & Tripp 2015;

Kabeer 1999; Krook 2015) may apply to a case study in a different historical period and cultural context, and the particular expressions and specific features that may emerge under substantially different conditions. Our case study is the Dutch invasion of Chiloe Island in southern Chile in 1600, and the ensuing mass rapes of Spanish women. Despite the time gap, these cases have much in common (Rwanda and Bosnia also have case-specific features, different from each other, but still many of the lessons are similar, Berry 2017; Kaufman 2018).

There are also differences between the late XX century Rwanda and Bosnia post-atrocity experiences analysed by Berry (2017), and Chiloe in 1600. A crucial difference is the attempt at secrecy. Officially, the mass rapes in Chiloe were, for decades or even centuries, a carefully kept secret. Following a successful Spanish counter-attack, the Dutch invaders were killed or escaped, the victorious Spanish commander made his soldiers marry the Spanish women, and everyone pretended that all the new babies had Spanish fathers. The architect of both the rushed mass weddings, and the attempt at keeping both rapes and weddings secret, was the Spanish commander himself, Francisco del Campo (Rosales 1878). In his long and thorough report to Chile's *Gobernador* (Governor), Del Campo does not mention the mass rapes or the weddings (Del Campo 1852). However, the attempt at keeping these events secret was only partially successful. It was impossible to keep the mass rapes and the rushed weddings secret. In fact, they became an 'open secret' (Butt, Ball & Beazley 2016; Gladwell 2007; Roosa 2013, 2016). On the other hand, each individual victim and her family were carefully protected. Both who was raped by the Dutch and who was not, and whose father was a Dutch rapist and whose father was not, were successfully kept a secret forever.

The Chiloe case is also an attempt at managing a 'spoiled' group identity, which would be helpful to compare with the previously studied case of Croatia in the aftermath of the Yugoslav secession wars (Rivera 2008). Chiloe's conditions are completely different from Croatia's but, interestingly, Croatia's war is the same conflict which generated the atrocities in Bosnia being studied by Berry (2017). Precisely because it is different, Chiloe also permits exploring some of the diverse expressions that women's empowerment may adopt, as possibly context-dependent and culture-specific (Kabeer 1999). The Chiloe experience is also important because it was contemporaneous with, or closely followed (and it could be interpreted as retaliation for) atrocities committed by Spanish troops against Dutch women in the Low Countries during the Eighty Years War (Pipkin 2009).

Post-atrocity female agency is encouraged by 'rapid social change ... (and) critical material needs ... (W)omen were now forced to find other ways to survive. And to do jobs that men had traditionally done' (Berry 2017, pp. 831, 832, 836). 'War ... (perhaps, precisely because it is a force for destruction) – can give rise to rapid and often fairly progressive periods of social change ... Demographic, social, and economic shifts ... can lead to changes in labour force participation and open spaces for women's increased engagement' (Berry & Lake 2017, p. 337). In addition to these powerful material forces, there are also intellectual, psychological or emotional developments. Atrocity prevents a traditional implicit contract between the men and the women from being fulfilled. The men, who had committed themselves to provide the women both with the material means of subsistence and with protection against sexual violence, have failed on both accounts. The responses of both women and men to these negative and unexpected shocks are likely to include pain, disappointment, humiliation and frustration. Mass rapes during wartime or

following military defeat are witnesses to the ultimate failure of a traditional gender relationship, which had been sold to the women on the promise, among others, that fathers, brothers and husbands would protect the women against sexual abuse. When this promise is collectively not fulfilled, women will think again and act accordingly. Men's humiliation at military defeat is compounded by impotence and frustration at their failure to protect the women, a failure of which they are constantly reminded by the women's search for new ways of providing for and protecting themselves.

In Berry's (2017) approach there is no explicit role for cultural change. However, this role may be possibly implicit in the fact that atrocity and post-atrocity experiences inevitably go together with big increases in the amounts of information available to women, and with qualitative change in the processing of and reflection on these flows of new knowledge. Such experiences invite, or force, women to ask themselves new questions, to find new answers, and to become aware of the need of adopting new attitudes and behaviours. So, in both Rwanda and Bosnia there may have been at least some kernels of cultural change, especially in the women. In contrast, there can be no doubt that in Chiloe the Dutch invasion and its aftermath provoked significant cultural change in both women and men, from mistrust between families to sympathy and cooperation. Posttraumatic growth (Powell et al 2003; Taku 2011; Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004; Zoellner et al 2008) is often associated with religious attitudes (Shaw, Joseph & Linley 2005; Taku & Cann 2014), which makes this cultural change in Chiloe especially interesting, since it went in the direction of modernisation and interpersonal trust, that is, precisely the opposite from the cultures of societies where traditional religiosity prevails (Beugelsdijk & Welzel 2018). The Chiloe cultural change started with the women's need to deal with

cognitive dissonance (Acharya, Blackwell & Sen 2018; McGrath 2017; Vaidis 2014) and it was an ongoing process rather than a one-off event. It is also possible that such cultural change may have had positive long-term effects on economic development (Nunn 2009) and therefore, eventually and indirectly, on women's progress.

### **CHILOE IN 1600**

Chiloe is a small island (900 square kilometres), about 1,000 kilometres south of Chile's capital, Santiago. During the colonial period (1540-1810) it was the most remote and isolated of Spain's possessions in South America. Early in 1600, a Dutch force took control of Castro, Chiloe's only city ((Barrientos Diaz 2013; Del Campo 1852; Sandersz 2001). All the Spanish men in Castro were killed (Barros Arana 1999; Mansilla 2009; Rosales 1878; Valenzuela Solis de Ovando 1975).

Following the massacre, the Spanish women in Castro were kept alive and sexually abused (Errazuriz 2001; Mancilla 2007; Mansilla 2009; Valenzuela Solis de Ovando 1975). Historian Crescente Errazuriz, writing in 1881, almost 300 years after these events, may have been the first Spanish or Chilean historian who refers more or less explicitly to these mass rapes. '(The Dutch) spared the women, not from a humanity point of view, but with the purpose to let them suffer from the greatest humiliation possible' (Errazuriz 2001, p. 149, Barreveld's translation). As Rivera (2008, p. 616) argues, 'after long periods of time ... actors may switch from covering to disclosure because the stigma is sufficiently in the past and no longer poses a threat'. These mass rapes are not mentioned by, in chronological order, Del Campo, Rosales, Barros Arana, Barrientos Diaz, or Sandersz, the only

contemporaneous Dutch source available. However, Rosales, writing in the second half of the XVII century (that is, two or three generations after 1600) mentions the rushed mass weddings (1878, p. 345). The Dutch intended to sail from Chiloe taking with them some of the Spanish women, and leave the rest to their Indian allies (Del Campo 1852; Mansilla 2009). However, after at least four or five weeks of Dutch occupation (the historical evidence is ambiguous and the Dutch occupation could have been longer, Guarda 2002, p. 30; Urbina Burgos 2012, p. 230), a Spanish expedition under Francisco del Campo mounted a successful counter-attack and defeated the Dutch (Barros Arana 1999; Rosales 1878; Vazquez de Acuña 1990).

Immediately, Del Campo made many of his soldiers marry the women (Guarda 2002; Montiel Vera nd; Rosales 1878). We do not know how many Spanish women were raped by the Dutch, or married a Spanish soldier after the Dutch defeat. The historians call them 'widows', although some of them, especially young girls, could have been single. Also, other women who were raped were not widows, as their husbands (possibly about 25 of them) were away from Castro at the time of the Dutch attack. Among the Del Campo soldiers, 44 or 45 stayed in Chiloe after the rest of Del Campo's troops returned to the mainland (Barrientos Diaz 2013; Barros Arana 1999; Mansilla 2009; Montiel Vera nd). Possibly all the soldiers who stayed got married, and all those who got married stayed, at least in the short term (many Spanish individuals and families left Chiloe in the following years and decades, Guarda 2002; Muñoz Correa 2008; Urbina Burgos 2012). This number, 44 or 45, was possibly as many as Del Campo could spare (the enemy threats, from both Indians and Dutch, were even more serious in the mainland). The total numbers of Spanish men initially killed by the Dutch, or Spanish women raped, could both be higher. There is some evidence that the number of Del Campo soldiers keen on



getting married and staying in Chiloe was possibly higher (Rosales 1878). These mass weddings had taken place so hastily that someone challenged their validity, and a second priest had to be sent to Chiloe to perform the ceremonies again (Rosales 1878).

These weddings are extremely important. This was the first time since at least Spain's anti-Jewish riots of 1391 (Caro Baroja 1978; Hering Torres 2003/4; Marquez Villanueva 2006), for a whole generation in a Spanish community to rush to marry without paying careful consideration to the 'blood purity' implications of such weddings. After these rushed mass weddings, no Spanish newly-wed in Chiloe knew who the ancestors of his or her new in-laws were. Thus, after 1600 it would have been very silly to accuse anyone of being 'New Christian' (a secret descendant of Jewish or Moorish converts), or the descendant of secret Protestants. If the Inquisition took the charge seriously and started an investigation, the accuser's own spouse could be among its first victims.

### **RAPID SOCIAL CHANGE AFTER THE BATTLE OF CASTRO**

After the Dutch occupation of Castro and eventual Dutch military defeat, rapid social change followed (as in post-atrocity Rwanda and Bosnia, Berry 2017), affecting both the local organisation of economic activity and military defence. The Spanish colonists decided that it was too dangerous to continue living in Castro. There was great fear of another Dutch invasion. From then on they lived in rural areas, each extended family in their own *encomienda*, together with their respective Indians (Barrientos Diaz 2013; Guarda 2002; Montiel Vera nd; Urbina Burgos 2012). The Indians in the *encomienda* were in practice a local version of Europe's

mediaeval serfs. Moving away from the city forced each Spanish *encomendero* to rely more on his or her own extended family, including mixed-race *mestizos*, friendly Indians and Spanish employees. Thus, both economic production patterns and military defence practices were affected. Another advantage of this new ruralisation was that, from now on, it would be easier for each family to be secretive about any women in the family who might have been made pregnant by the Dutch. Babies fathered by the Dutch would not only be insulting to the typical Spanish male's pride and *machismo*. Also, according to the prevailing blood purity views, heretic blood contaminated these Dutch heretics' children and grandchildren, making them unable to apply to prestigious or well-paid positions (Caro Baroja 1978; Green 2007; Hering Torres 2003/4; Menendez Pelayo 1945). There was so much at stake that the official denial position became one in which even thinking that the mass rapes and the rushed mass weddings had actually happened was an 'unthinkable belief'. This is 'a thought that one cannot admit having, or even characterize as worth entertaining, without raising doubts about one's civility, morality, loyalty, practicality, or sanity' (Kuran's 1995, p. 176).

Rushing the wedding celebrations between the Del Campo soldiers and Spanish women aimed to support the pretence that the fathers of any babies were Spanish soldiers and not Dutch invaders. All these weddings were urgent. So, the careful marriage selection patterns observed everywhere else in the Spanish empire (and in Chile before 1600), inspired by blood purity concerns or fear of the Inquisition, and leading to endogamy or marrying into a family your own family had known for a long time (Hojman 2007), could not be applied. This was not only highly unusual, considering the generalised concerns with blood purity, but possibly unique in the New World Spanish colonies. Guarda (2002) reports at least thirteen such

post-Dutch-invasion rushed marriages, although possibly many more took place. It seems unlikely that these couples would have come together in more normal circumstances. Still, even for those couples for whom match quality seemed comparatively low, the decision to marry was possibly rational (Kiser & Hechter 1998). This applies to any woman who knew that she was, or suspected that she could be, pregnant. It also applies to the men, who were presented with an extraordinary opportunity to marry a Spanish woman. Many more Spanish single men migrated to the Americas, as compared with Spanish single women (Boyd-Bowman 1976a, b). Many, or most, of the Chiloe 'widows' were part of the local elite, entitled to the privileges of the Spanish upper class, including the crown-granted right to exploit Indian forced labour.

After the 1600 Dutch invasion and rushed mass weddings, Chiloe became unattractive as a destination for new Spanish settlers. It was poor, cold, rainy, bad for farming and good only as a military fortress. Now hostile Indians controlled the mainland, and the Del Campo soldiers had married the Spanish women and received any remaining land and Indians which had not been allocated before. There were no new lands left to be colonised or new Indian groups to be recruited into forced labour. As a consequence, there were no new immigrant flows. Had there been any, they would have been free of the 'mass-rapes-and-rushed-mass-weddings' stigma, which affected all the old families, and therefore this would have introduced a new cleavage. In following decades and centuries, individuals and families migrated massively to mainland Chile (Urbina Burgos 1988).

### **SECRECY IN CHILOE AFTER 1600**

It is generally agreed among social scientists that secrecy (as opposed to transparency) is usually negative or unfavourable. However, a number of exceptions have been mentioned, in areas as diverse as national security, privacy, crime fighting, intellectual property rights, diplomacy, doctor-patient confidentiality, secret ballot democracy, political or religious intolerance and persecution, the right of protection against self-incrimination, or managing a 'spoiled' national identity (Etzioni 2010; Gibson 2014; Rivera 2008; Rober & Rosenblatt 2017; Zagorin 1996). Arguments in favour of secrecy have also been put forward in connection with rape (Butt, Ball & Beazley 2016; Eramian & Denov 2018). There is room for ambivalence here, since sometimes silence aims to protect the victim (Roberts 2012), but in other cases it protects the perpetrator. Secrecy in Chiloe about the fact that a whole cohort of Chiloe-born Spanish babies were possibly the children of Dutch rapists protected the mothers and their children against the well-known, widespread, and extremely negative consequences of being publicly identified as victims and children of war rape.

In Chiloe, the presence of the Spanish Inquisition, the Spanish blood purity laws, and the fact that the Dutch were religious 'heretics', all conspired to make these potential negative consequences even worse (Green 2007; Hering Torres 2003/4; Medina 1952; Pastore 2010; Silverblatt 2004). As compared with Berry's (2017) insights for Rwanda and Bosnia, secrecy in Chiloe had costs by limiting what women could do in terms of public expressions of post-atrocity agency, mobilisation and political participation, but it also protected these women against the patriarchal backlash (Berry 2017; Krook 2015; Slegh et al 2013). Thankfully, neither attempts at 'reconciliation' nor forcing the victim to marry the perpetrator (Porter 2019) were possible in Chiloe (the perpetrators were dead or had escaped to the other end of

the world). Secrecy may also have affected posttraumatic growth, since there was no social pressure on the victims to report 'progress' (Zoellner et al 2008), and social support (Shaw, Joseph & Linley 2005; Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004), or at least the official version of it, was limited.

There are questions regarding how long secrecy could be maintained. Gibson (2014, p. 299) reports his conclusions as follows: 'Thus I have come from one extreme, in which long-term deceptions are fragile and easily toppled, to the other, in which they are bolstered from all directions by self-interest, self-deception, trust, dramaturgical preplanning, organizational design, and all the rest'. Rivera (2008), who examined Croatia after the Yugoslav secession wars (the same conflict leading to the Bosnia atrocities studied by Berry, 2017), has shown that, under certain conditions, including a favourable official attitude from the government, attempts at 'covering', cultural reframing, concealment of, or dissociation from reputation-damaging, stigmatizing events may succeed. Disclosure may not occur, and at least some observers may be deceived into believing that 'nothing happened'. In Chiloe, despite Del Campo's (1852) initial intentions and subsequent official efforts, gossip about what had happened in Chiloe could not be avoided (for example, gossip by those Del Campo soldiers who had not married or stayed in Chiloe, and therefore had nothing to lose). Possibly also some mothers told the truth to their grown-up children, and the latter eventually told their own children. Oral history may or may not be reliable (Roosa 2013, 2016), but it may have been all Rosales (1878) had when he first reported the rushed mass weddings, two or three generations after they took place. So, the rapes and weddings became an open secret (Butt, Ball & Beazley 2016; Gladwell 2007; Roosa 2013, 2016). Everyone

knew that they had happened, but no one would mention it and, crucially, no one was able (or willing) to point out exactly who had been raped or who was half-Dutch.

### **SECRET-PROTECTING FAMILY STRATEGIES**

In post-1600 generations, every Spanish family in Chiloe reacted keenly to the need for secrecy about the 1600 mass rapes, in many different ways (Guarda 2002; Hojman 2007; Mansilla 2009). Most of the historical sources (family and church records and applications to official positions) used by Guarda (2002) are from the mid XVIII century, about 150 years after the Dutch invasion. Since the allocation of Indian forced labour, land rents and social prestige depended at least partly on the merits of their ancestors, families had a problem. The best allocations would go to the oldest families. But if someone claimed that his family's founder was among the first Spanish arrivals (in 1567), he was also implicitly admitting that possibly a whole generation of women in his family had been victims of the mass rapes, and that possibly he had some Dutch (heretics') blood himself. Sometimes families could get away with some form of clever equivocating or elaborate deception (Kuran 1995; Zagorin 1996). Some families falsified the time of the founder's arrival in Chiloe, or literally and unceremoniously scribbled out ancestors' names from the family tree, or made whole generations disappear, or failed to record the names of the women in the respective generation (Del Campo 1852; Errazuriz 2001; Guarda 2002; Rosales 1878; Sandersz 2001). Heroines of the anti-Dutch resistance were ignored, or their roles downplayed, by their own descendants. In a period when to some extent people could freely choose their own or their children's surnames from a large pool formed by the surnames of all their ancestors (Ryskamp 2012), some surnames

disappeared (Guarda 2002; Hojman 2007; Mansilla 2009; Vazquez de Acuña 1990). No family admitted having ancestors born in 1600 or 1601 (Guarda 2002).

Another way the Spanish families in colonial Chiloe tried to keep the mass rapes secret was by minimising their friendly contacts with the Inquisition. Very few people claimed to descend from Inquisition officials, previous work experience with the Inquisition elsewhere did not lead to brilliant careers in Chiloe, surnames of ancestors who had been, or living relatives who were Inquisition officials were avoided, and no prisoner may have ever been sent to face the Inquisition tribunal in Lima (Medina 1952; Guarda 2002; Barrientos Grandon 2007). Again, these are all examples of rational behaviour (Kiser & Hechter 1998) by the Spanish colonists. It would have been irrational, or extremely unwise, to do anything else. This surname cleansing was also part of 'the secret', or general secrecy strategy. If the Inquisitors started asking questions, they might also investigate many other things, from possible secret Protestant or secret New Christian family backgrounds, to whether any Spanish women had been happy to collaborate with the Dutch enemy during their occupation of Castro, or had been keen to eventually sail back to Holland with them.

The Chiloe case in 1600 suggests that under a secrecy strategy regarding mass rapes and rushed mass weddings, even if such strategy is only partially successful, the Berry (2017) phase of female agency looks very different from Rwanda and Bosnia in the late XX century. In particular, no open, public expressions of new political organisation and mobilisation by the women were possible. The war atrocities, sexual violence and immediate aftermath which women experienced and suffered could not be forgotten. Lessons were learned that could not be un-learned. But under a secrecy strategy, female agency can only be

expressed discreetly, privately and quietly, for example, in the contact between two women, or in the context of small groups of women, or in the intimate communication between a wife and her husband. Thus, any expressions or manifestations of a new female agency have also become secret. This imposes severe limitations on what women can do, but on the other hand it also has the advantage that no patriarchal backlash (Krook 2015; Slegh et al 2013) will be unleashed. Even if defined as purely individual, which is not always the case (Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004), posttraumatic growth benefits from social support (Shaw, Joseph & Linley 2005), a commodity officially in short supply in Chiloe.

### **CULTURAL CHANGE: FROM PRISONER'S DILEMMA TO COOPERATION**

As Berry (2017) shows, in post-atrocity Rwanda and Bosnia the opportunity of cultural change, which at some time was possibly present, may have been largely lost, despite encouraging feats of female agency, because of emergent new hierarchies of victimisation and patriarchal backlash. Many women may have learned new facts, and how to think about old and new facts differently, but the patriarchal backlash pushed them back into silence. No matter how much progress women could have made in terms of cultural change, there was little or no support from their men. In contrast, in Chiloe post-atrocity female agency could never be expressed openly or publicly. But many or most of the women quietly re-arranged their priorities and beliefs regarding fear of the Inquisition and related attitudes towards other women (as witness their efforts towards keeping the secret, marriages to unknown new husbands, and ignoring traditional 'blood purity' concerns). Their new husbands helped in this process, being as they were a self-selected group of



Spanish men who had chosen to marry under extremely unusual (and from a traditional point of view, damaging) circumstances. Another special pressure towards cultural change in Chiloe was the dynamics of example among Spanish men, from the new husbands (I'm marrying a woman who was, or may have been, raped by the Dutch') to traditional old husbands ('they raped my wife'). Such example would encourage a traditional husband to change his attitude, along the lines of: 'If all these Spanish soldiers are willing to marry women who may have been, or are known to have been, raped by the Dutch, maybe I should also be more understanding, supportive and generous to my own wife'.

Both before and after 1600, Chiloe had all the typical tensions and cleavages of other Spanish colonies. A subtle tension divided Old Christians, who believed themselves of 'clean' blood, 'uncontaminated' by Jewish or Moorish ancestors, and the rest. This tension was largely silent, since in theory no one of 'impure' blood was allowed to migrate to the Americas. Everybody claimed to be Old Christian (Caro Baroja 1978; Guarda 2002). Some people in Chiloe who had the same surnames as the 'luteran' victims of the Inquisition in Seville in 1559 (Pastore 2010) may have been suspected as secret descendants of Protestants. In many cases, families could not be sure of whom their own ancestors had been. In most cases, people did not know who the other Spanish families were. In a deeply antagonistic and repressive, Inquisition-controlled society, this amounts to: 'I may not know who I am, but I know that others are not like me, that they are potentially my enemies, and that they could be dangerous' (Green 2007; Greenleaf 1981; Marquez Villanueva 2006; Medina 1952).

However, after 1600 these differences (many of them not real but imagined) became insignificant, as compared with the real danger, which threatened everyone,

of a hostile observer identifying a family member as half-Dutch. Imagined or real differences which seemed important before 1600, now were meaningless in relation to the 1600 atrocity and its possible consequences, which were generally shared. This is precisely one of the five factors defining posttraumatic growth, increased personal strength: 'Things that used to be big deals aren't big deals to me anymore' (Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004, p. 6). The typical Spanish woman in Chiloe after 1600 had to change her thinking about other women, who were now seen by her as in the same position as hers. She was forced by the evolution of her own thoughts to cooperate with all the other women, including cooperate in keeping the mass rapes and rushed mass weddings, secret. This is an interesting case of cognitive dissonance (Acharya, Blackwell & Sen 2018; Hinojosa et al 2017; McGrath 2017; Minozzi 2013; Montgomery 1994; Vaidis 2014).

Cognitive dissonance refers to the fact that 'when individuals hold two or more cognitions that are contradictory, they will feel an unpleasant state – dissonance – until they are able to resolve this state by altering their cognitions' (Hinojosa et al 2017, p. 171). This is a powerful analytical instrument, which is being increasingly used in anthropology, psychology, sociology and economics. Sometimes avoiding cognitive dissonance makes compromise possible (Acharya, Blackwell & Sen 2018). There are three stages to cognitive dissonance: intellectual awareness, psychological discomfort, and action. The typical Spanish woman in an Inquisition-controlled environment has always known that she should not trust anyone except her own family. She does not know anything about the others. She has always lived in a repressive, totalitarian society, sharply divided along religious and racist lines. She knows that it would be wise to suspect everyone, to distrust her neighbours, to expect to be interrogated and tortured, to betray and be betrayed, and to be accused

by her enemies even if she is 'innocent'. This is a zero-sum society, or a prisoner's dilemma society.

Then, suddenly, without any previous warning, it gets worse: there is war, all the men in her life are killed, and she is subjected to prolonged or repeated sexual abuse. All these horrors are happening equally to every woman. They are all equally affected. Even after the victorious Spanish counter-attack, all the women are still treated equally with regard to the rushed mass weddings, pregnancy, and commitment to secrecy. This woman possibly feels strongly that she is not different from the other women, that dealing with the immediate and long-term consequences of these horrors is more important than anything else, and that no one is in a better position to offer support, sympathy or solidarity than another woman in the same situation. Not even her supportive new husband can help as much as another woman, who shared every step in the experience of horror, can. These new perceptions sharply contradict her pre-1600 view that her female neighbour was possibly the enemy. Intellectual awareness of, and psychological distress at this cognition conflict are both inevitable, and they are solved by the action of cognition change: 'I was wrong about my neighbour, she is not the devil, she is my sister'. This change in cultural attitudes is summarised in Table 1.

This woman understands the importance of secrecy, not only for herself but also for future generations, and she is prepared to start life again with an unknown new husband, and to change her previous views of other women. All these are challenges to the old, traditional Inquisition-controlled social order. They are also expressions of new cognitive processing and increased personal strength, both key ingredients of posttraumatic growth: 'I can handle things better ... Whichever way it goes, you have to deal with it ... if I handled this then I can handle just about

anything' (Tedeschi & Calhoun 2004, p. 6). Or: 'I discovered that I am stronger than I thought I was', 'I have more self-confidence' (Powell et al 2003, p. 79). This is also an example of the diversity of women's empowerment, depending on context and culture (Kabeer 1999), which makes Chiloe very different from Rwanda or Bosnia (Berry 2017).

Self-interest also plays a role in a group's ability to keep a secret (Gibson, 2014). A Spanish woman in Chiloe may know that another woman was raped, but it may not be in her interest to tell. Singling out any woman raises questions about all of them ('why did they rape her, but not you?'). The pre-1600 Inquisition-controlled, prisoner's dilemma's society and the post-1600 cooperation environment can both be explained by using game theory pay-off matrices. Table 2 assumes two women friends before 1600, who are both, separately and simultaneously, being interrogated by the Inquisition. Each woman may be loyal to the other, or betray her. The respective pay-offs depend on the strategies they adopt. For example, the top right cell (north east) in Table 2 represents Prisoner 1 betraying her friend, whereas Prisoner 2 remains loyal. As a result, Prisoner 1 is released but Prisoner 2 gets three years in jail. In Table 2 the best strategy for each prisoner, regardless of what the other prisoner does, is betray. Equilibrium corresponds to, or consists of, this double betrayal, which yields a two-year sentence to each woman (bottom right cell, south east). This equilibrium is inferior to that outcome in which each woman remains loyal to the other (top left cell, north west), but it is unfortunately inevitable.

In contrast, Table 3 represents the post-1600 cooperation society. The pay-offs are now defined differently, this time in units of multi-generational wealth and prestige. If each woman betrays the other, none of them gets anything (bottom right cell, south east). If only one woman betrays the other, again they get nothing,

despite the fact that one of them was loyal (both top right and bottom left cells, north east and south west). Even betrayal by only one of the two women means that the whole secrecy structure, which was carefully and painfully put together, has collapsed. A woman has nothing to gain, and much to lose, by claiming that another woman was raped by the Dutch. A positive outcome is only possible if both women are loyal, each woman loyal to the other (top left cell, north west).

Fear of the Inquisition in Chiloe has two different versions. There is a fear that divides (before 1600), and another fear that unites (after 1600). This possibly applies also to other, more modern or even contemporary totalitarian societies.

## **DISCUSSION AND GENERAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Berry (2017) three-phase conceptual framework (atrocities, female agency, disappointment) has proved enriching and illuminating when applied to research on a historically and culturally different case study. There are general implications of the Chiloe research, regarding secrecy, uniformity (that is, that the same happened to all the women), and cultural opportunity. The Chiloe case shows that, if an attempt at keeping wartime mass rapes secret succeeds, at least partially, this may contribute powerfully to eliminate, or at least significantly ameliorate, some of the negative effects of the general public learning about this atrocity. Partial success means that each woman, baby and family must be protected, even if the atrocity is an open secret. But, as compared with the year 1600, secrecy is much more difficult to get away with in the XXI century, because of progress in communication technologies and the development of social media. If secrecy is in fact impossible, maybe a policy alternative worth considering could be to actively confront, directly, any new

hierarchies of victimhood, and the patriarchal backlash, as soon as they emerge. This policy alternative would require sustained and expensive education and information campaigns, and new legal initiatives and activism, and it may work only slowly if it works at all, but it must be tried if nothing else is available. On the other hand, after Rivera's (2008) research on Croatia, we know that, if certain conditions apply, including a favourable government disposition, then dissociation, concealment, 'covering' or cultural reframing of stigmatizing, reputation-damaging events are all perfectly possible in the late XX and early XXI centuries. The Chiloe case study reinforces Rivera's conclusions under completely different historical, political, social and cultural circumstances. Chiloe seems to suggest that, under these very different conditions, posttraumatic growth may have been more substantial than in the postwar former Yugoslavia (Powell et al 2003). This is also an illuminating illustration of the diversity of women's empowerment (Kabeer 1999).

With respect to uniformity, an important factor in Chiloe is that every woman was, or was perceived as being, equally affected. No woman could credibly say: 'The other women were raped by the Dutch, but not me', or 'The other babies are half-Dutch, but mine is hundred percent Spanish'. No one would have believed her. So, there was no room for the emergence of new hierarchies of victimhood (Berry 2017). In general, it is possible that a patriarchal backlash may not happen at all, or that it would be much more difficult, without the complicity of at least some women or groups of women. These are precisely the women who would be favoured by any new inequalities generated by new hierarchies of victimhood.

Combining aspects of both secrecy and uniformity, altruism may also be potentially present, for example, in tactics of the 'I-am-Spartacus' type (each slave falsely claiming to be the rebel leader, in order to protect the leader from their

enemies). This is similar to the king of Denmark during the German occupation in World War II, wearing a Jewish identification item, after the Nazis had decreed that all the Danish Jews should wear them. In both examples I sacrifice myself by claiming something that is not true, in order to protect something else which I believe is more important. The equivalent in a mass rapes scenario would be women who, with perfect knowledge of all the possible personal and collective consequences, both positive and negative, falsely claim to have been raped by the enemy. This is of course completely hypothetical, but it is not impossible in practice, assuming that these women are convinced of the need to protect both secrecy and uniformity. Whether altruism is present at all, or the particular forms under which it may express itself, are possibly context-dependent and culturally-sanctioned (Kabeer 1999).

Women-led cultural change happened in Chiloe because there was a cultural opportunity, a widening cultural gap. The pre-1600 prisoner's dilemma, Inquisition-controlled society was a cultural aberration. After the Dutch defeat in 1600, when women were pushed towards cultural change by post-atrocity cognitive dissonance, this was partly a cultural response to how backward the old attitudes were. Post-atrocity secret female agency just contributed to further expand an already existent cultural gap between the new and the old. In general, the more backward or reactionary a traditional culture is, the more likely it is that an atrocity, or an atrocity-motivated shock, will lead to substantive women-led cultural change. It is possible that, if we look at cases of war and wartime sexual violence in recent decades, the opportunity for women-led cultural change would have been greater, the more archaic the traditional attitudes were. This is an exciting question for future research. It is also an opportunity and a recommendation for external or international intervention and support. Efforts are likely to be most effective, where the cultural

gap is the largest. However, extra care should be devoted again to avoid encouraging new inequalities and victimhood hierarchies. An important policy implication for specialists and professional helpers (doctors, nurses, psychologists, lawyers, etc) is to protect secrecy if this is at all possible, maybe even at the cost of having to pretend uniformity. But secrecy should not be deliberately or artificially protected if it would encourage new inequalities or new hierarchies of victimhood.

Another interesting avenue for future research is the study of other examples of posttraumatic growth which go together with moving away from traditional religiosity and towards modernisation and interpersonal trust. This was the case of Chiloe in 1600, but it may be much more general. On the one hand, many actual instances of posttraumatic growth have been shown empirically to be correlated with religious attitudes. But, on the other hand, it is possible that at least some times posttraumatic growth may be a positive influence upon modernisation and trust (or the latter, a positive influence upon the former, or positive influences may be mutual). Maybe researchers need to separate explicitly different types of religious attitudes. How posttraumatic growth and a decline in the role of traditional religiosity relate to each other may depend on a country's level of economic development, or on precolonial and colonial aspects of its geography and history (Beugelsdijk & Welzel 2018). Finally, another option for future research would use the Chiloe experience of mass rapes and their aftermath in comparative work, including historical cases, which possibly should examine and emphasise context and diversity in several related spheres, such as the moral and other implications of rape as a 'weapon of war' and 'peacetime rape', women's empowerment, and altruism (Berry 2017; Kabeer 1999; Pipkin 2009; Porter 2019; Powell et al 2003; Roberts 2012).



## **CONCLUSION: SOME POSSIBLE LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES**

After atrocity, secret female agency, and cultural change, people in post-1600 Chiloe learned to become comparatively more tolerant and cautiously open, more prepared to compromise, accommodate and trust, and keener on cooperation, solidarity, reciprocity, and respect for differences. These are typical features of contemporary, advanced, successful, rich democratic countries (Boettke, Coyne & Leeson 2013; Furtado 2017; Harrison & Berger 2006; Nunn 2009; Ostrom 2007; Rotberg 2013). Some, or many, women in these XVII century families developed sympathy for women in other families who were possibly different from themselves according to pre-1600 standards, whereas even reluctant individuals were pushed by necessity and self-interest into embracing forced cooperation. Cultural change among the Spanish families in Chiloe after 1600 was eventually exported to mainland Chile by successive generations of migrants (Urbina Burgos 1988).

Chile today has the most successful economy in Latin America, together with one of the best institutional qualities in the region. Chile's Human Development Index (HDI) was the highest in the region in 2017. According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), in 2018 Chile was the second least corrupt country in the region after Uruguay. There are many other indicators which confirm these positive trends. For example, the Inter-American Development Bank has Chile at the top of the region in terms of public expenditure quality (BBC Mundo 2018). Chile had the second lowest rates of both poverty and extreme poverty in the region in 2017, again after Uruguay (CEPAL 2019, p. 83). The same source reports that Chile had the largest share of GDP allocated to social expenditure in Latin America (p. 144), the largest share of 20-24 year-olds in the first quintile (the poorest 20 percent of the population) with complete secondary

education (p. 193), and the biggest proportion of households under both social inclusion and double inclusion (social and work inclusion, p. 194). As to women's progress, Chile had the lowest rate of employed women with jobs in low productivity sectors (p. 203).

Some observers have attempted to explain Chile's current economic and institutional success as a result of the free-market, open economy policies of the Pinochet military dictatorship (1973-1990), whereas others argue that some roots of such success are even more recent (BBC Mundo 2019). However, and without wishing to challenge the merits of XX and XXI century policies and institutional developments, there is strong evidence that Chilean success started much earlier. For example Bernardo O'Higgins, the founder of the nationality and first head of government in the early XIX century, had very modern democratic and free trade preferences ('... I was emphatic in that two measures were needed, in order to push the people away from their indifference and to make them interested in the revolution: the election of a Congress and the establishment of free trade', Hojman 2002, p. 162). Or, more than a hundred years before the Pinochet dictatorship, Friedrich Hassaurek, the United States ambassador to Ecuador in 1867, wrote: 'Chile is the most prosperous and respectable of the South American republics. She has built roads over the Andes, not only wagon-roads, but also a railroad. She has had less revolutionary troubles than her neighbors. Chilean commerce is flourishing ... the superiority of the native Chileans over their Spanish brethren must not be underrated' (Hojman 2002, p. 156).

It would be difficult to argue that these very long-term positive trends are not at all related to earlier cultural change in the direction of cooperation in Chiloe. Even if someone wishes to insist that Chile's current economic and institutional success

(and with it, Chilean women's progress) have very recent, late XX century roots, she would still need to explain why such positive policies, and no others, were adopted by the Pinochet dictatorship and post-Pinochet democratic governments.

We will never know who the father of each of these 1600- and 1601-born babies was (and today it does not matter). But it is possible, just possible, that Chilean exceptionalism exists today partly thanks to Francisco del Campo's vision and leadership and, above all, thanks to the quiet heroism of all those Chiloe women who kept the secret, had the courage to change their beliefs about other women, and had enough faith to start their lives again with unknown new husbands.

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Table 1

Typical attitudes of a cautious, thoughtful, realistic Spanish woman towards another Spanish woman (maybe her neighbour) in Chiloe, before and after 1600

<b>Before 1600</b>	<b>After 1600</b>
<p>'I am a true Catholic (or secret Protestant), possibly of 'Old Christian' (or secret 'New Christian') blood, and she is possibly very different from me.</p> <p>I do not know who she is or what she thinks,</p> <p><b>So I must be very careful with her'</b></p>	<p>'I am a true Catholic (or secret Protestant), possibly of 'Old Christian' (or secret 'New Christian') blood, and she is possibly very different from me.</p> <p>But I believe that I know what she thinks and feels, because I believe it is exactly the same that I think and feel.</p> <p><b>Both she and I were raped by the Dutch, both she and I married Spanish husbands we know nothing about, and both she and I became pregnant. And we have been jointly given an opportunity to keep it secret (which would be very silly not to take advantage of)'</b></p>

Table 2

A prisoner's dilemma society (Chiloe before 1600)

When interrogated by the Inquisition, do I stay loyal to my friend, or betray her?

Pay-offs in years of jail: (ME HER)

	<b>Prisoner 1 (ME): Loyalty to the other woman</b>	<b>Prisoner 1 (ME): Betrayal</b> (Dominant strategy: whatever she does, this column is best for me)
<b>Prisoner 2 (HER): Loyalty to the other woman</b>	(1 1)	(0 3)
<b>Prisoner 2 (HER): Betrayal</b> (Dominant strategy: whatever I do, this row is best for her)	(3 0)	(2 2)

Table 3

Forced cooperation after 1600 (cooperation is defined as keeping the mass rapes secret)

Pay-offs in units of long-term, multi-generational wealth and prestige:

(Woman 1 Woman 2)

	<b>Woman 1: Loyalty to the other woman</b> (Dominant strategy: best column for Woman 1, regardless of what Woman 2 does)	<b>Woman 1: Betrayal</b>
<b>Woman 2: Loyalty to the other woman</b> (Dominant strategy: best row for Woman 2, regardless of what Woman 1 does)	(1 1)	(0 0)
<b>Woman 2: Betrayal</b>	(0 0)	(0 0)