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Why say sorry: on the ambiguities of official apologies

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Why Say Sorry

On the ambiguities of official apologies

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Why Say Sorry

On the ambiguities of official apologies

Doctoral thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

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Table of Contents

Prologue: Official apologies **p. 1**

Chapter 1. Introduction **p. 3**

1.1 Case: Blair & the Irishmen **p. 3**
1.1.2 The PM's apology p. 5
1.1.3 The apology's meanings p. 6
1.1.4 Additional observations p. 9
Intermezzo: The UK case study **p.12**
1.2 Putting theory to the test **p.17**
1.3 Research objective & definitions **p. 19**
1.4 Relevance **p. 23**
1.5 Methodological and philosophical implications **p. 25**
1.6 Set up **p. 27**

Chapter 2. Literature review **p.31**

2.1 Introduction **p. 31**
2.1.2 Selection of the literature p. 32
2.1.3 Methodological implications p. 36
2.14 Overview of the review p. 39
2.2 Speech **p. 40**
2.2.1 A prominent orientation p. 40
2.2.2 Rationale p. 41
2.2.3 Presenting prescriptive models p. 44
2.2.4 Application to the case p. 45
2.3 Dramaturgy **p. 47**
2.3.1 Performatives p. 47
2.3.2 The centrality of sincerity p. 49
2.3.3 Attention to dramaturgy p. 50
2.3.4 Apologies as rituals p. 47
2.3.5 Application to the case p. 54
2.4 Multi-actor context **p. 57**
2.4.1 Individual templates p. 57
2.4.2 From individual to collective apology p. 59
2.4.3 Three sets of studies p. 60
2.4.4 Empirical (case) studies p. 62
2.4.5 Novel approaches p. 63
2.4.6 Obstacles p. 65
2.4.7 Application to the case p. 66
2.5 Conclusions of the literature review **p. 68**

Chapter 3. Conceptual framework **p. 75**

3.1 Introduction **p. 75**
3.2 Making meaning **p. 75**
3.2.1 Agency and discourse p. 75
3.2.2 Moral discourse p. 77
3.3 Performance **p. 79**
3.3.1 Elements of performance p. 79
3.3.2 Publicness p. 83
3.4 Multi-actor environment **p. 89**
3.4.1 Circuit of meaning p. 89
3.4.2 Equivocality & authority p. 90
3.5 Alternative approach **p. 93**

Chapter 4. Operationalization **p. 95**

4.1 Case study approach **p. 95**
4.2 Case research objectives **p. 98**
4.2.1 Objective 1: Historical background p. 98
4.2.2 Objective 2. Performance p. 99
4.2.3 Objective 3. Multi-actor environment p. 100
4.2.4 Objective 4: Meanings p. 100
4.2.5 Objective 5: Interpretive challenges p. 101
4.3 Case selection **p. 103**
4.4 Limitations of the research **p. 104**

Chapter 5. The Canadian apology **p. 107**

5.1 Background **p. 107**
5.1.1 The wrongdoing p. 107
5.1.2 Policy shifts p. 109
5.1.3 Lead up p. 110
5.2 Speech **p. 115**
5.2.1 The statements p. 115
5.3 Dramaturgy **p. 117**
5.3.1 The casting p. 117
5.3.2 The staging p. 119
5.3.3 The scripting p. 122
5.3.4 The acting p. 123
5.4 Multi-actor environment **p. 127**
5.4.1 Victims' interpretations p. 127

5.5 Meanings of the apology **p. 130**
5.5.1 An affirmation of survival p. 130
5.5.2 A coming together p. 131
5.5.3 A cultural and spiritual celebration p. 132
5.5.4 A teachable moment p. 132
5.5.5 The end of a long battle p. 133
5.6 Interpretive challenges **p. 135**

Chapter 6. The Belgian apology **p. 139**

6.1 Background **p. 139**
6.1.1 The wrongdoing p. 139
6.1.2 Fate of the arrestees p. 139
6.1.3 Postwar silence p. 142
6.1.4 Lead up p. 143
6.2 Speech **p. 147**
6.2.1 The statements p. 147
6.3 Dramaturgy **p. 149**
6.3.1 The casting p. 149
6.3.2 The staging p. 150
6.3.3 The scripting p. 152
6.3.4 The acting p. 152
6.4 Multi-actor environment **p. 155**
6.4.1 Third parties' interpretations p. 155
6.5 Meanings of the apology **p. 158**
6.5.1 A moral message p. 158
6.5.2 A history lesson p. 159
6.5.3 A political and policy statement p. 159
6.5.4 Acknowledgement of the victims p. 160
6.6 Interpretive challenges **p. 162**

Chapter 7. The UK apology **p. 165**

7.1 Background **p. 165**
7.1.1 The wrongdoing p. 165
7.1.2 Institutional involvement p. 167
7.1.3 Lead up p. 172
7.2 Speech **p. 172**
7.2.1 The statements p. 172
7.3 Dramaturgy **p. 175**
7.3.1 The casting p. 175
7.3.2 The staging p. 176
7.3.3 The scripting p. 177
7.3.4 The acting p. 176
7.3.5. Remote performances in Australia p. 179
7.3.6 The casting & the scripting p. 179

7.3.7 The staging p. 180
7.3.8 The acting p.182
7.4 Multi-actor environment p. 185
7.4.1 Victims' & third parties' interpretations p. 185
7.4.2 Moral & formal authority p. 187
7.5 Meanings of the apology p. 189
7.5.1 A welcome home party p. 189
7.5.2 An attempt to reframe victimhood p. 190
7.5.3 Display of moral leadership p. 191
7.5.4 A teachable moment p. 192
7.6 Interpretive challenges p. 193

Chapter 8. The Dutch apology p. 197

8.1 Background p. 197
8.1.1 The wrongdoing p. 197
8.1.2 The massacre in Rawagede p. 181
8.1.3 Public outcries p. 202
8.1.4 Lead up p. 203
8.2 Speech p. 206
8.2.1 The statements p. 206
8.3 Dramaturgy p. 208
8.3.1 The casting p. 208
8.3.2 The staging p. 209
8.3.3 The scripting p. 209
8.3.4 The acting p. 211
8.4 Multi-actor environment p. 216
8.4 1 All interpretations p. 216
8.4.2 Moral & formal authority p. 218
8.5 Meanings of the apology p. 220
8.5.1 A spectacle of legal defeat p.220
8.5.2 A tribute to Indonesian heroes p. 221
8.5.3 An attempt to deliver closure p. 222
8.5.3 A hard-fought recognition p. 223
8.5.5 Start of new policies p. 225
8.6 Interpretive challenges p. 226

Chapter 9. Conclusions p. 229

9.1 Summary of the argument & research approach p. 229
9.1.1 A novel framework p. 225
9.1.2 Rationale for sequential presentation p. 227
9.2 Interpretive challenges p. 235
9.2.1 Misalignments in the performance p. 235
9.2.2. Conflicting interpretations p. 237

9.4 Research conclusions **p. 241**
9.4.1. "The Centrality of Performance" p. 241
9.4.2 "Apologies are ambiguous" p. 243
9.5 A novel approach **p. 243**
9.5.1 Apology as moral act p. 245
9.5.2 Apology as political move p. 251
9.5.3 Apology as policy decision p. 256
9.5.4. Apology as historiographical event p. 261
9.6 Evaluating official apologies **p. 265**
9.6.1 Alignment across the four realms p. 267
9.6.2 Victims as capable agents p. 267
9.7 Appealing to multiple publics **p. 271**
9.8 The framework vis-à-vis the literature **p. 274**
9.9. Conclusion **p. 275**

Word of thanks **p. 277**

Appendices **p. 279**

1. Additional conclusions of the literature review p. 280
2. Research objective 1: Historical background p. 281
3. Research objective 2: Performance p. 284
4. Research objective 3. Multi-actor environment p. 291
5. Research objective 4: Meanings p. 295
6. Research objective 5: Misalignments & Conflicting interpretations p. 296
7. Case selection criteria p. 297
8. Selection of cases p. 298
9. Elements of the apology statement (Canada) p. 299
10. Interpretations in the public arena (Canada) p. 300
11. Elements of the apology statement (Belgium) p. 314
12. Interpretations in the public arena (Belgium) p. 317
13. Elements of the apology statement (UK) p. 320
14. Interpretations in the public arena (UK & Australia) p. 323
15. Elements of the apology statement (Netherlands) p. 331
16. Interpretations in the public arena (Netherlands) p. 333

Bibliography **p. 339**

List of tables

1. Overview of case selection criteria p. 12
2. Overview of the case study's variables p. 14
3. Features of the case study p. 14
4. Methods and sources of the case study p. 15
5. Discrepancies between salient apology theories and the case study's findings p. 19
6. Features of the apology that are stipulated in the case chapters p. 28
7. Considerations for the presentations of the case studies p. 29
8. Omitted studies of apology in the field of linguistics p. 35
9. Related definitions of apologies in the literature p. 37
10. Sets of studies of collective apology p. 61
11. Measures to construct validity and reliability throughout the case research p. 96
12. Overview of interpretive challenges (Canada case) p. 135
13. Overview of interpretive challenges (Belgium case) p. 162
14. Overview of interpretive challenges (UK case) p. 193
15. Overview of interpretive challenges (Netherlands case) p. 221
16: Types of ambiguities in public (apology) performances p. 237
17: Typology of public debates in the case studies p. 240
18. Source set relevant to research block 1 (historical background) p. 282
19. Framework for the examination of the historical background of apologies p. 282
20. Keywords used in research block 2 (performance) p. 285
21. Source set relevant to research block 2 (performance) p. 287
22. Framework for examining the contents of the apology statements p. 288
23. Framework for examining performances p. 289
24: Framework for examining moral interlocutorship p. 289
25. Framework for examining multi-actor environments p. 292
26. Framework for examining moral authority p. 292
27. Framework for examining formal authority p. 293
28. Framework for examining the meanings of apologies (within-case analysis) p. 295
29. Framework for establishing differentiated cues for interpretation p. 295
30. Case selection criteria p. 297
31. Selected cases vis-à-vis the criteria p. 298
32. Elements of the apology statement of Canadian Prime Minister Harper in parliament, June 11, 2008 p. 299
33. Social actors and their interpretations of the Canadian apology in domestic newspapers (June 11, 2008 - December 11, 2008) p. 301
34. Elements of the apology statement of Belgian Prime Minister Di Rupo in Mechelen, September 9, 2012 p. 314
35: Social actors and their interpretations of the Belgian apology in domestic media (September 9, 2012-March 9, 2013). p. 317
36. Elements of the apology statement of UK Prime Minister Brown in parliament, February 24, 2010 p. 320
37. Elements of the apology statement of UK Prime Minister Brown in Westminster, February 24, 2010 p. 321
38. Social actors and their interpretations of the UK apology in domestic newspapers (February 24, 2010-August 10, 2010) p. 323

39. Elements of the apology statement of the Dutch ambassador to Indonesia, December 9, 2011 p. 331
40. Social actors and their interpretations of the Dutch apology in domestic newspapers (December 9, 2011-June 9, 2011) p. 333

List of figures

1. Set up of the case research p. 96
2. Overview of the apologies' meanings in terms of morality, politics, policy and historiography p. 245
3. Example of alignment of meanings across realms p. 266
4. Action perspectives for contributions to alignment for apologizers and victims p. 269

List of pictures

Canada
1: The House of Commons, in Ottawa, Canada. View from a public gallery (June, 2010). p. 117
2: Scene at the lawn at Parliament Hill, Ottawa, Canada (June 11, 2008) p. 120
3. Viewing in the Chief Joe Matthias Centre in North Vancouver B.C., Canada (June 11, 2008) p. 121
4. PM Harper and guests walk to the floor of the House of Commons, Ottawa, Canada (June 11, 2008) p. 124
5. Aboriginal guests on the floor of the House of Commons, Ottawa, Canada (June 11, 2008) p. 128

Belgium
6. Canopy and stage at the Dossin Barracks, Mechelen, Belgium (September 9, 2012) p. 149
7. Holocaust memorial and square near the Dossin Barracks, Mechelen, Belgium p. 150
8. Central stage in front of the Dossin Barracks, Mechelen, Belgium (September 9, 2012) p. 151
9. Holocaust survivor Chail Almberg and Crown Prince Filip, Mechelen, Belgium (September 9, 2012) p. 153
10. Crown Prince Filip and Holocaust survivor during torch lightening, Mechelen, Belgium (September 9, 2012) p. 154

United Kingdom
11. Group photo of the special guests, London, United Kingdom (February 20, 2010) p. 175
12. PM Brown's apology in the Attlee Suite, London, UK (February 24, 2010) p. 176
13. Former child migrant Nigel (Owen) Powell with teddy bear Hector, London, UK (February 24, 2010) p. 179
14. UK High Commissioner Valerie Amos' performance, Sydney, Australia (February 25, 2010) p. 180
15. UK Head of Post Jolyon Welsh's performance, Perth, Australia (February 25, 2010) p. 181
16. Unknown guests, setting up a table during the apology event, Brisbane, Australia (February 25, 2010) p. 182

17. Former child migrant Paddy Dorain addresses the UK Head of Post, Perth, Australia (February 25, 2010) p. 183
18. UK High Commissioner Valerie Amos and an unknown attendee, Sydney, Australia (February 25, 2010) p. 190

The Netherlands

19. Ambassador De Zwaan and Falkirk regent Voice Ade at the cemetry, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2011) p. 209
20. The pyramid at Rawagede Hero Cemetery, Balongsari, Indonesia (date unknown) p. 210
21. Stage of the apology, with from the far right: the Dutch ambassador, Jeffry Pondaag and Liesbeth Zegveld, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2011) p. 211
22. The wooden plaque, held by the “widows of Rawagede”, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2014) p. 213
23. Widow Wanti Dodo at the apology performance, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2014) p. 213
24. Ambassador de Zwaan at the Rawagede Cemetery, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2014) p. 219
25. Ambassador De Zwaan and Sukarman walking along at the monumental wall, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2014) p. 222
26. Ambassador De Zwaan and the widows, with attorney Zegveld and Pondaag (with name tag), Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2011) p. 224

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Prologue

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Official apologies

In the last decades, government officials seem increasingly inclined to apologize for atrocities and injustices perpetuated in the past. In 2008, Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd apologized in Parliament for laws and policies that inflicted "profound grief, suffering, and loss" to Aboriginal peoples. His successor, Julia Gillard, offered government apologies in 2013 for past policies that encouraged unwed mothers to give up their babies for adoption to married couples. In 2010, Hillary Clinton, the American Secretary of State, apologized to Guatemalans for a medical experiment conducted by the US Public Health Service in the 1940s, in which Guatemalan soldiers, prisoners, and people with mental disabilities had been injected with syphilis without their consent.

These are just a few examples on the growing list of official remorse: more and more, government representatives take up apology as a tool to address historical wrongdoing. And with good reason: apologies can highlight "possibilities of peaceful coexistence" and remove obstacles to more productive relations among individuals and communities (Barkan 2006, p.7). They have the potential to rehabilitate individuals and restore social harmony (Tavuchis, 1961, p. 9), and they seem to be humane and efficient devices for curtailing conflict (Cohen, 2004, p. 177).

An official apology may appear to be a simple act with great potential and appeal, but it can be a complex and delicate undertaking. In the act of apologizing, strategy and drama, morality and liability, facts and emotion, leadership and humility all come together. The apology can affect the identity of many members of society – the constituency that the apologizer represents, the victims to whom the apology is addressed, and the disenfranchised groups that feel tied to the addressees but are left out of the apology. These parties may applaud the act, rise in revolt, or decry it as insufficient to remedy past trauma. There are practical ramifications to consider as well: while historical wrongdoing often has terrible, long-term consequences that must be acknowledged, officials offering apologies generally do not want to trigger demands for excessive financial compensation.

These and many other aspects make official apology a complex phenomenon that begs further study.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Case: Blair & the Irishmen

In 1974, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) bombed pubs in the towns of Guildford, Woolwich, and Birmingham (UK). Twenty-six people died in the blasts. The British police arrested over a dozen Irishmen. Some of them were accused of direct involved in the blast; several of their family members were charged as accomplices. They were severely mistreated, even tortured, by the police. Many of the arrestees admitted during the police interrogations that they had prepared the bombs at their family's kitchen table and carried out the attacks. Seventeen were ultimately convicted and ordered to serve long prison sentences. One of them was "carried kicking and screaming from the dock" of the court, shouting, "I'm innocent you bastards! No, no, no!" (BBC, 2005a).

The prisoners, who became known as "the Birmingham Six" "the Guildford Four," and "the Maguire Seven", all fought to prove their innocence, but their efforts failed (Hilliard, 1990; Woffinden, 1987). "As appeal after appeal was referred back to the court," noted a lawyer, "there was cumulating evidence that lies and deceit had been practiced not just by the police who extracted the confessions from the appellants, but also by the expert witnesses who backed up the police with scientific evidence and by some of the lawyers who conducted the cases for the prosecution" (Schurr, 1993, p. 2).

In the 1980s, a series of television documentaries, books, and newspaper articles stirred increasing skepticism about the handling of the cases and the guilt of the prisoners. The public campaigned for overturning their sentences, and eventually all cases were taken up by the Court of Appeal. This court concluded that the forensic evidence, such as swabs for explosive residue on the suspects' hands, had been erroneous, "judged even by the state of forensic science in 1974" (Schurr, 1993, p. 3). The remaining members of the Guildford Four were released in 1989 – one of them had died in prison. Soon after, the Birmingham Six and the Maguire Seven were released on the same grounds.

A few years later, Gerry Conlon, a member of the Guildford Four, called for an apology by the UK government. Conlon, the subject of the film *In the Name of the Father*, had become the most well-known of the victims, and in 2004, his case was taken up by leaders of the Northern Irish Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP). The SDLP had political ties with Tony Blair, the British Prime Minister, as they worked together on a peace agreement for Ireland in those days. SDLP leadership asked the prime minister to apologize. In return, Blair wrote a letter to SDLP frontman Marc Durkan to clear the names of the families, but Durkan insisted that Blair should make a public statement. The newspaper *The Irish News* threw its support behind Durkan and started a petition campaign for an official apology (Chrisafis, 2005).

Early in 2005, the press reported that action by Downing Street was forthcoming (McGinn, 2005). “It is understood that Mr. Blair is prepared to concede that Mr. Conlon was wrongly jailed in a speech from the dispatch box in the House of Commons,” the *Belfast Telegraph* announced in February (Molony, 2005). A member of the House of Commons was set to ask a question that would “provide ample opportunity for public recognition of the wrongs inflicted on the Conlons” (Evening Gazette, 2005). Members of the Conlon and Maguire families were invited to sit in the public galleries in parliament. In February, they travelled to London, expecting to finally receive an official gesture of moral repair.

1.1.2 The PM's apology

On February 9, 2005, Prime Minister Blair made a public apology to the victims and their families. There had been a "miscarriage of justice in the case of Gerard Conlon and all the Guildford Four as well as Giuseppe Conlon and Annie Maguire and all of the Maguire Seven," he said. This was a "matter of great regret," as the wrong people had been convicted for the crime. "I recognize the trauma that the conviction caused the…families and the stigma which wrongly attaches to them to this day. I am very sorry that they were subject to such an ordeal and such an injustice. That’s why I am making this apology today" (BBC News, 2005).

The statement was delivered in the PM’s office near the seat of parliament, although the initial idea had been to apologize in the House of Commons. However, in order to apologize there Blair needed a

Member of Parliament (MP) to ask him an appropriate question as the rules of the occasion required. A critical member of the press wrote that, "the MP bounced around on his seat, trying to catch the eye of the Speaker. But that obdurate old Scot [the Speaker of the House] was having none of it, deeming it an unfit question." (The Sunday Times, 2005). The PM, than, chose to apologize in his office, where he first made a statement on camera, then shook the hands of the victims, and finally retreated with his guests into private chambers where he repeated the apology and spoke with them without any press present (Wilson, 2005).

When the press questioned the victims afterwards outside parliament, they expressed gratitude. Gerry Conlon stated that “[the Prime Minister] went beyond what we thought he would, he took time to listen to everyone. He exceeded our expectations, and he said it was long overdue” (Graham, 2005). He added that Blair “apologized profusely and he was physically taken aback by what we have all suffered” (Wilson, 2005). The PM had acknowledged, he said, that “everyone has been affected by this, everyone has suffered trauma from it” and that this acknowledgment had been “a good thing” (Contenta, 2005; Graham, 2005; Millar, 2005). Conlon said also that he felt relieved. “This hasn't ended for us,” he concluded. “But today is the start of the end...” (Chrisafis, 2005; Settle, 2005). He showed the paper with the apology statement that he had received from the prime minister to the press reporters, proudly holding it up in the air.

1.1.3 The apology's meanings

On its surface, this apology seems easy to comprehend. To investigate its meanings, we can look to the growing body of apology scholarship that has emerged in the last two decades across the humanities and the social sciences. We can begin that investigation by checking the statement against a cumulative list of requirements that many theorists agree are necessary for an apology to be meaningful (Gill, 2000; James, 2008; Lazare, 2004; Ohlstain, 1989; Smith, 2008; Tavuchis, 1991).

These elements include:

- ✓ The apology is a speech act (oral utterance)
- ✓ It needs to be addressed to, and heard by the victims of the wrongdoing
- ✓ The apology includes a referral to a violation of a moral norm
- ✓ The apology acknowledges responsibility for the wrongdoing
- ✓ The apology expresses sincere regret; the statement should not be ambiguous in anyway

The apology to the wrongly convicted Irishmen meets these requirements. It included a verbal utterance and in this utterance the apologizer referenced the violation of a norm and characterized this as "a miscarriage of justice". He also used the word "apology" which indicates that he took responsibility for the wrong and he spoke of "great regret", directly addressing the victims. So overall, the apology seemed to be one by the books.

Beyond this checklist, one could observe that the apology was especially meaningful to the victims, which is another important issue in apology theory. In conceptual studies, apology is treated as a moral gesture that must be aimed at the party that has suffered from the wrongdoing at issue (Gill, 2000; Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008; Tavuchis 1991). The apologizer needs to treat the victims as beings with dignity and equal moral worth, and (partly) because of this, the act carries moral meaning as act of recognition and inclusion. Scholars also argue that the reception of the apology by the victims influences its meanings (Smith, 2008, p. 111). The addressees can accept or reject the gesture and if they choose the latter option the act is rendered worthless.

In the case of the alleged IRA perpetrators, the apologizer spoke directly to the victims, and they in turn indicated with their response to press reporters that they felt the PM had addressed them as worthy moral beings. In Conlon's words, the prime minister "took time to listen to everyone" (Graham, 2005). Both members of the Conlon and Maguire families affirmed afterwards how meaningful the apology had been to them. So once more, the case seems well aligned with dominant views in the literature.

The apology is also congruent with another prominent view: studies define apology as an act that is aimed at "reconciliation" (Auerbach, 2004; Barkan, 2006; Daye, 2004). Reconciliation is a broad concept: it is treated as a process, as well as an outcome of social acts of peace making, such as apology (Lederach, 1997, p. 20). The literature offers a wide range of definitions of this outcome. It can mean "resigned acceptance in the light of the futility of protest," sums up philosopher Charles L. Griswold, “acceptance and an agreement to cease hostilities", "a strong sense of affirmation" or "joyful endorsement” (2007, p. XIV, XV).

In the UK case the victims offered “joyful endorsement” – at least in the short term.[1] Gerry Conlon affirmed right after the apology that it had taken away a heavy burden and turned a page in his life. Reviewing reports in the media that included other victims’ reactions, similar expressions of gratitude can be observed (Millar, 2005). So again, the 2005 apology appears congruent with existing outlooks in the literature on what the gesture is supposed to achieve.

As noted in the prologue, the UK apology was just one of many official apologies that have been offered recently in what seems to be an emerging trend. The last two decades have seen over a dozen official apologies on behalf of political and government bodies for historical wrongdoings (Celermajer, 2009; Weyeneth, 2001). Some scholars speak of an "age of apology” (Gibney, 2008). Situated against this backdrop the UK apology, once more, does not appear to be exceptional in any way.

Hence, examined with the help of apology literature, we can conclude that Blair's formal statement meets the standard list of requirements for an apology speech act; that the PM addressed the appropriate party accordingly; and that the act was meaningful in terms of reconciliation, as it offered some kind of closure to the troubled victims. Thanks to theory we can grasp its composition and its meaning. We can also conclude that the case is not an interesting exception: it does not stand out as a unique act on the political stage, but rather fits in an existing trend. Hence, there seems no need for further questioning. It all makes sense. What more explanation do we need?

---

[1] Ten years later, Gerry Conlon expressed frustration over the apology.

1.1.4 Additional observations

Viewing this apology through a broader lens, though, the case gets more complicated. Reviewing the reactions to the apology in the public debate, we see many more social actors taking interest in the apology outside of the inner circle of apologizer and victims. Several (Northern) Irish politicians took ownership of it by claiming responsibility for causing the apology to happen in the first place (Chrisafis, 2005; Evening Gazette, 2005; McGinn, 2005; Molony, 2005). Irish PM Bertie Ahern stated that he appreciated "that Tony Blair has agreed to my request for this issue to be addressed," and Mark Durkan of the SDLP called into memory that *he* had asked Blair to make a public apology to Conlon (Lane, 2005).

Additionally, other victims of miscarried justice let their opinions be known. Blair had chosen to pay homage to the Guildford Four and the Maguire Seven, but they were not the only ones who had been unjustly jailed by British authorities after the 1974 bombings. There had been six similar cases related to the blasts in Birmingham and these exonerated prisoners now demanded a comparable gesture (Hurst, 2005; Morgan, 2005; O'Neill, 2005). "It is nice to see the prime minister acknowledges the fact that people were innocent," said one of them in a newspaper report. "He must now apologize to the Birmingham Six as well" (Chrisafis, 2005).[2]

Another observation concerns the venue. Not only the formal statement, but also the place of performance came under scrutiny. The choice of both the initially selected site for the apology (the House of Commons) and its actual location (the PM's Westminster office) generated debate. Members of the Conservative party, seated in the opposition benches, said that the PM should have made a formal Commons statement, because "that would have allowed the Opposition and other MPs to question him" (Hurst, 2005; Settle, 2005).

For their part, however, the victims appreciated the ultimate place of performance. A member of the Maguire family claimed that the intimate exchange behind closed doors in Blair's office had been a

[2] In response the PM's office denied that Blair was obliged to apologize to anyone who had suffered a similar fate.

meaningful alternative, stating that, “It has come out better because it was like a family thing...” and Gerry Conlon noted that “Tony Blair went much further than he could have done on the floor of the House of Commons” (Millar, 2005).

Further scrutinizing the public reactions another observation stands out. In the news media, the apology was widely seen as an attempt to overcome the standstill in the negotiation process in which the UK government and various other parties were involved (Clarke, 2005; Contenta, 2005). Although the office of the PM insisted that the apology should be considered without wider ramifications for the peace talks, other parties perceived it as politically motivated (Hurst, 2005; Murphy, 2005). “The broadcast, suggested by Irish Premier Bertie Ahern, was seen as a desperate attempt to revive the Ulster peace process,” wrote a correspondent for *The Daily Telegraph*, (Wilson, 2005).

More specifically, it act was seen an attempt to boost the position of the SDLP in the upcoming elections in Northern Irelands' constituencies. The SDLP was perceived as the political ally of Blair that sat on the same side of the negotiation table in the peace process. Strengthening the SDLP could weaken the position of its political competitor Sinn Fein, the Republican party, that was perceived as the hardliner in the peace talks (Murphy, 2005).

In addition, other critical commentators saw the apology as a political ploy that was particularly advantageous to Blair himself as prime minister and as leader of the Labour Party (McGuiness, 2005; Millar, 2005; O’Neill, 2005; Young, 2005). A commentator of the *Sunday Times* wrote that it had “considerable political benefits [for the PM] and was worth doing for selfish reasons” (Clarke, 2005). Blair could enjoy a wave of good publicity, he wrote: the PM’s apology appeared on television and made the front pages.

So the UK apology was welcomed by the victims, but it also generated a debate that had nothing to do with the addressees and the old wrong: the political gains for Tony Blair himself; his lack of moral leadership on other occasions; the political ramifications of the apology for Northern Irish elections and the peace talks; and non-verbal elements of the performance, such as the location. The latter became significant as a social venue that harbored an exchange in which victims felt appreciated, and as a political forum that did not permit other politicians to question the apologizer directly.

Drilling deeper into the issues that emerged, we can observe conflicting interpretations of the fundamental nature of the apology. The apology was situated in both the realm of moral actions (as a gesture to rehabilitate the victims) and the realm of political actions (as a move to spur peace talks and to satisfy Blair's ally and constituency). The latter realm was defined by commentators *as the opposite* of the former: as if these realms were impossible to conjoin and the political significance of the act undermined its moral meaning.

Hence, a look through the broader lens indicates that the UK apology was not just a simple, intimate exchange, but a controversial performance with wider ramifications. This introduces an intriguing question: how to make sense of such complicated public act?

Intermezzo: The UK case study

The preceding discussion is based on a full case study of the 2005 apology by the UK prime minister. The observations that have been discussed at the previous pages are based on this case study. A case study is understood as "an investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1994, p.33). In this intermezzo I will lay down the specifics of the case analysis. If the reader wants to move on, he or she is invited to pick up the thread at page 13.

The aim of this case study was to test the applicability and explanatory power of salient apology theories, to see if they could capture the full dynamics of one instance of official apology. For this, it was first necessary to identify the salient theories: I choose the most quoted studies that theorized apologies[3]. Secondly, it was imperative to select a case that was representative of the phenomenon that I sought to study – that is: public, official apology. Other criteria that the case had to meet are listed in the table below.

Table 1. Overview of case selection criteria

Case selection criteria	**Argument**	**Case "Blair & the Irishmen"**
1. The primary phenomenon of interest in the case must be an apology by a government official for historical wrongdoing. The verbal statement must include an expression of regret, an acknowledgement of responsibility for wrongdoing, and a referral to the violation of a (moral) norm.	To make comparison with salient apology theories possible, it must be specified that the apology statement minimally includes these elements.	This apology meets these requirements.
2. The case needs to be selected within a confined institutional, cultural, and temporal space: western democracies in the past decade.	This choice is informed by the recent emergence of official apologies; they are a relatively novel phenomenon and often occur in western democracies.	This apology dates back to 2005 and has been offered in the UK.

[3] See chapter 3 for more details on the selection of literature that is reviewed and referenced in this thesis.

3. The case has to be an empirically rich case that provides numerous and various data and allows for multiple layers of analysis (Yin, 1994).	3. This criterion is informed by a theoretical consideration: "rich" cases may trigger new ideas for theory building (Sigglekow, 2007).	A preliminary media scan indicates that there were various reactions to this apology and that dramaturgical elements of the performance were included in the apology debate.
3a. The case must include various interpretations of the apology by, at minimum, the primary addressees.	3a. The expectation is that we can learn most from apologies that have generated significant public attention, assuming that such cases are more likely to involve high stakes, large numbers of interests, and therefore generate much reflection.	
3b. The apology performance must have dramaturgical (non-verbal) elements.	3b. This criterion is informed by the observation that recent official apologies are mediatized events that include such elements.	
4. The case must be representative of the central phenomenon.	This criterion is informed by basic theoretical considerations.	A cross check indicates this apology is congruent with 4 other official apologies with regard to its composition, procedure and categories of actors involved.[4]

Next, I needed to outline the variables of interest. The independent variable, "official apology," was already known, but the outcome variable was in need of refinement. The most common outcome variable in apology theories is "reconciliation." Yet, this is often treated as the desirable *social outcome* of the act. (Reconciliation is within reach, goes the rationale, if the statement of the apologizer meets the requirements that are laid out on page 4.) Because the aim of this case study was to test theory, I continued to use this variable, lest I ran the risk of failing to connect theory with the case study's findings. For this purpose, I used the definition of social psychologists Bar-tal & Bennink of reconciliation as "mutual recognition and acceptance, invested interests and goals in developing peaceful relations, mutual trust, positive attitudes, as well as sensitivity and consideration for the others party's needs and interest" (2004, p. 15).[5]

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[4] This crosscheck is available upon request.

[5] In theories in the field of transitional justice and related areas of study reconciliation is often considered to be a process, rather than an outcome. The definition employed here is one of reconciliation as an outcome of an act of peace making, such as apology.

Table 2. Overview of the case study's variables

Variables	
Independent variable	Official public apology ("Blair and the Irishmen")
Outcome variable	Reconciliation (definition by Bar-tal & Gemmink)

The aim of this case study was modest. It was to verify if current theory of apology is indeed capable of describing and explaining the dynamics in the public arena through which the official apology becomes meaningful. Could existing concepts of apology be applied to the case? If so, did the apology at issue produce the predicted outcome (reconciliation)? And if not, why not? If the case study would indicate that the apology does *not* bring about reconciliation, I would have identified complexities that required more investigation. Hence, the nature of the case study was "disciplined configurative," George & Bennett, 2005, p. 75). Such a case study can "impugn established theories if the theories ought to fit but do not" and it can serve a heuristic purpose by "highlighting the need of new theory in neglected areas" (Eckstein, 1975, p. 99).

Table 3. Main features of the case study

Features of the case study	
Nature	Disciplined configurative case study
Aims	• To test theory • To establish the need for new theory • To identify complexities that require more investigation
Central questions	• What is the meaning of the official apology, considering the dynamic public debate in the aftermath? • How are dramaturgical elements of the performance significant as carriers of meaning?
Research questions	• What is the meaning that the apologizer enacts? • What meaning is assigned to the apology by the primary addressees? • Who else assigns meaning to the apology? • What meanings are attributed to the apology by these social actors? • Are non-verbal elements of performance relevant to primary addressees and/or these social actors? • If so, how?
Research activities	• To verify if the case meets the selection criteria • To compose a record of events that lead to the apology • To describe the performance • To take inventory of the social actors who assign meaning to the apology • To analyze the meanings that all social actors enact, or assign to the apology • To compare the evidence of the case study with apology theory

Outline for the report[6]	• Description of the wrongdoing • Record of past events leading to the apology event • Description of the event including verbal statement and non-verbal dramaturgical elements (location, staging) • Description of dominant interpretations of the apology
Outline for the final analysis	• Testing the evidence against existing concepts • Testing the outcome against what theory predicts • Proposing adjustments of the framework of analysis for further case research
Limitations	• The economic, legal and other ramifications of the official apology are not included • The focus is on the very short-term response that the apology engenders. This response can include readings of the apology that will fade away over time; the case study's findings do not have wider implications for the long term • The research lacks detail; the aim is *not* to draw a detailed picture of the public debate, to measure the value of a contribution; to verify the background of a social actor who assigns meaning to the apology

Key to the investigation were the interpretations of the apology by social actors in the public arena. It included their reactions up to one month after the apology, because it is reasonable to expect that the act of official apology generates the most attention immediately afterwards and that, in the long term, its societal impact gets pooled with other factors that influence its meaning. Official apologies may be situated in a wide field of social, economic, legal and other factors and, consequently, the apology's particular meaning can become impossible to distinguish over time. Further, the investigation of these reactions was limited to those in printed media only, and the final analysis was to include only dominant readings of the apology.

Table 4. Methods and sources of the case study

Method	**Details**

To establish what meanings are assigned to the apology, the following indicators are used:	• Causal links (e.g., connecting the apology to other events)
	• Use of value-laden language (e.g., describing the apology as such-and-such)
	• The selection of topics (e.g., highlighting or ignoring topic and specifics)
	• The references to topics in the text
	  ○ No reference to a topic (the issue is not mentioned at all by an actor)
	  ○ Weak reference (the topic is mentioned briefly and not as the actor's first concern)
	  ○ Medium reference (the topic appears amidst others, but receives considerable attention)
	  ○ Strong reference (the topic is key to the rationale, receives much attention and is mentioned early on)

[6] The full case study report is available upon request.

To establish which interpretations of the apology are dominant in the public debate, the following distinctions are made:	• No presence (the topic is not mentioned in media) • Weak media presence (topic appears in two utterances) • Medium presence (in three or four utterances) • Strong presence (in more than four utterances)
Sources	**Details**
	• Primary sources: newspaper articles and press briefings in the UK and Ireland; visual record of the performance event; witness reports in (any kind of) media in order to recompose the performance • Secondary sources: scholarly contributions of the apology and/or wrongdoing

1.2 Putting theory to the test

How to make sense of the UK apology, considering the public debate that took place in its aftermath? And what to make of the non-verbal elements of the performance? How do these convey meanings, if any? These questions resulted from the observations that we made using a broader analytical lens to analyze the UK apology. Let's try to answer these and see if, and how apology literature can be helpful. The UK case leads us immediately into uncharted territory. Looking for cues about the meaning of the dramaturgical elements of the apology brings us to the first difficulty. As observed, the location of Blair's apology was significant to both the victims and the apologizer's political opponents. The first expressed content, whereas the latter were critical.

Seeking answers in apology studies, we return empty handed. The literature focuses on formal speech as the basis for the interpretive analysis of acts of apology. Theorists frequently define apology as a "speech act" (Celermayer, 2009; Lazare, 2003; Smith, 2008; Tavuchis, 1991). This orientation produces frameworks for the analysis of verbal statements. "What is said" is most important; "how" or "where" it is said has not yet received much consideration. Apology theory has thus not yet produced matured analytical tools that can help capture the non-verbal elements of the performance. Apparently, the dramaturgy of the apology performance forms a neglected area of study.

If we try to make more sense of the range of interpretations that circulate in the public debate, we encounter a difficulty of another kind. The theory focuses on apology as interpersonal exchange between victim and apologizer.[7] These two are treated as the sole parties that are key to realizing an apology's meanings. For the apologizer, the act provides an opportunity to demonstrate the good moral judgment that had been absent during the wrongdoing. As a result, "the offender may be reestablished as a more trustworthy and respectable member of the community" (Gill, 2000, p. 24). As for the victim, other considerations are relevant. "[T]he apology involves a recognition of the injustice of the harm done to the victim, a confirmation of the moral worth of the victim and the value of what has been lost" (Gill, 2000, p. 24).

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[7] The latter is often called (symbolic) "offender" or "perpetrator".

Because the theory zooms in on the dyad of (symbolic) offender and victim, the search for concepts to better understand the "meaning making process" in the public arena finds yield no result. The scope of analysis of existing theories has not yet included broad multi-actor environments. Although the case data suggest that other social actors claim a stake in the apology as well, theory excludes third parties in the capacity of “meaning makers.” Irish Premier Bertie Ahern, party leader Mark Durkan, the Birmingham Six, and other social actors who assigned meanings to the act, are left out of sight.

Further scrutinizing the conflicting meanings that third parties assigned to the act, we can identify two more concerns. Salient analyses situate the act of apology merely in the moral realm. When we have wronged someone, "we may apologize, expressing other-oriented moral regret and appealing for forgiveness from the person whom we have injured," write philosophers Trudy Govier and Wilhelm Verwoerd (2002a, p. 68).[8] Apologizing is tied to peace making and reconciliation; the act is defined by its capacities to bring about change for the better and by its moral worth to the offender and the victim.

The case demonstrates that the UK apology became meaningful in multiple ways. For instance, it was seen as a strategic maneuver to ponder constituencies, as if Blair electoral concerns had prevailed over genuine regret. The apology was also tied to his former actions: some commentators found his (perceived) lack of moral leadership on other occasions to be crucial while evaluating the gesture. Apology theory has not yet dealt with such interpretations, which focus on topics that have nothing to do with the wrongdoing and with the values and norms central to the apology.

And there is more: the case study shows that some readings of the apology (re-)defined the role of the parties involved, or called new stakeholders into existence. One actor could be central in one interpretation, while pushed to the background in another. The reading of the apology as political move created specific stakeholders (like Irish politicians) who had been absent in the interpretation of the apology as an act of justice. The interpretation of the apology as personally beneficial to PM Blair

[8] Italics by the original authors.

put him in the spotlight, while diminishing the role of the victims as instrumental to his self-interest, whereas the view of the gesture as an act of justice put the lattermost in the center of attention. Hence with regard to the outcome variable, theory focuses on apologies' moral meaning and defines this meaning in terms of reconciliation between offender and victim, but the UK case suggests that there are more meanings, parties, and roles at stake.

Summing up, we have identified the following discrepancies between apology theory and the UK case:

Table 5: Discrepancies between salient apology theories and the case study's findings

	Features	**Salient apology studies**	**Case Blair & the Irishmen**
1.	Independent variable	Formal speech (what is said)	Formal speech & non-verbal elements of performance (how and where it is said)
		Apology as moral act	Apology as an act with multiple (potentially conflicting) meanings
2.	Scope of analysis	Interpersonal exchange (offender and victim)	Multi-actor environment (multiple social actors)
3.	Outcome variable	Reconciliation (old wrong, known parties in fixed roles)	Controversy (new topics, emerging social actors, dynamic role assignment)

To summarize, the case of Blair and the Irishmen raised various questions. What is the meaning of the apology, considering the various interpretations that circulated in the public debate? And how are dramaturgical elements of the performance significant as carriers of meaning? The previous discussion leads to the tentative conclusion that we are analytically ill-equipped to answer these questions. We do not have the conceptual gear at our disposal to do so. Official apologies have not yet been treated as public performances in terms of a wider multi-actor context than the victim-perpetrator relationship.

So the theoretical task that now lies before us is to develop a new approach in order to help answer these questions. For this, we need to start developing some novel analytical tools.

1.3 Research objective & definitions

If we seek to make sense of official apologies, we have to start at the very base of theorizing. Since existing theories treat apology as a moral act of reconciliation between just two parties, we will have to come up with a novel concept of apology. The objective of this thesis is

> **to re-imagine the concept of official apology in terms of a public performance in a multi-actor environment.**

I understand "official apologies" to be social acts in which a formal representative of government and/or state publicly offers a statement on behalf of that body for historical wrongdoing. Think of an ambassador, a monarch, or a president. The use of the term "act" here comes closest to the phenomenological tradition that treats it as a way in which social agents constitute social reality through language, structure, and "all manner of symbolic social sign", to cite philosopher Judith Butler (1988, p. 519). The statement of the official should be addressed to victims and include at least an expression of regret, an acknowledgement of responsibility for wrongdoing, and a reference to the violation of a (moral) norm. Through these requirements, this definition articulates the concept of apology with salient apology studies that provide these basic elements (Blatz et al., 2009; James, 2008; Lazare, 2004; Tavuchis, 1991).[9]

Authors often disagree on what other elements should further define apology. Some define the concept more extensively (De Greiff, 2008, p. 132). They argue that material recompense for the victims should accompany apologies in order to make them meaningful. (Dundes Renteln, 2008; Minow, 1998; Shriver, 1995). Others insist that apologies specifically address moral, non-material repair (Daye, 2004). Some scholars argue that apology is more a broad process than a single speech act, which includes elements like institutional reform (Oliner, 2009), while others put forth a narrow definition of apology, separating the apologetic statement from other actions and stages in processes of reconciliation (Kampf, 2009; Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008; Tavuchis, 1991).

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[9] Apologies by perpetrators in public forums who speak only on their own behalf, such as individuals apologizing before truth and reconciliation tribunals, are not included.

In this thesis, official apology is treated as a bounded, social act.[10] Treating it as such is necessary to make comparison with conceptual apology studies possible, including the oft-quoted landmark study of sociologist Nicholas Tavuchis (1991) and the monograph on apology by philosopher Nick Smith (2008). In this thesis it is assumed that this bounded act can convey multiple meanings – not just moral meaning to be defined and understood in terms of the relationship between apologizer and victim. Expanding the scope of analysis this way deviates from apology theory – a choice that is informed by the observations of the UK case. Yet, defining apology as a potentially multisided act still enables us to link the conclusions of our investigation to existing literature.

The apology is considered to be a "performance": a staged event, or, more precisely, a bounded enactment, distinct from other activities, which takes place in a larger social context (definition adapted from Schieffelin, 2003, p. 195). A performance produces social realities, such as understandings of the problem at hand and the (power) relations of those involved (Hajer, 2009). It includes speech as well as non-verbal elements that will be called "dramaturgy."[11] This term refers to the entire production of the performance. Think of the location, the decor, and the people on stage (Turner & Behrndt, 2008). The performance is mediatized and is thus susceptive to other social actors than those physically present at the scene.

The members of the publics that make sense of the apology do so privately, but many express themselves in the public arena: the forum in which ideas, media, institutions, and practices all contribute to the dynamic generation of publics and public opinions (definition adapted from Low & Smith, 2006, p. 5).[12] The particular context of the apology will be called "multi-actor environment." It is dynamic and heterogeneous; a wide range of individuals and collectives is involved in the meaning making process of this public apology (Hajer, 2009; Mouffe, 2000; Van Zoonen, 2011).

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[10] Official apologies often need to be complemented with other measures, including material recompense, in order to be effective, but I do not include these in the definition of apology.

[11] In western theatre studies the way scripts are composed and read are treated as part of the dramaturgy. The definition employed here comes close to what is often called "production dramaturgy" in these studies.

[12] Some definitions will be refined and/or expanded in Chapters 3 and 4).

The term "social actor" refers to those taking observable actions that are functional, if not always intentionally so, in the process of interpreting the apology (definition adapted from Page, 1996, p. 21).

Now that the key objective has been spelled out, it is time to discuss its relevance. Why would studying the phenomenon in this particular manner be significant, other than making a theoretical contribution?

1.4 Relevance

The choice of this objective is not only informed by the state of theory, but also by the societal relevance of the central phenomenon. As noted, an increasing number of officials have begun to use apologies to address past wrongs. The acts receive national, and sometimes worldwide, attention. The social sciences and the humanities however, have not yet come up with approaches that can grasp many of their features. We have frameworks at our disposal to unravel the moral meanings for (symbolic) offender and victim, as well as tools to analyze the verbal statement, but we lack a theoretical basis to analyze, first, elements of dramaturgy of the public performance and, second, the meaning making process in the multi-actor environment in which the apology performance take place.

If we can develop tools to better capture the multi-actor context, we will be able to locate social actors in society who somehow feel involved in the apology, even though they do not belong to the inner circle of apologizer and victim. This is relevant, because these individuals and collectives can help make and break post-conflict transitions in society. Studies in conflict resolution and related fields have already demonstrated that a wide range of social actors can affect such processes in various ways (Cohen, 2004; Kriesberg, 2000; Lederach, 1997; Van der Merwe, 2001). Additionally, such tools can help pin down the issues that these parties are concerned with, as well as opportunities to engage them in societal transition. This may result in the identification of effective strategies that would allow officials who offer apologies to constructively address them over potentially divisive issues.

Developing tools to analyze the staged event can help spectators critically evaluate official apologies. The professionalism with which such events are being organized has increased in the last decades. They can be planned with the (sole) purpose of being reported, and "planted" with the help of dramaturgical tools, such as lighting effects to make the performer look good, and artifacts and extras that are carefully selected and purposefully placed within view of press cameras (Boorstin, 1992).[13]

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[13] Examples abound, such as the infamous speech of president George W. Bush in New Orleans to commemorate hurricane Katrina (Cels, 2008). Bush held his speech against the background of the historic St. Louis cathedral at

Enhancing the capacities of "audiences" to recognize and assess the uses of these tools may turn them into even more informed citizens – and this may ultimately contribute to a well-functioning democracy.

Simultaneously, the insights developed in this thesis may also enhance the capacities of those performing, and of those orchestrating public performances of leaders of government. Even though the aim of this thesis is to develop a descriptive framework, it may be possible to draw lessons from it, that help these social actors increase their stagecraft. It is my hope that these lessons ultimately help performers enact the meanings that an apology can convey in order to promote constructive social outcomes, and that they help enhance their capabilities to engage their publics to make these outcomes reality.

Lastly, the choice for this research objective is informed by my interests in history, philosophy, public policy and social justice. I very much look forward to this particular endeavor. The objective requires extending the scope of inquiry beyond traditional approaches of apology: I will have to come up with a rich analytical framework that includes novel variables. For this, I will need to look at theories in various academic disciplines, including philosophy, political sciences, and theatre studies. I consider it to be an intellectual challenge to investigate so many aspects of one social act and to sift through multiple theories to find cornerstones to work with.

To summarize, re-imagining the concept of apology as a public performance in a multi-actor environment offers ample opportunity to make a contribution to theory and practice. The expectation is that such a novel concept can help us better understand the emerging phenomenon of official apology by establishing its range of meanings; by identifying social actors and issues relevant to post-conflict transitions; by enhancing apologizers' strategic capacities to constructively address these issues; by adding to the capabilities of publics to evaluate public performances; and by enabling performers to strongly enact the constructive meanings that an apology can convey.

Jackson Square, which, at that time, still lacked electricity. Two giant light spots had been planted there, merely for the event. They were dismantled as soon as the president's remarks had ended.

1.5 Methodological and philosophical implications

Before continuing the discussion, it is necessary to step aside momentarily and address some basic methodological and philosophical notions that underlie this thesis. The previous account implies that social acts, like public apologies, can be "read," just as texts can. As sociologists Jeffrey Alexander and Jason Mast write, "… social action can be understood by social actors and social interpreters as a meaningful text" (2006, p. 15). The act of apology is treated as a negotiated, public text, while multiple readers bring to it their own backgrounds when interpreting it (Van Zoonen, 2012). It is also implied that this particular text becomes meaningful through a dynamic process of interpretation involving various social actors. The act triggers an "agentive response" among parties that are physically absent from the scene and, for example, watch the apology on television or read about it in the newspaper (Hughes-Freeman, 1998, p. 9).

The interplay between these interpreters is treated as a circuit of meaning – a phrasing that draws heavily on the work of social scientists Paul du Gay, Stuart Hall, and others (2013). There is no fixed, final meaning that an act ultimately conveys, but the making of meaning is a continuous process within which there is room for resistance to dominant readings and opportunity to provide alternatives (Grant, 2004, p. 310).[14] No single actor is capable of determining a fixed set of meanings and, as a result, discursive closure is "never complete" (Grant, Hardy, Oswick & Putnam, 2006, p. 306).

Some basic philosophical issues need to be clarified as well. As introduced, current apology philosophy situates the act in the realm of moral actions, because it is first and foremost seen as a response to a violation of a norm, which injured other human beings (Gill, 2000; Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008; Tavuchis, 1991). As moral actions, apologies have received attention in the field of ethics.[15] More specifically, two salient perspectives in ethics are frequently referenced in apology studies. The first is the Kantian deontological outlook in which the inherent value of a social act is central. Conformity with a moral norm is key.

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[14] Meaning making is understood as forming relationships, assessing significance, sense making and understanding (Gaut 1993). I will elaborate some definitions in chapter 3.

[15] Ethics: the philosophical study of morality.

The underlying idea is that such norms should be obeyed by each moral agent and that an act, such as an apology, can be right in itself if it meets a moral norm. In other words: a deontologist can recognize an act as morally right because of its inherent value, despite its consequences. In this view, apologizing can be appropriate despite potentially harmful effects because, in plain wording, “it is the right thing to do.” “Apologies strike at the heart of our deontological commitments and call us to honor our basic duties,” writes philosopher Nick Smith (2008, p. 10).

To deontologists, the observations and questions that we have discussed so far will be irrelevant: if an act itself can be morally right and if its inherent value matters most, what is the point of looking into various social actors’ interpretations of the act? Our approach departs from the notion of inherent value. Instead, this thesis focuses on meanings that derive from interactions between social actors – not on establishing the inherent meaning of the act, as proposed by deontologists.

From a teleological or utilitarian point of view, on the other hand, actions should be judged by their ends or effects, rather than their inherent value. Utilitarianism is more oriented towards practical outcomes. In this perspective, an action is morally right if it produces as much, or more good (utility) for all people affected by it as possible alternatives. From this perspective, this thesis makes more sense. Utilitarians would treat the interpretations of an apology in the public debate as "practical outcomes" and as relevant sources for establishing its meanings. Furthermore, we treat apology as an act that has the potential to become meaningful in several ways – not only as a moral action. (To summarize this in the appropriate utilitarian phrasing: this study is open to the argument that the utility of an apology can be manifested in various realms of meaning.)

However, it is important to note that this thesis is *not* intended as an ethical study. These philosophies provide universal principles on which we can judge actions, such as apologies, as morally right or wrong. This study, however, does not assess the state of affairs that apologies bring about nor judges them as an ethical study would. It is also not aimed at investigating the acts' moral meaning only. Rather, we seek better understand the its plural meaning. If the research allows for a discussion of an apology's meaningfulness – that is, the extent to which the act is morally or otherwise significant, it will be included in the conclusions.

1.6 Set-up

Let's now return to the undertaking that is about to be carried out. The next chapter includes a thorough literature review. The aim of this review is twofold: to firmly establish the need for new theory, and to learn from the theory to build a novel conceptual framework. The key questions are: what can we learn from the conceptual literature on apology? How do salient theories suggest that official apologies become meaningful? What significance do they assign to dramaturgy and the multi-actor environment? What are corner stones exist for our investigation, and what parts of theory have limited value?

In chapter 3, a novel conceptual framework is introduced. This framework is interdisciplinary, drawing on theories in the fields of sociology, philosophy, anthropology, political sciences, as well as theatre studies. It also discusses the assumptions underlying the framework and its central concepts. In chapter 4, the framework is operationalized. The case study method is re-introduced, but this time, for the purpose of theory building. This chapter also makes clear how validity and reliability are constructed throughout the case research, and it includes an overview of the specifics of the case research, including the research questions and research objectives. Appendices 2 to 6 present details of the data collection and analysis; it includes coding frameworks.

At this point, we are geared up and ready to conduct a novel investigation into apology cases. In chapters 5 to 9 four case studies are presented. These include: the government apology of Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada to Aboriginal peoples for former harsh assimilation policies; the apology of Belgian Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo to the Jewish community for the involvement of government agencies in the deportation of Jewish people during World War II; the gesture of British Prime Minister Gordon Brown to former British child migrants who had been shipped off to Commonwealth territories; and, lastly, the apology by the Dutch ambassador in Indonesia for post-colonial atrocities committed by Dutch soldiers. At the end of each chapter I will identify the interpretive challenges that emerged during the case analysis, to be discussed later on in the final conclusions.

Originally, each case study has been conducted and reported on in similar fashion. This resulted in systematically composed, thick descriptions of each case, which were based on the same list of research questions.[16] These comprehensive case reports made a boring read. For this final account I have edited the cases in service of a sequential explanatory strategy. With each case, novel aspects of the central phenomenon will be highlighted.[17] This way, the theoretical argument will proceed from one case to the next; concepts will be developed sequentially, and earlier consistent findings will not be repeated. So all case chapters will zoom in on different features of the performance and multi-actor environment. (Other features will be discussed either briefly or not at all.) In the last case of the Netherlands, all topics relevant to the analysis will be taken into account. The table below makes clear what features will receive most attention:

Table 6. Features of the apology that are stipulated in the case chapters

Case	**Performance**	**Multi-actor environment**
Canada	Dramaturgy	Victims' interpretations
Belgium	Dramaturgy	Third parties' interpretations
United Kingdom	Speech + dramaturgy	Victims' & third parties' interpretations
The Netherlands	Speech + dramaturgy	All interpretations

The cases are logically ordered to enable the incremental construction of the theoretical argument. The order is based on three factors: the level of “theoretical saturation”, or, in plain wording, what is already known to the reader; which case data provide promising new insights; and which concepts are in need of further development (Steenhuijs & De Bruin, 2006). A second principle underlying the sequence of the cases will be discussed in the conclusions to this thesis.

[16] These reports are available upon request.

[17] I have not used a progressive case study approach as research method. The strategy merely concerns the *presentation* of the case studies in this thesis.

Table 7. Considerations for the presentation of the case studies

Considerations	Details
Practical	• Readability: the original case study reports are lengthy • Repetition: the original case study reports share many similarities
Theoretical	• The strategy is justified because there are similar findings in each case study • Other considerations are discussed in the Conclusions (Chapter 10)

Lastly, the conclusions in chapter 10 start with an overview of the central argument and research approach. It re-introduces and addresses the interpretive challenges that have been identified in the case chapters. It alo offers a proposal for a novel approach of official apologies that is based on the case research. It discusses this approach vis-à-vis existing literature on apologies and on public performances by (political) leaders, and it outlines implications for research and practice.

Let's move on now and plunge into apology literature to seek a deeper understanding of the state of the theory.

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Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This thesis aims to re-imagine the concept of official apology in terms of performance and multi-actor environment. To determine what exactly needs to be re-imagined, how and why, we need to develop a deeper understanding of the state of the theory. The first goal of the review is to establish the need for further theorizing. The case study of Blair and the Irishmen has indicated that current apology theory cannot shed light on some of its complexities. This has led to the tentative conclusion that official apologies have not yet been treated as public performances in multi-actor contexts.

However, these conclusions need to be clarified and given nuance: they lack a discussion of what exactly can(not) be explained – and the first objective of the review will be to provide just that. Re-introducing the case of Blair and the Irishmen in the review we will first establish what features of this case could not be explained, than we will sift through theories, and finally return to the case to determine exactly what they can and cannot capture.

The next goal is philosophical in kind: we seek a profound understanding of why they cannot capture these complexities. For this we need to drill down to the roots of the theories and determine where oft-used arguments and concepts stem from. So we will not just take stock of how apology theories propose apologies to become meaningful and what they can or cannot grasp (goal #1), but also try to unravel the rationales underlying these proposals (goal #2). Once we have gathered these insights, we are ready to draw lessons from the literature. That is, to identify stepping stones for further research, theoretical pitfalls to be avoided, and conditions that our own research framework has to meet (goal #3).

These goals lead to the following primary questions for the review: how and why do salient apology theories suggest that official apologies become meaningful? How do they discuss dramaturgical elements of performances and the contexts in which official apologies take place? What valuable analytical tools can theory provide for our own research, and, conversely, what concepts have limited

value for this thesis's purposes? Finally, what conditions does a novel framework of analysis have to meet?

Because of its topic-based structure, the review cleaves through the same body of literature multiple times. As a result, several authors will resurface in various parts of the text. One oft-cited scholar is sociologist Nicholas Tavuchis, who wrote a multifaceted and well-known theory of apology. He first appears in the discussion of speech acts, but since he addressed many other relevant issues, he returns in other sections as well. Philosopher Nick Smith is also frequently reintroduced to the scene as a keen commentator on apology literature and as a critical observer of the many conceptual problems of public/collective apologies.

2.1.2 Selection & collection of the literature

The objective of this thesis helps select the works for the review. The ambition to re-conceptualize the central phenomenon calls for a closer look into the body of theories of apology that introduce, test, and/or refine concepts of apology, as well as include a proposal about how they become meaningful. (So they all must theorize the phenomenon.) These works will be included in the review and collectively referred to as "apology studies", "apology theories" or "apology scholarship." The studies stem from different academic disciplines, and, to indicate the variety of perspectives, I will name the field of expertise of the author for each work cited.

The growing attention can be understood, first, as a response to the growing number of official apologies, noted in the prologue to this thesis. The evolving practice of apology has generated attention in the fields of philosophy, linguistics, sociology, psychology, anthropology, law, and the political sciences – including sub-areas, such as transitional justice and international relations studies. According to linguists Sandra Harris, Karen Grainger, and Louise Mullany, “apologies have probably generated more research in the past two decades than any other form of speech act” (2006, p. 716).[18]

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[18] It has grown hand in hand with contemporary academic reflections on reconciliation and peace-building processes. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, for example, has been a frequent subject of

The relevant literature has been collected during the last decade, starting with the casual purchase of Aaron Lazare's monograph "*On Apology* in a bookstore in Berlin (2004). The literature collection grew out of:

A. Over 10 Google searches with keywords including "apology," "official apology," "collective apology," "government apology,""state apology," "political apology," "public apology," "political forgiveness," "forgiveness" & "politician."

B. A careful follow-up on references to other titles in the source set.

C. Searches with similar keywords in Google Scholar, Academic Search premier (EBSCOHost), and JStor.

D. Searches with similar keywords for theses in ProQuest.

Studies that do *not* thoroughly theorize apology will be left out, including five bodies of literature that have been set aside despite having close ties to the phenomenon of official apology. The first set of excluded works consists of many studies about truth and reconciliation commissions, reconciliation processes, and the ways in which the past is remembered (Auerbach, 2004; Cohen, 2004; Daye, 2004; Dwyer, 2003; Funabashi, 2003; Gallagher, 2002; Potter, 2006; Torpey, 2006). In these studies, the act of apology is treated as part of broad societal processes of reconciliation and peace building, with attention to social, political, economic, legal and other facets of these wide-ranging processes over the long term. Within this wide field of considerations, the act itself receives little conceptual reflection of its own.

The second set of works omitted consists of religious studies on apology. The review does not include Christian philosophy that treats individual apology as a religious act that is embedded in the Christian tradition of repentance and forgiveness. In this body of literature, the Bible and the philosophical works of the Fathers of the Church, such as Augustine, form the starting point for analyses of the meanings of an apology. This thesis, however, focuses on how the apologizer, victims, and other social

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study and with that, public apologies by individual perpetrators that are offered during the gatherings of the commission (e.g., Allen, 1999; Daye, 2004; Gobodo-Madikizela, 2002; Graybill, 2002; Rotberg, 2006, 2010).

actors assign meaning to the act of apology. Their perspectives take precedent. Only if their interpretations include religious references will religious perspectives on apology be taken into account.

The third body of literature that is omitted encompasses studies in apologies and crisis management. These include works of, most notably, Michael Hearit (2006) and William Benoit (1995). The first author shows how leaders of organizations, when struck by allegations of wrongdoing, manage the crisis through apology. The second discusses how public apologies help individuals and (leaders of) organizations save face when under attack and situates apology within a set of strategies for image restoration.

The reason for excluding these studies is twofold. First, unlike the government figures who typically make official apologies, the protagonists in the crisis management studies face the acute risk of heavy reputation damage. Second, the central unit of analysis in these works is an individual or organization.[19] Although one can argue that government officials offering apologies also act on behalf of an institution, and thus, some kind of organized entity, both Hearit and Benoit are primarily concerned with private sector corporations, which have very different features. Because of these discrepancies, the studies are left out of the review.

A third body that is excluded consists of studies in the field of applied linguistics. The "apology speech act" has received much attention from linguists. Most of their efforts focus on unraveling everyday apologies between individuals by examining the utterance of the apologizer. This limits the value of the studies for our undertaking, in which non-verbal elements of the performance are central. The omission does not, however, imply that linguistic contributions are entirely absent in the review. In fact, linguistics heavily contributes to apology theory across the humanities and social sciences. Most apology research is situated in the field of linguistics, observed Smith, and has hewed close to its main ideas and methods of inquiry even as the topic has migrated to other academic disciplines (2008, p.

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[19] These organizations are treated as bounded-off, highly manageable units. I argue that government leaders who offer apologies are not acting on behalf of such units.

18). The literature review will shed light on this theoretic trail and pays considerable attention to the influence of linguistics on apology study across academia.

Table 8. Omitted studies of apology in the field of linguistics

Feature	**Detail**	**Example**
Central unit of analysis	Apology between individuals in everyday situations	Trosborg, A. (1995). "Interlanguage pragmatics: Requests, Complaints and Apologies."
Focus of the research	Linguistics elements of the utterance of the apologizer	Sugimoto, N. (1997). "A Japan-U.S. comparison of apology styles."
Origins of the theories	(Applied) linguistics & combinations with cultural studies and/or socio-psychology[20]	Ogiermann, E. (2006). "Cultural variability within Brown and Levinson's politeness theory."

The last body of literature that is set aside is concerned with the concept of "forgiveness." This omission needs some more argumentation since the concept of forgiveness is treated as the natural moral ally of apology in much of the literature. Psychiatrist Aaron Lazare writes that apology and forgiveness are "inextricably bound together" (2004, p. 229, 247) and Tavuchis states that "one who apologizes seeks forgiveness" (1991, p. 17).

Yet, if one digs deeper into the conceptual roots of forgivenss and how we have come to understand it, one will notice that it only makes sense to speak of forgiveness in cases of individual apology in private settings, since it assumes a prior personal relationship between forgiver and offender. You forgive someone (the agent), not something (the deed), explains philosopher Charles L. Griswold (2007).

Forgiveness is also closely linked to personal virtue, feelings of love, (self-)respect, and regret (Griswold, 2007, p. 43, 47, 71). Forgiveness scholarship often builds on religious works on forgiveness in which the personal act of repentance before God is seen as crucial (McFayden, 2001, p. 5) or on philosophical contemplations, such as the much-quoted work of Hannah Arendt, who discusses forgiveness as a form of human action, that she attributes to Jesus (1971, p. 236). "Forgiveness, in this

[20] Socio-psychology includes theories such as such as face-saving theory, personal image restoration theory, etc.

view," writes political scientist Peter Digeser about Arendt's thinking, "is quickly assimilated to our personal relationships and our capacity to love one another" (2001, p. 16).

In case of official apologies, however, there are no feelings of love and no relevant personal relationships; they are no self-expressive acts of personal remorse. Apologizers serve as *symbolic* offenders and are not personally tied to the wrongdoing for which they offer apologies.[21] (As human rights expert Martha Minow points out, no one can ask for forgiveness or forgive "by proxy" [1998, p. 114, 116].) In addition, there is an argument to omit these works. Those who align apology and forgiveness an apology's meaning in terms of two outcomes: either it is accepted by granting forgiveness or it is refused by withholding forgiveness (Lazare, 2004, p. 237; Minow, 1998, p. 116; Tavuchis, 1991, p. 20). If we, as researchers, were to follow this avenue of analysis, we would only be interested in the response of the victim who personally suffered from the wrongdoing. Other parties would be left out of the picture and other considerations deemed irrelevant.[22]

2.1.3 Methodological complications

Before moving forward, two methodological issues need to be clarified. The first concerns variations in how theorists reference the phenomenon of official apology. The definition in this thesis expresses a special interest in public performances that become meaningful through a process of interpretation in

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[21] Political scientist Mark Amstutz will see this differently. He writes that, "political forgiveness represents an extension of interpersonal forgiveness to the actions of collectives" (2005, p. 224). His notion of political forgiveness includes official apology.

[22] However, there are a few notable exceptions. Studies exist that discuss both forgiveness *and* official apology, and pay considerable attention to the latter. They include the study of political scientist Peter Digeser, called *Political Forgiveness* (2001), which situates the concept of forgiveness in the political arena and discusses the subsequent conceptual problems; an article by international relations expert Nava Löwenheim, who includes official apologies in her research on "forgiveness" in international relations (2009); and the in-depth monograph on forgiveness by philosopher Charles L. Griswold, who dedicates part of his book to the phenomenon of "political apologies" (2007).

a multi-actor environment. It is implied that (1) the entire performance event, including dramaturgy, carries meaning (2) the act is accessible to a broader public and generates multiple interpretations; and (3) apologies can have moral, but perhaps also other meanings.

This interest has not yet been claimed by other scholars, even though many dedicate their efforts to studying the similar central phenomenon. In their studies, may define an apology by a government official in different terms. They see it as a *collective* apology, since it is offered (and often received) on behalf of a group by a representative (Edwards, 2010; Gill, 2000; Smith, 2008, Trouillot, 2000). Some introduce their very own label for collective apologies, such as Tavuchis's typology of the Many-to-the-Many or the Many-to-One apology (1991). Others call it a *political* apology and emphasize the political interests and power relationships involved (Augostinos, Hastie & Wright, 2011, Shelton, 2007; Weiner, 2005a, 2005b).

The phenomenon to which these definitions refer often overlaps with the one that is central to this thesis, which makes it possible to include most theories in the review without much methodological ado – even though they do not accentuate all three aspects of the phenomenon mentioned above. The literature review sometimes includes the various definitions and phrasings that other authors put forth, but only discusses the parts of the theories that are relevant for the phenomenon of official apology as we defined it.

Table 9. Related definitions of apologies in the literature[23]

Term	**Features**
Collective apology	Apologies that are offered on behalf of a group by a representative. These are often accepted by a representative of a collective of victims, surviving relatives, etc.
Political apology	Apologies that are defined by their capacity to alter power relationships and are tied to political interests and policy-making processes.
Public apology	Apologies that are made in public a. by celebrities, business and/or political leaders, often for personal wrongdoing (scandals); b. by individual perpetrators who are personally involved in the wrongdoing at issue, and which are offered in an open forum, such as a gathering with a truth and reconciliation committee.

[23] The table includes my own, colloquial operant definitions.

Government apology	Apologies that are offered by government representatives for (historical) wrongdoing, addressed to the victims.
State apology	Apologies that are offered by officials on behalf of the state for (historical) wrongdoing, addressed to the victims.
Categorical apology[24]	Apologies (individual or collective) that offer considerable significance across twelve distinct forms of meaning (truth telling, acknowledgement of responsibility, etc.)

A second, more nagging methodological issue concerns the use of the term "meaning." This thesis focuses on meanings of apologies, which we will identify with the help of interpretations of the act in the public arena. However, across apology studies in humanities and the social sciences there exists a wide spectrum of definitions of the term. Some definitions are restrictive. For example, studies in pragmatics often reference "speaker's meaning" and point to the way in which someone linguistically encodes his or her intentions, or, in plain wording, uses language.[25] The function of words, then, is "to indicate the concepts that are constituents of the speaker's meaning" (Sperber & Wilson, 2005, p. 468).[26]

On the other end of the spectrum sits the monograph of philosopher Nick Smith, which is dedicated to untangling the many meanings of apologies. Quoting Michael Walzer's *Spheres of Justice* (1983), Smith generously expands the notion of meaning and writes that, "Apologetic meanings can span different 'forms,' 'kinds,' or 'spheres' of value" (2008, p. 23).[27] The different perspectives on meaning sometimes make navigating the literature challenging. I will endeavor to clarify the usage of the term in the review if there is a risk of methodological confusion.

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[24] This term has been coined by Nick Smith (2008).

[25] Pragmatics is often described as the study of language-in-use, or as "the study of how contextual factors interact with linguistic meaning in the interpretation of utterances" (Sperber & Wilson, 2005, p. 468).

[26] In pragmatics, other uses of the term "meaning" occur. A well-known pragmatist (Leech), for example, introduces the notion of "utterance meaning" (Trosborg, 1995, p. 6).

[27] "Spheres of justice" refer to separate entities of justice, to be identified by the distinct set of social meanings of the goods exchanged within it, and which are regulated by their very own principles (Den Hartogh, 1999).

2.1.4 Overview of the review

The review consists of three parts and conclusions. Composed in similar fashion they briefly recall the UK apology of 2005 and the questions that it raised as starting points for discussion. They further comprise a search for answers to these questions in the literature, ending with the application of the insights to the case to pinpoint what complexities can or cannot be grasped. Yet, the substance of these parts varies, since all three highlight focus on different topics.

The first part (2.2) deals with the "text" itself. I discuss how salient theories propose to make sense of acts of apology as speech act. I also clarify the discursive orientation that dominates the theories as well as reconstruct the distinctive line of reasoning that emerges in the literature.

Central to the second part (2.3) is "dramaturgy". Here I explain how apology scholarship has come to treat performance by digging into speech act theory and theories on ritual. In this discussion, the consequences of the prevailing discursive orientation in apology literature become even more clear: it demonstrates that they result in a lack of attention for the non-verbal elements of the act.

The third (2.4) part deals with the "context" of official apologies. It critically discusses salient theories that focus on either individuals or collectives vis-à-vis the notion of multi-actor environment. Two obstacles are identified that stand in the way of applying the theories in this thesis. Besides that, this section points to useful insights in the literature, which can help develop a novel framework of analysis.

The review ends with conclusions (2.5). These recall the research questions of the literature review and summarize the main findings. The conclusions form the springboard for the next chapter that will consist of a proposal for a novel conceptual framework.

Now that the central questions, selection criteria, methodological issues, and the composition of the review have been discussed, it is time for the actual investigation.

2.2 Speech

2.2.1 A prominent orientation

When PM Blair apologized to the alleged IRA bombers, he made a formal statement. There had been a miscarriage of justice, he said, which had led to the wrongful imprisonment of innocent people. He recognized the trauma that this had caused and said that he was sorry. The PM first made his apology on camera and then to the victims personally. Afterwards, the victims expressed gratitude and told members of the press corps that Blair had been affected by the stories that they had shared with him during their private meeting. The UK case led us to question the meaning of official apologies in general. How to make sense of such complicated act?

If we turn to the literature to answer the question of how to make sense of (official) apologies, we will notice that the majority of scholars who interpret the phenomenon classify these as a speech acts. Consequently, they zoom in on "speech" and scrutinize the verbal utterance of the apologizer (Bavelas, 2004; Blatz, 2009; Celermajer, 2009; Dundes Renteln, 2008; Harris et. al, 2006; Kerstens, 2008; Kimoga, 2010; Löwenheim, 2009; Negash, 2006; Taft, 2000; Tavuchis, 1991; Teitel, 2006; Thompson, 2008; Trouillot, 2000; Verdeja, 2010).[28]

The interest in speech is prominent across academia. In the field of psychology, Janet Bavelas writes that “[apologizing] is a social action that can only be done with words and, by corollary, if it is not done in words, it has not been done” (2004, p. 1). Sociologist Danielle Celermajer concludes, "We carve out a distinct and irreducible role for speech itself in our map of reparative action" (2008, p. 46, 47). In the political sciences, Ernesto Verdeja writes that "an apology is a speech act,” referencing speech act theorist John Searle (2010, p. 563). In international relations studies, Nava Löwenheim takes aim at the "speech-act of asking for forgiveness" and its several forms, including apologies (2009, p. 535).

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[28] If situated in the field of linguistics, studies often examine speech to pin down the intention of the speaker: what is he or she trying to express – or “mean”?

“Apologizing, we say, ‘I’m sorry,’” conclude Trudy Govier and Wilhelm Verwoerd in a philosophical paper, and this small sentence captures the quintessence of the approach: the apology is conceptualized as a verbal utterance (2002a, p. 69).[29]

2.2.2 Rationale

Why treat an apology so explicitly as speech act? Why assign so much value to the words that are uttered? A basic explanation is that, in order for an act to convey apologetic meaning, it needs to *reach* the victims. An apologizer has to make sure that the injured party can actually take notice. For this, an utterance is essential. As Smith notes, “it also seems impossible that one could convey considerable apologetic meaning without the presence of anything like a conventional speech act...” (2008, p. 20). Another possible explanation is that many scholars, not just linguists, appear to be comfortable with “text” as a subject of inquiry. Statements in writing are common sources in, for example, the political sciences.

These may seem reasonable explanations, but I argue that a deeper inquiry can reveal a particular line of reasoning that better explains the discursive orientation.[30] This line of reasoning starts with a clear idea of the meaning that an apology speech act should convey, and *to whom* (Dundes Renteln, 2008, p. 72). “The meaning of a[n apology] speech act is what it conveys to its intended audience; what the speaker through performing the action is giving this audience as entitlement to believe or do,” writes philosopher Janna Thompson (2008, p. 32). This "audience" consists of the victims. They are central for a variety of reasons: the apology is intended to rehabilitate them; they form the estranged party with whom the wrongdoer must be reconciled; and only they can accept the apology or reject the apology. Hence, the speech act must convey special meaning to the victims.

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[29] In the original quotation, the word “sorry” is in italics.

[30] Apology studies often do not explicitly present such a full chain of reasoning.

Since language is central to calling to mind specific meanings, the rationale goes on, what exactly the apologizer says becomes highly important.[31] One has chose the right expressions. After all, the restorative potential of apologizing, argues sociologist Nicholas Tavuchis, lies in its "capacity to transform unbearable realities through speech" (1991, p. 7). But which words should the apologizer utter to realize this potential? Precisely what needs to be said?

"I apologize," or "I am sorry," and so forth come to mind, but many of these expressions can easily be misinterpreted. "I am sorry," can be taken as an expression of regret ("I am sorry you were involved in a traffic jam") or as an admission of guilt ("I am sorry that I stepped on your foot"). That is why some scholars spell out the contents of the statement.[32] They capture what the apologizer must say in order for his or her statement to carry special apologetic meaning to the victims. They value precise and unambiguous wording, because such clarity can direct the victims towards the intended interpretation, and rule out the possibility of misinterpreting the statement as excuse, justification or ordinary account. The more exact the phrasing is, the better the chances are that the addressees will interpret the utterance as an apology.[33]

This is how linguistics becomes relevant in apology philosophy. In this field of study, various lists of expressions have been introduced to identify and analyze apologetic speech acts. A well-known list can be found in the landmark study of Soshana Blum-Kulka and Elite Ohlstain of the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project (CCSARP). Their research is aimed at what they call the linguistic realization of the act of apologizing. Blum-Kulka and Ohlstain introduce an "apology speech act set" that encompasses a range of apology strategies.

This set includes five linguistic elements: (1) an expression of regret, called an explicit illocutionary force-indicating device, such as "(be) sorry", "apologize", "regret"; (2) an explanation or account of

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[31] I use the term language only to refer to verbal utterances, not to Cassirer's broad notion of "symbolic forms".

[32] The well-known study of psychiatrist Aaron Lazare, for example, begins with an exploration of definitions of apology and the words "that we use and misuse in offering apologies" (2004, p. 23).

[33] There is an exception: historian Michael Marrus states that in case of apologies, "Silences or ambiguities can be useful" (2007, p. 92). Marrus, however, did not go into details.

what caused the violation at issue; (3) taking responsibility for the harm done; (4) an offer of repair for the wrongdoing; and/or (5) the promise of forbearance (1984, p. 206-208).

Scholars in other disciplines put forth comparable lists with mostly linguistic requirements to identify and analyze apologies (Bibas & Bierschbach, 2004; Corntassel & Holder, 2008; Gill, 2000; James, 2008; Lazare, 2004; Macleod, 2008; Mbaye, 2005; Murphy, 2008; Taft, 2000; Tavuchis, 1991; Verdeja, 2010).[34] The lists vary in scope and content, but basic elements that many scholars outside the field of linguistics agree upon are the acknowledgement of responsibility for the wrongdoing; the expression of sincere regret; and some kind of referral to the violation of a moral norm, for example stating that the offense was, in fact, "wrong."[35]

This line of reasoning produces studies of apology that generally comprise the following parts: (1) a definition of the apology as a speech act that is situated in the realm of moral actions, (2) a list of elements that the speech act should include, (3) a method for retrieving these elements, such as content coding, in an instance of apology, (4) a case study or a set of case studies, and (5) a conclusion about a. whether the instance lives up to the initial list and b. the apology's meaning.[36]

An example is the case study by political scientists Craig Blatz, Karina Schumann, and Michael Ross (2009) that discusses government apologies for historical injustices. The authors argue that such apologies should fulfill certain goals, and they present a list of elements that the speech acts should contain to be acceptable to both members of the victimized minority and the non-victimized majority.

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[34] "Requirements" is used as a term, along with "conditions", "elements", and "criteria".

[35] Linguists present distinct lists that are often based on the work of Blum-Kulka and Ohlstain (e.g., Kampf, 2000 & 2008). Some theorists (outside the field of linguistics) leave away certain basic elements that are mentioned above. For example, Stephanos Bibas and Richard Bierschbach, experts in the field of law, write that, "At a minimum, apology is at least a dyadic relation and interaction, requiring an expression of sorrow by the offender to the victim or victims" (2004, p. 90).

[36] Some scholars choose to discuss the significance of an apology in terms of its "function": the ways in which the act is significant to the individuals involved or to the community as a whole. For example, philosopher Kathleen Gill elaborates on the moral functions of apology for the offender and the victim (2000).

For instance, they argue that the utterance should include “[a]n expression of remorse indicating that a government believes that an apology is warranted and cares about the victims” (2009, p. 222). They also inductively conclude, based on case research, that additional elements can be relevant as well, such as “praise for a minority group” and “dissociation of the present system” (2009, p. 221-227).

To conclude, the discursive orientation of apology scholarship results in analyses that focus on the verbal utterance of the apologizer. Many studies introduce a standard in the form of a checklist that is further operationalized to examine the utterance. “From this perspective,” writes Smith, “the important philosophical work consists of determining the necessary conditions for belonging to the group of things called ‘apologies’ and then measuring particular examples against this standard” (2008, p. 18).

2.2.3 Presenting prescriptive models

This approach not only help researchers identify apology speech acts and separate them from other kinds of accounts. Scholars also employ the lists in a prescriptive manner (Coicaud & Jönsson, 2008; Gibbs, 2008; Gill, 2000; Thompson, 2008; Trouillot, 2000). They are used as regulative ideals or desirable prototypes, that dictate how one should apologize.[37] This results in studies with phrasing, like, "An apology *must* also be sincere..." or, "Full and frank apologies *should* acknowledge both the injustice of particular actions or events..." (Mbaye, 2005, p. 33; Murphy, 2008, p. 11).[38]

One example of this approach comes from political scientist Matt James, who studies Canadian government apologies to Aboriginal peoples, the High Arctic Inuit, and Italian Canadians. He starts to

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[37] An explanation for the tendency to introduce regulative ideals is offered by philosopher Alice MacLachan: she ascribes this tendency to the desire of philosophers to create ideals that can guide processes of reconciliation as well as evaluate *all* instances of apology and forgiveness (2009). Some scholars, however, are more lenient than others (e.g., Lazare, 2004).

[38] Italics are mine.

lay out criteria for an “authentic political apology,” based on the work of Tavuchis, Minow, Bavelas, and other scholars, and then evaluates Canadian cases “to judge their robustness” (2008, p. 139). He concludes that they show several deficits. The federal government made what James calls “disappearing ink” acknowledgements of wrongdoing to get publicity and short-term political credits (2008, p. 148).

James’s example demonstrates that the creation of prototypes can result in the employment of strong directives for analyzing instances of apologies. The apology *must meet* the researcher's criteria for what constitutes a meaningful act. This way, apologies that are offered by officials and/or political leaders can be easily dismissed as imperfect practices, infected by publicity, face-saving maneuvers, power play and the avoidance of legal or financial consequences (Corntassel & Holder, 2008, p. 462; MacLachan, 2009). “Apologies by national leaders for grievous or small infractions have drawn a variety of criticisms, even derision, for their lack of sincerity, for their manipulative ways, and eventually their banality,” concludes political scientist Girma Negash (2006, p. 135).

To summarize, the checklists of requirements that circulate in the literature are used in two ways: first, as tool to identify apologies and distinguish them from other kinds of accounts. If a speech act meets certain criteria, it belongs to the group of speech acts that are labeled "apologies." The second usage is prescriptive in nature: scholars take lists to be desirable prototypes to critically evaluate the meaningfulness of apologies, which can very well result in the discarding of instances of official apologies as politically fuelled and thus imperfect.

2.2.4 Application to the case

Let's return to the case of Blair and the Irishmen to determine the value of this approach for our purposes. At first sight, its value appears to be limited. It can only capture "what is said" during the performance in London. Apologies are predominantly defined by their linguistic features, whereas we are interested in "how and where it is said." We look at Blair's statement, but also took in the staging and acting during the event.

Nonetheless, we can use a linguistic checklist as a means to identify the act as an apology. Applying such list to the UK case, we can conclude that the apology includes the basic elements that many scholars set out for apologetic utterances. Blair used the word “apologize”; he expressed regret; he referred to the violation of a moral norm by stating that there had been “a miscarriage of justice” and his statement was addressed to and heard by the victims of the wrongdoing (the “intended audience,” in the words of Thompson). Hence, employing a checklist helps us determine if a case reflects the necessary theoretical constructs to make comparison with salient approaches possible.

Second, the literature provides many suggestions for the interpretive analysis of the apologizer’s utterance, which makes up a major part of the apology performance. However, if we choose to interpret apology speech with the help of a list of requirements, we run the risk of cutting the statement into loose bits and pieces. Such a compartmentalized approach does not take into account the structure of a statement as a whole. We could overlook meanings that are embedded in the internal structure. Hence, in order to analyze an apology’s full range of meanings, we will need to add a question: considering all elements, in what overall rationale does the use of the elements make sense?

2.3 Dramaturgy

2.3.1 Performatives

When PM Blair delivered the apology, he stood in his office in Westminster. The press corps had been notified in advance and invited into the chambers to register and broadcast the event. The PM first made a statement on camera, looking towards remote TV spectators. When he had finished, he turned towards the victims and handed over a paper copy of his speech. He then retreated into a private area with them for a more personal exchange. Afterwards, both addressees and political opponents of the PM discussed the venue and its meanings. The first made clear that they appreciated the private setting of the PM's office, and the latter commented on the very same issue, because they had been prevented from asking the apologizer critical questions about the gesture.

This observation led us to problematize the non-verbal elements of the apology, such as the venue. We questioned the significance of the production dramaturgy of the event. It also prompted us to define official apology as a public performance, different from private encounters behind closed doors. We reasoned that, in an effort to enact meaning in public, the apology is set up as a staged event with the help of various dramaturgical tools (Hajer, 2009). This made us question the meanings that non-verbal aspects of such staged performance carry. Are aspects of performances included in apology theories? If so, how precisely do they discuss dramaturgy?

If we turn to the literature we find that overall, matters of performance remain peripheral to prevalent discussions. Many authors set apart the speech act of apology as a "performative". To fully understand this classification and its roots, we need to look back to the origins of speech act theory.[39] The term "performative" is coined by one of its founding fathers, John Austin. He considers an apology to be a performative speech act: a declarative sentence by which someone performs a social act beyond

[39] In the field of linguistics, authors discuss performance as a formal pre-condition for speech act to exist (Blum-Kulka & Olstain, 1984).

merely uttering words (1962, p. 235).[40] "Performatives achieve their meaning by doing something instead of describing," explains sociologist Valentin Rauer (2006, p. 259). In the case of apologies, the victim may come to see the apologizer in a new light.

Austin also treats apology as an illocutionary speech act – that is, a speech act that instantly does what is said. These performative acts do not have consequences, in the sense that their effects *follow* the utterance, but rather take effect in the moment of saying. Austin considers these acts to be conventional, ritual, or ceremonial, notes philosopher Judith Butler. They only work because they have been repeated over time, and hence, "maintain a sphere of operation that is not restricted to the moment of the utterance itself" (1997, p. 3). Butler calls this moment "condensed historicity" (1997, p. 3).

To better understand her observation, we need to take a closer look at the Austinian notion of convention, which points to "social customs, practices, and institutions," according to philosopher William Lycan. "The [...] performings are governed by rules of many kinds. The rules are usually unwritten, merely explicit in normative social behavior" (2008, p. 149).[41] For this type of speech act to be adequately understood, argues Austin, the circumstances and persons have to be appropriate to the convention at issue, and there must be an accepted procedure, including the uttering of certain words, which has a specific conventional effect that is recognized by those involved.[42]

In case of official apologies one can think of placing a garland near a monument – a gesture that people in western societies will immediately recognize as a manner to commemorate victims. Bowing or kneeling can be also be readily recognized as a display of the appropriate humble attitude for the occasion, and understood as part of what Austin calls the conventional procedure. So convention provides a social actor a way to adequately execute the speech act, as well as an

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[40] Austin writes in 1962 about illocutionary acts. At this time, he does not use the term "speech act". He will do so in later studies.

[41] Even though this topic is not discussed at length in apology literature, I contend that a discussion is relevant, considering the strong adherence of apology philosophy to Austin's speech act theory.

[42] Adequately understood is my own phrasing. Austin uses the term "felicitous" (1962, p. 14, 15).

opportunity for the audience to adequately interpret it – and, thus, adds Butler, have effect instantaneously. Its “condensed historicity” enables those involved to either evoke or recognize certain meanings.

2.3.2 The centrality of sincerity

A different perspective on "performance" is offered by sociologist Nicholas Tavuchis. He formulates a demand: the performance of the speech act of apology must be “sincere”(1991, p. 1, 26, 27). The speaker must have deeply felt moral concerns and must *show* these during his or her personal presentation, otherwise the apology loses its special meaning. In other words: an apology is essentially a moral act and it can only exist as such when sincere. His ideas go back to speech act theorist John Searle (1976), who classifies apologies as “expressive” acts: they express someone’s feeling of sorrow about what has been done.[43]

Through performance, Tavuchis argues, the apologizer has to “minimize, if not altogether eliminate, ambiguity and alternate perceptions, e.g. mistaking the apology for an account, as well as demonstrating the earnestness of the suppliant” (1991, p. 132). The impression of earnestness rests in “oral and non-oral cues and markers, such as vocal nuances, postures, the presence of witnesses, and even facial expressions that can affect (the apology’s) presentation and reception,” he concludes (1991, p. 321).

Many scholars endorse Tavuchis's demand and require the exhibit of sincere regret (Cunningham, 1999; Gibbs, 2008; Govier & Verwoerd, 2002a, 2002b; Negash, 2006; Taft, 2000). This requirement corresponds with their appreciation of full and precise apology statements. As discussed on page 35, many scholars value precise wording to rule out any form of ambiguity on the part of the speaker and avoid misunderstandings on the side of the intended audience. The victim of the wrongdoing should

[43] “The illocutionary point of this class is to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content. (...) Expressive verbs are 'thank', 'congratulate', 'apologize'...” (Searle, 1976, p. 12).

be able to instantaneously recognize the utterance as an apology, and a sincere performance can aid this recognition. The more precise the wording is and the more regret is displayed, the higher the chances are that the speech act is interpreted as... apology.

In addition to these technical and instrumental arguments for sincerity, part of apology scholarship, including Tavuchis himself, (also) sees sincerity as a necessary condition for an apology *to exist as a moral act*. The violation of the moral norm must be wholeheartedly decried (Taft, 2000, p. 1128, 1140) The underlying idea is that if the offender does not unreservedly subscribe to his or her action, the moral value of the apology vanishes, and, with that, the act loses its special apologetic meaning. "The importance of having the offender explicitly recognize the value of what he has destroyed is perhaps most evident in its absence," writes philosopher Kathleen Gill. "It is as though the refusal to recognize harm done, the value of what was taken, is a continuing devaluation of the moral worth of the victim" (2000, p. 16).

2.3.3. Attention for dramaturgy

The prevailing interest in performatives and sincerity has yielded little reflection on the dramaturgy of staged events. Still, it has been acknowledged that public apologies take place in a mediatized environment that influences their delivery. Despite such acknowledgement, scholars do not theorize public performance, but rather consider it to be an additional factor worth mentioning after the real job of theorizing apology is done, or as a topic to be discussed on another occasion (Gibbs, 2008; Griswold, 2007; Tavuchis, 1991; Thompson, 2008).

With regard to the venue, philosopher Charles L. Griswold notes that political apologies may be offered during some kind of reconciliation event that is especially organized for the occasion. It may include a "public ceremony accompanied by substantial publicity or media attention that relays the event to the wider society" and "ritualistic and symbolic behavior that indicates the parties consider the dispute resolved" (Griswold, 2007, p. 176; Long and Brecke, 2003, p. 6). Philosopher Janna Thompson adds that the apology's "content and the way it is presented – the ceremony that surrounds it, who performs the role of apologizing and the other roles that the ceremony demands – should be

endorsed by victims and their representatives" as well as "by the people who belong to the nation responsible for the wrong" (2008, p. 41). The authors leave it at that without further elaboration.

Tavuchis notes that during press conferences in which apologies are issued, journalists can function as interlocutors while putting things on record (1991, p. 82), but he does not go into greater detail. Linguist Sandra Harris et al. argues that, "Political apologies are in the public domain and, as a consequence, are highly mediated. Indeed, that is an important aspect of [victim groups' reasons for demanding an apology], i.e. to elicit a public apology from a politician which is reported/broadcast by various media to as wide an audience as possible" (2006, p. 721). There is often an audience present (either immediate, unseen, or both), Harris and colleagues she argues, which is likely to influence the "expression and form" of apologies. This is worth investigating, she concludes, but then sets out to establish different types of political apology (2006, p. 721).

Reviewing briefly, in the strands of theory that has been discussed so far two essential views on "performance" emerge, in which convention and sincerity are central. The first enables the apologizer to execute the speech act appropriately and, in so doing, generate instant effect. The latter is necessary to validate the apology as a moral gesture: if one is unable to discern the sincerity of the offender's regret, explains Smith, "the apology's meaning remains ambiguous" (2008, p. 69).[44]

This orientation has resulted in neglect of the dramaturgy of staged apology performances, even though it has been acknowledged that official apologies are delivered during special events and that they take place in a challenging and mediatized context that differs from everyday situations.[45] These observations move away from treating official apology as mere announcement and toward an outlook of apology as a more differentiated interaction. This opens up opens up a novel array of possibilities for further research.

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[44] Smith is presented here as analyst of apology literature. He speaks not of sincerity but of "categorical regret" (2008).

[45] This word has a religious connotation; that's why I have chosen not to use it in this thesis.

2.3.4 Apologies as rituals

In one modest strand of theory, though, dramaturgy has been theorized. Most notably, it has been addressed by international relations scholar Michel-André Horelt. He observes an absence of a performance-based approach to public apologies and ascribes this to the general disregard for rituals in the political sciences. Scholars apparently perceive rituals, such as apologies, as ornamental to real, substantial politics, he states. “The ritual of political apologies is […] still a blind spot in the research on political apologies...” (2012, p. 347). Pleading for a “performance-based approach to the analysis of political apologies for historic crimes” he discusses convention and ritual (2012, p. 348, 349).

Horelt defines rituals as "sequences of condensed, conventional" and "symbolic behavior that [are] socially standardized and repetitive", as well as formalistic in character. He dismisses the need for authenticity: an official apology should not be seen as a personal, self-expressive act. That is not the essence of rituals, he argues (2012, p. 350-352). Using a case study of an official apology in Canada, he concludes that the ritualistic character of the event deserves more attention in academia. “Beginning with the lieu of the ceremony in the Canadian Parliament, the way the position of the speaker and the audience was configured, down to the rhetorical figures that were used during the speech in order to create pathos, moral gravitas and in the end authenticity” (2012, p. 367, 368).

Philosopher Michel-Rolph Trouillot introduces a similar perspective. He encourages the research community to treat apologies as “late modern rituals” (2000, p. 173). “Apologies can be read as rituals in the strictly anthropological sense of a regulated, stylized, routinized and repetitive performance that tends to have both demonstrative and transformative aspects” (2000, p. 184). He argues that an apology ritual requires at least six distinguishable operations in order to result in transformation, but he does not translate these operations into forms other than speech action.

Lastly, political scientist Girma Negash discusses some "ritualistic acts" that can be included in public apologies (2006, p. 152). She argues that a collective apology should be “of official nature delivered in a public space with a fitting décor and ritual” (2006, p. 152). Negash briefly points to the necessity of proximity for the realization of the moral meaning of apology. The offender should acknowledge the

wrong and express sorrow "ideally facing the victim," she writes. "This direct confrontation demands humility. The ritualistic acts of bowing, kneeling, and prostrating in seeking forgiveness amount to humbling oneself while morally elevating the victim" (2006, p. 13).

It is necessary to drill one layer deeper in order to adequately evaluate the merits of this approach for this thesis's objectives. We need to take a closer look into the theories on rituals that are most cited by the aforementioned authors. The first stems from David Kertzer, who studies political rites that are used to "prop up," "overthrow," or "replace" political systems (1988, p. 174). Kerzter coined the definition of ritual, as used by Horelt, in his well-known study *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (1988, p. 9). "One of ritual's most distinguishing features is its standardization," the anthropologist writes.[46] "This, along with its repetitive nature, gives ritual its stability" (1988, p. 42).

The next theorist of interest is anthropologist Victor Turner, who studies rituals in tribal, non-western settings (1975). Seeking to understand how rituals and social drama are intertwined he situates social drama within groups with shared values and interests. This drama includes phases of breach, crisis, redress and either reintegration, or the recognition of schism. The last phase can be registered by some public ceremony or ritual in which community members take part, indicating reconciliation or permanent cleavage. Ritual unites, argues Turner, and expresses "communitas" (2011, p. 127-132).

Hence, in Kertzer's perspective it is constituted by standardization, repetitiveness and formality, and Turner further stresses the process of unit production.[47] Our examination thus makes clear that these

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[46] Kertzer is also trained as historian.

[47] The line between ritual and social act(ion) is blurred. As philosopher Judith Butler explains, *any* social action requires repetition, in the sense that social acts are re-enactments of a set of meanings that is already socially established.[47] "[Such action] is the mundane and ritualized form of their legitimation" (1988, p. 526). These unclarified distinctions are the topic of debate in cultural studies, anthropology and related academic disciplines. As anthropologist Felicia Hughes-Freeman illustrates, all sorts of answers may exist to the question of whether a ritual can or cannot be considered a genre of performance (1998, p. 6).

notions are very much acquainted with the Austinian idea of convention. (Their conceptual formulation is not nearly as distinctive as a it may appear at first sight.)

2.3.5 Application to the case

Let 's go back, once more, to the UK case and see whether the theory described above can provide answers to our question about the dramaturgy of the performance. The theory certainly sheds light on the personal performance of PM Blair. His performance included the oral and non-oral cues and indicators of sincerity, which the literature consider necessary. Gerry Conlon, for example, stated in the press afterwards that, "[the PM] was physically taken aback by what we have all suffered" (Wilson, 2005). Blair was sincere, according to the victims – and this particular audience is the one that matters in the literature.

However, the question of sincerity was not what piqued our interest. The challenge to prevailing theories came from the fact that the UK case demonstrated that the venue of the apology was meaningful, which led us to question the significance of non-verbal elements of the staged event – not the personal delivery of the statement. Yet, the theory also provides points of entry into the realm of convention and ritual. The question now is whether it is reasonable to apply these concepts to make sense of these elements. Can they be applied, and, of equal importance, to what extent is their application useful for this thesis's purposes?

Applying these concepts, two obstacles emerge. As for convention, it is possible to use the concept to analyze dramaturgical elements of the staged performance. That is, we can elucidate their conventional effect and in so doing, better understand (part of) their meanings. By delivering a government-issued apology at a representative location, such as parliament, the addressees can recognize it as an official act and this can add to its meaning. A physical action can be interpreted as conventional too. Bowing or kneeling can be recognized as a display of the appropriate humble attitude for the occasion, and understood as part of what Austin calls the conventional procedure.

Yet, trouble arises further down the road. Austin speaks of shared procedures, persons, and circumstances that can be recognized by those involved in the speech act. As political scientist Maarten Hajer notes, "one is struck by the central role of convention, permanence, and replication. Austin always assumed a shared repertoire or register of occasions in terms of which an utterance can and is to be understood" (2009, p. 57).

It is precisely the emphasis on convention, permanence, and replication that Hajer observes that will cause difficulty later on, when we discuss the multi-actor environment of official apologies. The UK case showed that there was no single group of participants that held similar values and beliefs. Rather, the broad lens that we used to look at this case took in a variety of interpreters who did not share a frame of reference in which the apology could and should be understood. We seek to understand official apology not just in terms of performance, but also in terms of its multi-actor environment, and the latter is defined by dynamism and heterogeneity, *not* by convention, permanence, and replication.

The same problem arises with attempts to treat official apologies as rituals. We could very well treat dramaturgical elements of the performance, such as the consignment of the paper statement to the addressees and the handshakes between the PM and the victims, as forms of ritualistic behaviour that make the apology performance convey meaning. However, this ritual-based approach again assumes a shared frame of reference among the social actors involved, as well as membership to a single community. It does not offer suitable conceptual tools to unravel the dynamic and heterogeneous setting in which official apologies take place.[48]

Applying the concept of ritual or "conventional" speech act creates an additional problem that has to do with the agency of the actors involved. Employment of the concepts of Austin, Kertzer, and Turner directs attention away from the ability of social actors to enact meaning: we choose to treat them as if

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[48] Kertzer would probably disagree with my argument. He argues that there can be different meanings attached to the very same symbol employed in ritual — a phenomenon that he calls "multivocality" — and that the complexity and ambiguity of symbols can also be a source of their strength (1988, p. 11). Moreover, he optimistically writes that ritual can build political solidarity in the "absence of consensus" (1988, p. 11). In his eyes, a ritual can have a conservative base and innovative potential (1988, p. 12).

they are not actively involved in the act and function merely as passive followers of conventional guidelines from which they are personally disengaged.

As anthropologists Humphrey and Laidlaw point out, in rituals, "the intentions and thoughts of the actor make no difference to the identity of the act performed… the actors are, and are not, the authors of their acts" (1994, p. 5). Butler makes a similar observation about convention. She eloquently states that, "The Austinian subject speaks conventionally, that is, it speaks in a voice that is never fully singular […]. The ritual dimension of convention implies that the moment of utterance is informed by prior and, indeed, future moments that are occluded by the moment itself. Who speaks when convention speaks?" (1997, p. 25).

In contrast, this thesis treats those involved in apologies as able, non-passive actors. It assumes agency. The UK case indicates that the apologizer functioned as host of the staged event. A host can include other speakers on stage, invite special guests for the occasion, stage the performance at a specific location, and choose to include or exclude forms of (ritualistic) behavior. There are, of course, serious limits to his or her agency; no agent is fully sovereign. Yet, despite these constraints, the assumption is that all social actors are capable of taking up discursive or dramaturgical tools to enact meaning, consciously or not.[49] This calls for another line of thinking and a different vocabulary from those offered by the aforementioned approaches.

To conclude, we have now established the dramaturgy of the performance event is not treated with the same analytical rigor as formal speech is. The sole serious discussion in the literature of dramaturgy is concerned with apologies as rituals. However, applying the concept of ritual is problematic. Central to our approach is the heterogeneity of the multi-actor environment and the agency of the actors making the apologies – not the univocality and compliance that pervades ritual-based approaches.[50] Thus, we have yet to find a framework to help understand the meaning of dramaturgy.

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[49] The term discursive in this sentence narrowly refers to speech.

[50] That is: compliance with convention.

2.4 Multi-actor context

2.4.1 Individual templates

After Blair's apology, members of the Conlon and Maguire families publicly stated that the act had meant a lot to them. Gratitude and praise dominated their comments. However, they were not the only ones commenting on the apology. Despite their positive response, criticisms swiftly followed. Political opponents, other victims of miscarried justice, and newspaper commentators found much to disdain in the apology. They argued that the act was calculated to advance the peace process in Northern Ireland, that it served electoral interests, and that its primary beneficiary was the prime minister himself, as it glossed over his poor moral track record.

Based on these observations, we concluded that the act allowed for various, even conflicting readings. The direct addressees were not the only ones to assign meaning to it; many other social actors claimed an interest in the act during the public debate. This led us to define official apology in terms of its multi-actor environment, and to question its meaning. How to interpret this public act that takes place in such a confusing context? How should we include the multitude of interpretations of "third parties" in our analysis? And does theory provide us with ideas to do so?

Turning once more to apology literature for answers, we can certainly address part of this question with regard to one set of social actors: the victims. The majority of the theory on apology focuses on the relationship between victim and (symbolic) offender, and on the meaning making process in which these two are involved. Leading scholars consider an apology first and foremost as an interaction between two parties: one who bears direct responsibility for the wrongdoing and another who owns the moral right to be addressed by the first party, since he or she personally suffered from it (Gill, 2000; Lazare, 2004; Smith, 2008; Tavuchis, 1991). “Our imaginary landscape of repentance is dominated by a template of apology in its individual form…” confirms sociologist Danielle Celermajer (2009, p. 6, 7; see also Harris et al., 2006, p. 717).

The theories include many illustrations of informal exchanges in the private realm. Tavuchis and Lazare, for example, use "everyday" apologies as building blocks for their analyses. They reference a letter of apology from a 71-year-old man to a former teen friend (Lazare 2004, p 2) and quote an etiquette book about written notes of personal apology (Tavuchis 1991, p. 30).[51]

Inevitably, this approach results in frameworks in which individuals play central roles. Smith (2008), for example, introduces a model for a full “categorical” apology, offered by one person to another. It contains a comprehensive list of all the possible meaningful elements of an apology, which can serve as a guide and standard for the examination of both individual and collective apologies. It includes, amongst other elements, acceptance of blame; identification of each harm and the identification of the moral principles underlying each harm (2008, p. 140-145).

The focus on individuals that characterizes this model comes into sharpest focus in the space in which Smith situates the realization of apologetic meanings. They come into being not only in the minds of offender and victim, he writes, “but also within and because of the elaborate space between them” (2008, p. 23). He does not reflect on other actors as serious participants in the meaning making process. The "elaborate space" is *not* shared with others.[52]

Hence, the emphasis on individual apologies in private settings results in analytical frameworks that explain meaning in terms of the offender-victim relationship. These frameworks are developed without considering apology practices in the public arena. Only after they have been created and the bar has been set have theorists taken up official apology for study. As a consequence, this particular brand of apology lacks a distinct theoretical stronghold of its own.

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[51] In some studies, scholars build upon the very brief reflection on apology by sociologist Erving Goffman, who treated apology as a form of a remedial act for saving face (e.g., Augoustinos, LeCouteur and Fogarty, 2007). Absent in discussions of individual apology is the thinking of philosopher Immanuel Levinas, who asserted that apology is very much intended as an act to meet the needs of the Other. (See: Smith, 2008, p. 8.)

[52] Smith discusses contexts of collective apology, but does not include social actors other than offender, victim, and the "community" in its entirety in his framework.

2.4.2 From individual to collective apology

After developing individual frameworks with the help of examples in the private realm, some scholars go on to discuss public apologies on behalf of groups. Some move from the individual to the collective apology without major adjustments (Cunningham, 1999; Govier & Verwoerd, 2002a, 2002b). Lazare, for example, explores private apologies between individuals and apologies made by business and political leaders in public. He characterizes both as "more alike than different," although he acknowledges that the latter are offered "in presence of a broader audience" (2004, p. 23, 38, 39).[53]

Not all scholars shift gears so casually. "Collective apologies add layers of complexity to nearly every facet of apologetic meaning," writes Smith (2008, p. 245). They argue that the individual framework cannot simply be applied to collectives (Tavuchis, 1991, p. 70). Philosopher Charles L. Griswold, for example, observes that "the political sphere possesses structural characteristics, tensions, and dynamics that in relevant and significant ways differ from those in the interpersonal context" (2007, p. 138).

Those who do discuss the conceptual particularities of collective/public apology often reflect on topics, such as historicity, symbolic action, and representation (Amstutz, 2005; Barkan, 2001 & 2006; Celermajer, 2009; Coicaud & Jönsson, 2008; Cunningham, 1999; Daye, 2004; Gibney, 2008; Gill, 2000; Govier and Verwoerd, 2002a, 2002b; Griswold 2007; Lind, 2008; Negash, 2006; Nobles, 2008; Smith, 2008; Tavuchis, 1991; Thompson, 2000; Trouillot, 2000).[54] Many of these complexities have already received attention outside the body of apology literature: especially the topics of collective responsibility and group guilt have been taken into account in relation to the Holocaust (Arendt, 1963; Goldhagen, 1996; Jaspers, 1947).

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53 Lazare's defines apology as "an encounter between two parties in which one party, the offender, acknowledges responsibility for an offense or grievance and expresses regret or remorse to a second party, the aggrieved. Each party may be a person or a larger group such as (...) a nation" (2004, p.30). Lazare mainly discusses negotiation processes of state-to-state apologies.

54 Smith then warns that collective apologies easily erode apologetic meaning (2008, p. 157).

One well-debated topic in the literature concerns the nature and responsibilities of the collective itself: What if the offender or victim is a group? (Coicaud & Jönsson, 2008, p. 78) Who precisely belongs to the collective apologizing? (Smith, 2008, p. 165) Is it a categorical mistake to treat the collective as if it were an individual? (Trouillot, 2000, p. 173) Is there such a thing as collective guilt? (Nobles, 2008, p. 25) As a kind of plural subject, does group culpability transcend that of its individual members? (Smith 2008, p. 176)

Another oft-discussed issue is the symbolic nature of collective apologies in which the apologizer has no personal involvement in the wrongdoing and acts as representative. What are the meanings of such apologies-by-proxy? (Smith, 2008, p. 151; Griswold, 2007, p. 135-145) Who can stand up as the representative of a moral community? (Griswold, 2007, p. 141; Celermajer, 2009, p. 7) Can a representative of a state that did not exist when the wrongdoing was committed legitimately offer apologies? (Gill, 2000)

There are many more thorny issues if one takes up the study of collective apology, all of which pose serious challenges to the individual framework. Yet, many scholars do not dismiss the idea of a meaningful group apology as an entirely unrealistic intellectual construct (Amstutz, 2005; Barkan, 2006; Cunningham, 1999 & 2004; Gibney, 2008; Gill, 2000; Ivison, 2000; Negash, 2006; Smith, 2008; Sparrow, 2002; Thompson, 2002). It is not a "category mistake to think of an institution or collective as being responsible for wrongdoing," argue philosophers Govier and Verwoerd (2002a, p. 76). These scholars have investigated the phenomenon of collective apology, and their labor has resulted in several relevant theoretical approaches, to be examined below.

2.4.3 Three sets of studies

How, then, does a collective apology become meaningful, according to these approaches? To answer this question, three subsets are to be considered given our interest in the multi-actor environment. The clusters are based on theoretical similarities and their relevance for the question that is central to this part of the review.

Table 10. Sets of studies of collective apology (simplification)

Set of studies	Features
1.	Philosophical studies that continue to work with individual templates, but attach conditions to these templates to enable their application to collective apologies
2.	Empirically rich (case) studies that do not seek to make major theoretical contributions, but aim to investigate one or more instances of collective apology
3.	Philosophical studies that re-conceptualize the phenomenon of collective apology

The first set of studies does not profoundly alter individual apology frameworks. Instead, the authors define conditions for applying these frameworks to cases of collective apology (Amstutz, 2005; Gill, 2000; Govier and Verwoerd, 2002a; Thompson, 2008). One such condition concerns representation. Theorists argue that an apologizer who acts on behalf of a collective can serve as a "symbolic" offender, and that it is not necessary that he or she be personally responsible for the wrongdoing. “We accept, for instance, the fact that parents sometimes apologize for the behavior of their children,” explains philosopher Kathleen Gill (2000, p. 13).[55] On such occasion there must be a plausible connection between the symbolic apologizer and the party responsible for the transgression. Only if this condition is met does agency through a (group) representative become possible.

A second condition for application of the frameworks deals with the existence of a coherent moral community. It is argued that for a collective apology to be meaningful, its members should subscribe

[55] Scholars debate the conditions for establishing such link. Tavuchis writes that, “At the interpersonal level […] others are not usually empowered to discharge our moral obligations…” (1991, p. 49).

to the apology and be "one of mind and heart" (Thompson, 2008, p. 35-37). The members should coalesce around the denunciation of the past wrongdoing. There must be agreement on the nature and causes of past offenses, adds political scientist Mark Amstutz, as well as on who bears responsibility (2005, p. 68). (Amstutz calls this a "consensus on truth" (2005, p. 77).)

Philosopher Janna Thompson adds that such consensus should also encompass future action. "Political apologies require that states [to] be transgenerational polities in which members pass on responsibilities and entitlements from one generation to another. […] Only if this practice exists, or if it can be brought into existence, are genuine political apologies possible" (2008, p. 38, 39).

So this set of studies thus defines the meaning of collective apology in terms of the (symbolic) perpetrator-victim relationship, and establishes additional conditions to allow existing individual templates to be applied to perpetrator and victim *groups*. Examining these conditions reveals that theorist argue that if there is no broad agreement in the offender community on past and future behavior, the moral meaning of the apology become jeopardized. Only consensus among its members can give a collective apology its moral weight.

2.4.4 Empirical (case) studies

The second group of works consists of empirical studies that are concerned with specific apology instances. They often entail empirically rich cases (Augoustinos, LeCouteur & Fogarty, 2007; Avruch & Zheng, 2005; Barkan, 2006; Blatz, Schumann & Ross, 2009; Brooks, 1999; Cunningham, 2008; Dudden, 2008; Edwards, 2005; Fette, 2008; Gibbs, 2008; Kerstens, 2008; Lind, 2008; Verdeja, 2010; Zhang, 2001). Scholars who study history or socio-political topics related to areas such as negotiation, international relations and reconciliation, examine these cases using various research methods.[56]

These works provide insights into the wealth of social actors that can become relevant in the process of demanding, offering, and accepting apologies. In one study, historian Julie Fette (2008) examines a

[56] Methods include discourse and media analysis.

French official act of regret for the activities of the Vichy regime. President Chirac expressed remorse in 1995 for the collaboration of the French government with the Nazi-Germans to deport Jewish citizens to concentration camps.[57] His statement prompted other parties, such as the French Roman Catholic church, to apologize publicly as well. Fette's study shows that there was no single audience existed that held the same opinion about these public gestures.

These case studies either concern historical investigations that bypass conceptual concerns like ours, or they include conceptual reflection on the central phenomenon, but continue to use frameworks of individual apology. In many cases these frameworks are applied to public instances without much further theoretical ado. Psychologists Augostinos, LeCouteur, and Foharty, for example, examine Australia's apologetic discourse regarding the forced removal of children from indigenous Australian families (2007). They include a statement of regret of the prime minister as well as apologies on the internet from ordinary non-Aboriginal Australians in their research. Molding their conceptual framework with the individual template of Tavuchis and the reflections of sociologist Ervin Goffman on personal apology, they refrain from developing an alternative approach.[58]

2.4.5 Novel approaches

A third group of studies to consider theorizes the phenomenon of collective apology and presents frameworks tailor made to interpret these acts (Barkan, 2006; Celermajer, 2009; Digeser, 2001; Negash, 2006; Nobles, 2008).[59] They include a novel outlook on the significance of a collective apology, often in terms of its broad societal functions. The act can exclude or include disadvantaged minority groups (Nobles, 2008); declare knowledge, condemn injustice, and "set the record straight" (Mihai,

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[57] His statement is widely often as apology, but is not, according to our definition.

[58] Goffman wrote very briefly about apology. He sees apology as a gesture through which an individual splits himself into two parts: the part that is guilty of an offense and the part that dissociates itself from the wrongdoing and affirms belief in the transgressed rule (1972, p. 122).

[59] Articles on collective apology exist that offer a typology of apologies, or another minor theoretical contribution (e.g., Cunningham [1999, 2004]. These are not included here.

2013); and promote a renewed self-understanding of the offender group by living up to its ideal normative identity (Celermajer, 2009).[60]

The studies also discuss the requirements that a collective apology should meet in order to fulfill one or more of these societal functions. In order to promote revised self-understanding, argues sociologist Danielle Celermajer, the apology must include specific elements. Some of these resemble the list of requirements for individual speech acts, such as an acknowledgement of responsibility and a promise not to continue or repeat the offense. Celermajer adds the requirement that they must be well-timed – that is, offered when the violation of the moral norm resonates with contemporary issues in politics (2009, p. 252-258).

This set of studies also takes account of more social actors than just apologizer and victim, and includes arguments for why these are relevant for the "success" or societal function of the apology. Because their scope of analysis surpasses the inner circle of apologizer and victim, these theories do more justice to a broader societal context than individual apology frameworks do. This aspect of these works is thus the most relevant for our current investigation of the issue of multiplicity.

Developing an ethic of collective apology, political scientist Girma Negash (2006) includes parties that seek and offer apology, such as offenders, victims, survivors, and their advocates.[61] They are all relevant, she writes, because “[a]n apology is affected by who initiates it, who responds to it, and who accepts responsibility” (2006, p. 11). In her discussion of these parties she promotes societal approval for the apology, preferably "bottom-up popular support" (2006, p. 140). Other actors are mentioned, but do not make it into her final conceptual framework, which relies on broad terms, such as “society,” “community,” or “state.”

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[60] Nick Smith discusses many of these "functions" as well (2008), but he has designed a theory that stands on its own, which makes it difficult to include his monograph in any of these subsets of studies.

[61] Negash conducted case studies of apologies in Germany and Israel, Japan and its Asian neighbors, Rwanda and the international community, and the US and China. Because she uses these studies to theorize apology her study is included in this third set of studies.

Offering another perspective, social scientist Michaela Mihai (2013) discusses how an official apology can trigger resistance among groups that view the act as a threat, as it critically re-examines the past and may lead to the revision of their self-image. She promotes well-orchestrated apologies that can put "'us, the community' in the best possible light: as liberal democrats who live up to our political identity by taking responsibility for our unsavory past" (2013, p. 203). Using the concept of exemplary political judgment, Mihai elucidates the ways in which state apologies can help change citizens' self-understanding.

Like Negash, Mihai emphasizes the need for a broad basis of support for the apology: "the more support for the apology, the more legitimate the apology –but also in terms of its effectiveness", to be understood as prevention of further wrongdoing (2013, p. 203). She urges the research community to include actors other than the victims, and to look into the ways in which these can trigger "changes in the broader political culture" (2013, p. 220).

2.4.6 Obstacles

Now that we have examined these sets of studies, we can return to our initial question. How can theories of collective apology be helpful in analyzing official apologies' multi-actor contexts? There are two issues that prevent us from adopting the approaches. The first issue concerns the use of general categories. The first cluster of works stretches the notion of the group so wide that there are only two left to consider: the offender and the victim group. These are too broadly defined to allow for a detailed analysis of a multi-actor setting. The second cluster of empirical studies provides insight in the possible wealth of third parties, but they do not theorize apology in terms of multi-actor environments. So for our effort they provide little to work with.

The third set of studies (the so called "novel approaches") includes more social actors and does some impressive theorizing of the context. However, the frameworks for analysis are not designed to account for a very diverse set of social actors beyond those directly involved in the process of the demanding and offering of apology. Instead, they continue to work within general categories, such as Negash's "state," "community," and "society" (2006). These works also do not establish the sophisticated toolkit that is necessary for analyzing multi-actor environments.

The second problem that arises has to do with expectations regarding group consensus. Theories of collective apology generally imply that in order for an apology to be meaningful, the offender group must form a coherent moral community.[62] The more cohesive this community is, the broader the support for the apology will be, and, consequently, the more meaningful an apology will be. Many authors point to the necessity of broad agreement, even to the need for full consensus for a collective apology to be meaningful (Amstutz, 2005; Gill, 2000; Mihai, 2013; Negash, 2006; Rotberg, 2006; Smith, 2008; Thompson, 2008; Volkan, 2008).

This perspective on apology – as a moral action that should be supported by as many like-minded group members as possible – sets up a barrier for the study of multi-actor environments. Such environments are defined by *equivocality*, while prevailing theories of collective apology promote *univocality*. Moreover, this perspective presumes an erosion of moral meaning within a heterogeneous multi-actor context in which conflicting interpretations spring up. A lack of consensus, the argument goes, renders the act of apology worthless. Because official apologies are offered in dynamic, fragmented environments to equivocal reception, the emphasis on broad group categories and consensus that collective apology theories favor creates analytical difficulties. They do not offer neutral analytical equipment to unravel apologies that engender various interpretations among manifold parties throughout society.

2.4.7 Application to the case

Let's now, for the very last time, take up the UK case. How can the theories of apology that have been discussed in this part of the review be helpful? Applying *individual* frameworks of apology, we see that they allow for the analysis of the apology as a meaningful act of rehabilitation for the primary addressees. The latter expressed that they felt treated as moral equals with dignity and humanity. The individual frameworks enable us to grasp how Blair's acknowledgement of Gerry Conlon's suffering had a positive impact on his family and fellow victims and why it could offer him some kind of closure.

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[62] The empirical case studies are not included in the discussion here, because they do not (re-)theorize apology.

However, these theories do not account for the roles of other social actors, such as the Irish politicians who took ownership of the apology, or the newspaper commentators who dismissed the act as a PR stunt. They do not help us better understand the public "meaning making process" of apology in the public arena. The frameworks are not designed to accommodate controversial acts in a context broader than the inner circle of perpetrator and victim. Treating apology as an intimate and comprehensible exchange between two parties, they ignore other parties that complicate and inject controversy into the act.

Applying *collective* apology theories to capture the multiplicity of the UK case presents other difficulties. These theories generally assume morally cohesive groups, connecting the notion of consensus to the moral meaningfulness of the apology. The collective ideally consists of like-minded members who share the same moral norms and thus unanimously view an apology by their representative as appropriate, as it addresses the violation of a norm that they all stand for.

The UK case demonstrates that various social actors still can interpret the apology differently, even when all interpreters condemn the wrongdoing that took place.[63] Commentators saw it as a political maneuver to further the Northern Irish peace process; other alleged IRA perpetrators dismissed the act as insufficient; and political opponents of the PM questioned the location of the apology because, they argued, as it prevented them from asking questions. Hence, theories on collective apologies do not provide the full analytic framework necessary to re-conceptualize the phenomenon of official apology.

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[63] All of the parties that emerged to interpret the apology's meaning agree that Conlon, et. al. were wronged. I argue that consensus on the moral norm that was violated is neither necessary nor sufficient for an apology to convey meaning.

2.5 Conclusions of the literature review

Having studied leading apology approaches, we can now re-introduce the research questions and summarize the main findings.

The first question for the investigation of the theories was concerned with how they suggest that apologies become meaningful, and how dramaturgy is treated in the discussion. We saw that the theories are preoccupied with every day apologies between individuals, and the moral meaning that such acts convey. This meaning is predominantly defined in terms of apologizer, victim, and their relationship. The apologizer can be welcomed back to the moral community that he or she was excluded from due to past transgression, whereas the victim can feel recognized and rehabilitated as a moral equal. And because both parties may come to see each other in a different light, their relationship can change for the better. (Part 1 & 3 of the review)

In order to establish an apology's meaning, the theories direct attention towards speech. Referencing Austin theory they define apology as a speech act (1962). This perspective, we noted, results in inquiries that are preoccupied with linguistic features. One can find many studies that aim to establish whether certain predefined, linguistic elements are present in the statement of the apologizer. The "checklist" that they employ is also used to discuss the meaningfulness of the act: if a statement lacks elements on the list it may be rendered morally meaningless. (Part 1)

As a result of the orientation on speech, the topic of dramaturgy remains peripheral to prevalent discussions. Thus far, one can find only find two substantial debates in the literature that are related to the issue of "performance". The first one directs attention towards the Austinian qualification of apology as a "performative": the kind of speech act that not merely describes, but *does* what is said. To better understand this qualification, we looked into Austin's full line of reasoning. For this, we temporarily left the body of apology literature for a brief excursion in speech act theory and philosophy.

Sifting through its theoretical roots, we encountered the notion of "convention", as well as (a small part of) Judith Butler's critique of Austin's thinking. The speech act of apology works instantaneously, Austin maintained, if the utterance is pronounced in the appropriate circumstances by the appropriate person, and if those involved recognize these as appropriate. This requires a shared frame of reference. We concluded that the latter requirement becomes problematic in our approach of official apologies: we situate these acts in crowded territory, amid heterogeneous social actors, in which such a frame of reference cannot be taken for granted. (Part 2)

The second discussion on performance that we identified is the most substantial one, but also the least relevant for our objectives. Pointing to the personal performance of the apologizer, many scholars coalesce around the need to display sincerity. They argue that the speaker must genuinely decry the violation of a moral norm. We identified two reasons for this criterion: an instrumental reason and a philosophical one. Sincerity provides clarity and thus guides the audience towards the intended interpretation of the statement, and sincerity is required for the act of apology to carry its special moral meanings. (Or, in other words: only when the performer is sincere, the act of apology can be the moral act that it is supposed to be.) (Part 2)

The third discussion in the literature was the least substantial, yet, the most significant.[64] Endorsing a performance-based approach, some scholars promote an understanding of official apology as ritual. In this approach dramaturgy becomes relevant as ritual form or ritual procedure. Repetition and convention are, once again, essential for its workings: these endow the performers with well-established ways to enact meaning. Digging further into theories of ritual, we noticed that they focus on social meaning: ritual is primarily aimed at formation of a community. Referencing Victor Turner, apology scholars introduce a view of ritual as a collective act that concludes a phase of disorder and schism, and expresses newly found unity. (Part 2)

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[64] The theory is void of critical dialogues with those who promote a performance-based approach. For example, the suggestion by Horelt to treat political apologies as modern rituals has not generated substantial reactions.

Another question in the review was dedicated to the ways in which theories discuss multi actor environments. Examining theories of collective apologies, we discerned an interest in unity comparable to the aforementioned discussions of ritual and "communitas". As for apologies on behalf of a group, scholars argue that ideally all its members should be one of heart and mind. Especially the members of the offender group should decry the moral norm that was violated in the past and endorse future ethical behavior. Such consensus, they maintain, adds to an apology's moral meaning and effectiveness.[65] (Part 3)

In order to understand how precisely official apologies and their heterogeneous environments are theorized, studies were divided into three sets. One cluster identifies conditions for the application of individual apology frameworks to collective public apology cases. Another set consists of empirical studies of specific apology instances. These studies often describe the multi-actor context in great detail but refrained from theorizing our central phenomenon. The third set directs attention to other social actors than offender and victim, and they accommodate these actors in broad arrangements, such as "state" and "community". (Part 3)

The final question central to this chapter deals with the identification of stepping stones for further research. Looking back at the journey into apology theory that we just made, we can now conclude that the arsenal of stepping stones is limited. We established that current apology theory opens a window into the realm of language. It is tempting for researchers to remain situated in this realm and explore its riches: public apologies can include numerous creative, linguistic maneuvers, for example, to save face, to deny responsibility and to avoid financial claims. These are without doubt fascinating topics for further research, but this is not where our interest lies.

The few discussions of "performance" that do exist, remain in an embryonic state in comparison with the matured analyses of speech. One such discussion is most significant for this thesis: that of apology as ritual. After a brief examination of classic theories of ritual, we concluded that this approach assumes univocality, whereas our ambition is to better understand the equivocality of the

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[65] With the latter notion they point to the discontinuance of wrongdoing in the future.

environment of official apologies. Further, it treats those involved as followers of conventional guidelines, whereas this thesis assumes agency.

The literature also opens a window into the private setting of apologies. It prompts us to learn from everyday apologies between individuals to enhance our understanding of collective (official) apologies. Focusing on the dyad of offender and victim, they explain the meanings of apologies merely in terms of their relationship. Even when theorists examine collective apologies that are offered in public, they often continue to reason within the individualist paradigm, but now in reference to victim and offender *groups*.

We also established that these approaches give credence to cohesive groups. For an apology on behalf of a collective to be meaningful, there must be a sound moral community, goes the rationale, so that moral agency through a representative of this community becomes possible. The esteem for consensus in apology scholarship contrasts with the dynamic and diverse environment of official apologies. This environment can be fragmented and the conversation about the act can be equivocal, even when all interpreters denunciate the wrongdoing that is central to the apology. This is a fundamentally different context than the one that collective apology theorists tend to appreciate and discuss.

Although there are insufficient tools to analyze dramaturgy and multiplicity, the literature has much to offer. Some important insights are listed below; others are summarized in appendix 1.

- ✓ As for speech, the review raises awareness that we must adopt the elements-based linguistic approach to make comparison with leading apology theories possible, but that it should be complimented with an examination of the structure of a statement, to avoid the risk of misinterpreting it as a loose construct with no (narrative) coherence.

- ✓ As for performance, the review shows that it is necessary to expand its existing definition (that was presented in Chapter 1). We need to treat it not just as a social act that produces realities and that happened to be staged and mediatized, but redefine it a *public* performance and rigorously determine what this implies.

- ✓ As for the multi actor context, the review offers encouragement to take the environment in which official apologies become meaningful seriously. Some theoretical approaches point to the act's broader societal outcomes. Whether these outcomes are called "functions," "social impact," or "societal significance," they encourage us to examine a wider context than the inner circle of apologizer and victim.

- ✓ The review also points to the need to reflect on the very ideas of multi actor environment and moral communities. The discussions of consensus, convention, and repetition all point to issues related to the concept of community and authorative representation, which may be problematic in multi-actor environments.

- ✓ Overall, the review improves our understanding of this thesis's theoretical relevance and how our approach departs from existing ones. One of the discrepancies that we identified during the discussion of ritual based approaches pointed to the need to explicate basic assumptions underlying our understanding of the meaning making process, including with regard to agency. The latter conclusion implies that we need to build up our own conceptual framework from the foundation up. We will do so in the next chapter.

Chapter 3. Conceptual framework

3.1. Introduction

A theoretical approach to apologies that integrates speech, dramaturgy, and multi-actor environments needs a strong framework. Apology literature, the case study of Blair and the Irishmen, as well as theories in the fields of sociology, philosophy, anthropology, political science, and studies of culture, communication, and theatre have produced a wealth of insights that can inform such a framework. Drawing from these sources of knowledge, I will now introduce a novel conceptual approach.

3.2 Making meaning

3.2.1 Agency and discourse

Let's start at the heart of the matter and sort out the problem of “making meaning.” What is it, who can do it, and how? We now know that official apologies differ from their counterparts that are offered in private settings. The move from one-to-one settings to the public arena alters the context and the act itself. This particular setting enables performers to use a range of tools to enact meaning (Hajer, 2009). They can employ behavioral choices, procedures, role definition and (other) dramaturgical elements (Friedman & Starr, 1997, p. 8). For example, a victim can bring a historical object to the scene as aide-mémoire of the harm done, and an apologizer can select a special location to commemorate the wrong.

“Enacting meaning” refers to the process whereby individuals employ such tools to bring a particular meaning into action (Thurlow, 2009, p. 462). They do so consciously or not. “Within the broader universe of meaning,” notes sociologist Jeffrey Alexander, “performers make conscious and unconscious choices about the paths they wish to take and the specific set of meanings they wish to project” (2008, p. 58). The same goes for those off stage: these “meaning makers” can employ such choices as well. A commentator can chose to express personal views in modest terms or boldly claim a position as spokesperson of a community. However, no one can force others to subscribe to a

particular meaning: one can only promote a “preferred reading” (phrasing borrowed from Stuart Hall, 1980).

Enactment refers to the process whereby social actors employ verbal and non-verbal choices to bring a particular meaning into action.

Both performers and interpreters are treated here as agents – that is, as social actors with the ability to enact meaning “within a local site of sense making and organizing” (Thurlow, 2009, p. 461).[66] This site can be a stage, a newspaper, a website, or another forum.

Agency refers to the ability of social actors to propose a particular manner in which to understand the apology.

However, one cannot enact meanings ad lib. Agency is limited by discourse: “an ensemble of notions, ideas, concepts, and categorizations through which meaning is allocated to social and other phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced in an identifiable set of practices” (Hajer, 2009, p. 64). One has to work within discursive parameters so that actions make sense to others and are not interpreted “as the outpourings of a maniac” (Bex, 1996, p. 57).[67] These parameters are not necessarily constricting: discourse also provides opportunities to enact meanings that are recognizable to others.

Moreover, there is a creative dimension to discourse. A social actor is not limited to endlessly reproducing readily identifiable practices, but can enact meanings by revising and recombining linguistic expressions and other elements of performance. To cite sociologist Alexander again, in their attempt to enact meaning, “performers […] innovate, create, and struggle for social change through small but significant revisions of familiar scripts which are themselves carved from deeply rooted cultural texts” (2008, p. 15).[68]

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[66] This approach differs from some approaches in sociology and political science, which are preoccupied with the relationship between "agency" and "structure" (Barker, 2012, p. 448).

[67] In this sense, one can argue that there is a “conventional” dimension to discourse.

[68] Alexander uses the word “scripts” to refer to the action-oriented subset of background understandings or “meaning primed to performance“(2008, p. 58).

Discourse is defined as an ensemble of notions, ideas, concepts, and categorizations through which meaning is allocated to social and other phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced in an identifiable set of practices (Hajer, 2004).

3.2.2 Moral discourse

Parameters of *moral discourse* are especially important in the case of apologies. Following the dominant perspective in apology literature, I argue that at a minimum, an apology has to exist as a moral act. It may convey various kinds of meanings, but without carrying moral meaning, the act cannot belong to the group of social acts that we call "apologies." It has to be aligned with moral discourse.[69]

I propose to explain this requirement not in linguistic terms, but in philosophical ones. The apology needs to reflect a process of "establishing shared moral discourse", meaning that it needs to reaffirm the membership of both offender and victim of a designated moral community (Tavuchis, 1991, p. 7). This community is characterized by shared values and norms, and can only exist if those who challenge these suffer consequences, such as exclusion.

This idea has already been developed by sociologist Tavuchis, who pays most attention to the excludes – that is, the offender who has violated a norm. Through apology, he or she re-affirms the norm that the community stands for and can consequently be welcomed back into the group. Other scholars focus on the welcome extended to the victim who has been harmed, exploited, or in case of the Irishmen, put behind bars without fair trial. The apology, than, acknowledges the moral worth of the victims (Govier & Verwoerd, 2002a, p. 69).

Underlying both views, I suggest, is the requirement that those involved in the act subscribe to the values and norms that have been violated. In so doing, they articulate their desire to belong to the same moral community. This way, the act of apology establishes shared moral discourse.

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[69] This requirement can be taken as a constraint, as well as an opportunity to enact meaning.

> ***Moral discourse*** refers to ensemble of notions, ideas, concepts, and categorizations through which values and norms are shaped, maintained, re-examined and articulated by social actors.[70]

Yet, this is not all. Establishing joint moral discourse calls for moral interlocutorship, to use the term of Smith (2008). A moral interlocutor is someone worthy of engaging in the search for common moral ground. For example, an offender can come to recognize and treat the victim as moral interlocutor. This implies that the victim becomes "the primary conversant in the offender's task of re-examining and maintaining her core values" (Smith, 2008, p. 65).

Building upon this idea, I propose to turn the notion into a bilateral concept: both parties come to find *each other* worthy of engaging.[71] This goes beyond treating the other party as a fellow community member. Both apologizer and victim do not confine themselves to "pure inner, monological thought," but take part in a process of revealing and shaping values (Taylor, 1985a, p. 278). "[V]ictim and offender become equals at the most basic level as they try to explain what has meaning and value and recognize when one has strayed from those beliefs," writes Smith (2008, p. 66). This notion of moral exchange between peers implies that those involved become vulnerable, since they are susceptive for each other's feedback.[72]

> ***Moral interlocutorship*** refers to the formation of shared moral discourse by both apologizer and victim – a process in which both parties participate.[73]

To summarize, it is assumed that social actors have agency and that they have different kinds of tools at their disposal to enact meaning during public apology performances. Their practices (or "enactments") are established and verified by reference to discourse. There is an active and creative

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[70] Definition by the author, based on the definition of discourse by Hajer (2003, 2005).

[71] "Conversation" is to be taken in the broadest sense: it includes non-verbal interactions as well.

[72] Not only because of the possible sanctions that may follow the admittance of a wrong doing, Smith writes, but because the apologizer turns to the person he has alienated most by his wrongful actions – a move that exposes his moral flaws to their full extent (2008, p. 66).

[73] Definition by the author, based on the work of Nick Smith (2008).

dimension to discourse, as well as a restrictive one. Moral discourse is central in the case of apology practices. For the act to be moral, it should engender shared moral discourse. For this, bilateral engagement is necessary, not merely an announcement that the other party is rehabilitated as a moral equal and henceforth allowed to re-join the community. According to this rationale, moral interlocutorship is a necessary condition for an apology to exist as a moral act.

3.3 Performance

3.3.1 Elements of performance

Official apologies are offered during special events. Building upon the work of most notably Maarten Hajer, I propose to see them as performances: bounded, produced enactments of meaning, distinct from other activities, that consist of speech and dramaturgy.[74] The latter term references the production of the performance event.

> ***Performance*** is understood as a bounded, produced enactment of meaning that takes place in a larger social context.

The view of official apology as performance draws us into the world of staged performances in theatre, as well as scholarship on performing arts. Two bodies of literature in particular have informed this view. The first consists of studies of western theatrical productions, which focus on the structure and elements of such productions, the way they are carried out, the relationships with and the effects on the audience, as well as the way the performance is interwoven with its social context (Schechner, 2003). The second relevant body of literature comprises studies of symbolism in politics, which treat political leaders as persuasive performers who need to convince publics to see situations in a particular way (Burke, 1969; Edelman, 1985, 1988; Goffman, 1959; Hajer, 2009; Kertzer, 1988; Merelman, 1969; Yanow, 2006; Van Zoonen, 2005).[75]

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[74] A well-known definition of dramaturgy in studies of performing arts is "making drama work" (Hay 1993, p. 13). Other elaborate definitions are available as well. For example, experts in the fields of theatre and literature Katharina Pewny and Inge Arteel propose to define dramaturgy as "multiple relational processes of transmission and negotiation in performance events: between text and performance, words, bodies and spaces, stage and audience, creation and reflection, institution and public, aesthetics and politics, art and academy, practice and research, past, present, and future" (2014).

[75] This outlook on performance diverges from another prominent understanding of the term that is associated with the work of Erving Goffman and symbolic interactionists. Central to this understanding is the idea of performativity as "the expressive processes of strategic impression management and structured improvisation

Elements of performance are casting, scripting, staging and acting (adapted from Hajer [2009]).[76] The first term references the invitation policy (Van der Steen, Van der Spek, Van Twist, 2010). The casting manages the expectations of those invited before arriving at the scene. A social actor may be cast as an ordinary member of the audience and expected to stay passive, or be invited as an honorary guest and offered a more prominent role. Casting also excludes social actors. In the case of the apology to the alleged IRA perpetrators, the members of the Birmingham Six were not invited to the event, although they suffered from a miscarriage of justice similar to what the primary addressees had endured.

> ***Casting (substantive)*** refers to the process of selecting and inviting social actors that will be given the opportunity to partake in the performance in a particular role.

The next element is concerned with the staging of the event. A "stage" is the bounded-off space in which the performance takes place. The stage itself is located at a (geographical) "site." For example, former US President Bill Clinton's apology for the inaction of the international community during the genocide in Rwanda took place on the tarmac (stage) at the Kigali airport in Rwanda (site). Additionally, we consider how space is organized and decorated, including the objects at the scene. Such objects can play an important role, as the UK apology demonstrates. Gerry Conlon showed the paper with the apology statement to the press, proudly holding it up.

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though which human beings normally articulate their purposes, situations and relationships in everyday life" (Schieffelin, 1998, p. 195). Defining performance this way ties the concept to social life and everyday interactions. Goffman proposed to see such performances as repetitive acts, building upon the works of, amongst other scholars, anthropologist Victor Turner. Goffman was also influenced by sociologist Marcel Mauss, who compared ritual to theatre.

[76] Hajer distinguished: (1) Setting: the physical situation in which an interaction takes place. (2) Staging, which refers to the way in which actors deliberately organize an interaction, including the distinction between active players and (passive) audiences, the "invitation policy" and seating arrangement. (3) Scripting: the efforts of actors to create a certain setting by determining the characters in the play and by providing cues for appropriate behavior (2009, p. 67).

Staging (spatial) refers to the physical situation in which the interaction takes place. It includes the way in which space is structured and how this promotes or discourages specific (inter)actions and understandings (Hajer, 2009).

Another element of performance is the scripting. It points to the planning of the event, which I propose to treat as the desired sequence of actions. Who is supposed to do what in what order? The fact that a prime minister speaks last on stage can be relevant, because it allows him or her to have the final word. Scripting also includes cues for appropriate (inter)action. There may be formal rules that govern the event. If the apology is performed in parliament the apologizer may be required to address the Speaker of the House, instead of speaking directly to the victims. This definition of the term “scripting” is analogous to its use by software programmers, who refer to "scripting language" as a language aimed at getting an existing application to act in the order and way a programmer intends.

Scripting (temporal) refers to the planning of the event, including cues for (inter)actions.

"Acting", the final element, includes actions, including behavioral choices and verbal utterances that help enact meaning. Speech is included (as “speech action”) and consists of not only the apologizer's formal statement, but also the verbal utterances of other performers.[77] These utterances can be written out in advance or improvised. Acting also includes any kind of disruptions of the script (Hajer, 2009). An uninvited guest can show up at the scene causing a commotion. Someone can wave a flag in protest. Criticasters actors can set up an alternative physical stage to draw attention to their contesting reading of the wrongdoing, like a protest outside the building where the apology is taking place.

Acting (substantive) refers to all activities in which those attending engage on- and off stage. It includes speech action.

Although these elements are separated on an analytical level, they are intertwined in practice. The casting and the organization of the physical space both provide behavioral cues to participants.

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[77] The approach promoted here differs from how “speech” is usually treated in theatre studies – as something "that the writer writes" that needs to be uttered on stage (Schechner, 2003, p. 87). In this body of literature, it is often argued that the performers and the director of a play have to stick to the written composition.

Someone can be invited as member of the audience and appointed to a seat in the back of the room to witness the apology.[78] An honorary guest, however, may expect exceptional treatment and be offered a reserved spot at the front row. When US President Bill Clinton apologized in 1997 to Afro-Americans seniors who had been allowed to suffer from a cruel medical experiment by the National Health Service, it was arranged for them to be escorted to their seats in the front of the East Room at the White House by the presidential guard.

3.3.2 Public-ness

An official apology performance is defined by its public character. I propose to understand its "public-ness" in technical, political, and ethical terms. From a technical point of view, the performance takes place in a forum that is accessible to the press and thus susceptible to interaction with a broader set of social actors than those present at the scene. Examining the UK apology, we saw that press reporters enabled other social actors to take notice of the performance. They registered and broadcasted the event.

> ***Public*** (technical) refers to the open forum in which the apology is performed, and to its accessibility to a broader set of social actors than those physically present at the scene.

Intermediaries that make the event public are crucial, including members of the professional press corps, who are allowed on the premises and who report in various news media. Their reports can be informed by various interests (Bondebjerg & Golding, 2004; Brants et al., 1998; Cammaerts & Carpentier, 2007).[79] As for apologies offered by politicians (including government leaders), linguist Zohar Kampf observes that journalists "construct social dramas of apology […] and help the public

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[78] I will often use the term "spectators" instead of oft-used "audiences"; it puts emphasis on the visual (non-verbal) elements of performance.

[79] The media include tv, radio, newspapers, and magazines, as well as new media, such as websites, blogs, and social networks. It is assumed that the media are not necessarily ideal channels for enhancing democracy and protecting public interests, but that nonetheless, they have an intermediary function.

determine whether the transgressor should be excluded or re-included in the social structure" (2011, p. 14). Such reporters, however, are not the only possible intermediaries. One can imagine Gerry Conlon making a video with his smartphone of the event in Westminster and putting it on the internet.

> ***Intermediaries***, including press reporters, make the apology performance public through a wide range of media channels.

Understood in political terms, the performance is not just public, it also *creates* publics (Martin, 2002, p. 388). [80] As philosopher John Dewey notes, mediatized public acts performed in modern democracies call multiform, dynamic publics into existence (2012).[81] In our vocabulary: an apology performance triggers an "agentive response" among social actors that are not present at the venue, but watch the performance on television or read about it in the newspaper (Hughes-Freeman, 1998, p. 9). Any of these parties can take an interest in the apology, not just in the sense of being drawn to the staged, dramatic spectacle, but also in that they believe that it affects their own interests.

These interests are multiform. On the individual level, for example, one can feel affected as a critical member of the majority group on whose behalf a wrongdoing is acknowledged; as a national who is asked to revise historical beliefs; or as a cynical observer of political acts who feels irritated by the whole performance and sees it as a waste of taxpayers' money. The same goes for collectives, either formal or informal; nonprofits, private sector corporations, and other associations of any kind – including associations that instantaneously come into being and define themselves merely in relation to the apology. All of these can claim various interests in the act. Because social actors and their interests take such differentiated shapes and are so dynamic, they cannot be easily coordinated and regulated by (government) representatives (Dewey, 2012).

The interests taken are in many cases unpredictable. Publics can be called upon and created by external parties, and drawn into the public debate to their own surprise. Reporters can play an important role in this process. Because they can be very creative in finding original angles for their

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[80] Italics by Martin.

[81] I am indebted to public management expert Mark Moore who pointed me to Dewey's ideas (Moore et al., 2012).

stories, we cannot foresee what narratives they will produce and what publics their narratives will call into being.

For clarity, it is important to note that Dewey's "publics" do not necessarily overlap with moral communities.[82] For example, social actors can take interest in the act of apology as members of the offender group on whose behalf the gesture is offered. At the same time, some of them may reject the apology as "amoral" because the act does not meet their own standards, while others are of the opinion that the act does satisfactorily rehabilitate the victims.

To summarize, official apologies are set up as staged events for everyone to see and call multiple publics into existence. These publics are clusters of social actors that somehow take interests in the apology, but do not necessarily share norms and values. These publics are heterogeneous and dynamic, and cannot be easily foreseen and regulated. So in this sense:

> ***Public*** (political) also refers to the creation of (clusters of) social actors that take interest in the apology – a process that is unpredictable and unfettered, and is set in motion by the performance itself.[83]

Lastly, I distinguish a third dimension of the public-ness of the event.[84] This time, it concerns an ethical dimension. Previously, I proposed treating apologizer and victim as interlocutors engaged in an intimate moral conversation (Smith, 2008). Now I suggest treating them as interlocutors that partake not just in one exchange, but in *two*. The moral interlocutorship of the primary parties in the apology extends to *public* moral discourse – that is: the open-ended process of shaping, maintaining, re-examining, and articulating values and norms through numerous exchanges between moral agents throughout society who are not necessarily part of the same moral community.[85] These interactions

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[82] For clarity, I will sometimes hyphenate the term "publics" to emphasize its Deweyian roots, but I will speak mostly in terms of "social actors" in the "public arena".

[83] Definition by the author, based on the work of Dewey (2012), Martin (2012), and Moore (2012).

[84] We discuss, of course, just part of his philosophy that deals with of personhood, human agency and culture.

[85] As noted in chapter 1, we take this realm to be an arena in which ideas, media, institutions, and practices contribute to the dynamic generation of publics and public opinions (Low & Smith, 2006, p. 5).

are not restricted to the particular setting and duration of the performance itself.[86]

Let's think this idea through from the very beginning. In the opening of this chapter, social actors were portrayed as agents with the ability to choose among various options, including dramaturgical tools, to enact meaning. Applying this idea to the moral realm in which the act of apology is situated, agency also has a moral dimension. Agents have the ability to choose among different values and various ways to act upon these. An apologizer can choose to pay respect to the victims by asking them to stand next to him or her on stage in the spotlights, instead of requiring them to be seated as ordinary spectators in an unlit room. Victim can shy away from making public statements or chose to manifest themselves as vocal counterparts with ideas of their own.

Moral agents do not come into being in a vacuum. The moral choices and practices of performers (and other social actors) are informed by numerous exchanges with other moral agents. Their moral compass – that is: a more or less coherent set of judgments of what is right and wrong – is constructed these back-and-forth's. Or, in other words: their moral agency can only be understood by reference to public moral discourse. Someone can witness a moral act, take notice of the praise for the actor, conclude that it is apparently "the right thing to do", and, as a result take similar actions. And the opposite situation can be significant as well: witnessing the negative consequences that criminals must undergo may prompt an individual to not repeat their misdeeds.

However, the performers' moral choices and the actions in which their choices become manifest, are not automatically recognized by others.[87] Not all moral enactments will be readily identified and subscribed to, because not everyone has the same moral compass. In order for enactments of meaning to be considered moral by third parties, they have to meet the moral standards held by these parties, explains philosopher Charles Taylor (1985a &b). So the call to stand on equal footing on stage will only be acknowledged as a sign of respect by third parties if they subscribe to the value and recognize the call as an indication of this value. And because of the multiplicity of the environment and the variety of

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[86] Taylor's concept of cultural community includes moral community.

[87] As with other forms of discourse, there are opportunities and constraints.

moral standards that social actors hold, it is possible that the performers will meet some of them, but simultaneously fail others – and, thus, not satisfy all "publics".[88]

The fact that performers who enact moral meanings have to consider the moral agents outside the dyad on stage creates opportunities as well as constraints. Acting as public personae they may feel restricted in this capacity to do what they personally see fit. They have to carefully consider which values to honor, what norms to apply, and what actions to take because of wider ramifications. As a result, they might have to ignore personal considerations. A representative of a victim group may, deep inside, long to reject the apology, but has to think through the consequences that doing so would have for his or her constituency.

At the same time, their enactments on stage offer them an opportunity to influence public moral discourse. These enable performers, first, to bring a particular meaning into action and inform thinking, shape interests, and alter discussions about values and norms. They can pick up a topic and, in Taylor's words, "place it in public space, and thus bring us together qua participants in a common act of focusing" (1985a, p. 273). Second, they can also encourage moral agents throughout society to act upon the values and norms that are central to the apology. After all, the moral meaning of a public apology remains limited if only the individuals on stage follow up on the moral claims that they themselves make.

To conclude, the performers are involved in countless interactions with other moral agents in their environment. Their enactments are informed, judged, and executed by reference to public moral discourse. This makes the notion of moral interlocutorship is a *dual concept*, I argue. It relates to the conversation that takes place within the inner circle of apologizer and victim as an intimate dyadic process, just as we earlier envisioned. At the same time, it references the ongoing public moral "conversation" which involves the dyad of apologizer and victim performing on stage, as well as many other moral agents throughout society.

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[88] This problem is key to the conclusions to this thesis.

Public (ethical) also refers to the enactment of meaning in relation to public moral discourse and the opportunities and constraints that come with it.[89]

[89] Definition by the author.

3.4 Multi-actor environment

3.4.1 Circuit of meaning

As public performance, an official apology means nothing in itself. Its meaning is constructed by previous enactments and present practices, in reference to discourse, and its meaning depends on how it is being interpreted. As researchers we can, first, investigate the performance and the meanings that transpire from the act and, second, establish what views of the act circulate in the public arena within a specific period of time. These views are based on the political judgments, cultural preferences, historical beliefs, and other features of the social actors who interpret the apology. This heterogeneity defines the environment in which the apology becomes meaningful (Mouffe, 1999).

Because multiple voices and interpretations can very well diverge rather than "coalesce into consensus," the apology is situated in fragmented field of interpretations (Jablin, 2001). The performers on stage must reckon with the fact that what they say and do in front of a particular public, "will often almost instantaneously reach another public that might 'read' what has been said in radically different way and mobilize because of what it heard" (Hajer, 2009, p. 46). In the terminology of this thesis, their enactments can trigger a wide range of agentive responses among the social actors that claim interests in the act. Enacting meaning in such a context is not easy: as numerous voices respond to the performance, contesting and critical views may gain prominence in the debate (Hajer, 2009).

No response is definitive; no one has the final say. In this sense, the apology becomes meaningful in a dynamic "circuit" (Gay, Hall & Janes, 1997).[90] The interpreters are informed by other understandings of

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[90] This term is borrowed from sociologists Paul Gay, et. al. However, there is a discrepancy between my approach and theirs. It concerns the use of binary conceptions. Gay et al. argue that language is all about distinctions and similarities. (For example: a "peach" is not an "apple.") "In language, meaning arises by plotting the relation of what something is and what it is not" (1997, p. 17). This implies that the meaning of a word is an exclusive (formal) property. Translating this idea, mutatis mutandis, to social acts like apologies would imply that an

the apology that continuously go round. They reference, comment, re-direct and revise, and in so doing create a public debate. For this circuit to function, the media are crucial. They serve as channels through which social actors voice their views (Couldry, 2001), and, especially in the era of new (social) media, they can distribute comments instantaneously to countless agents, injecting speed into the circuit and attracting participants.[91] So the process of meaning making in the public arena is not just dynamic, but also multiform and mediatized.

> ***Multi-actor environment*** refers to the context in which official apologies take place (if occurring in western democracies). It is mediatized, dynamic and multiform.

We could expand the discussion of the nature of this environment. For this purpose we could draw studies, such as the work of political scientists Daniel Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004), who define a range of media systems, or of sociologist Mary Marx Ferree et al., who discuss models of public spheres (Ferree, Gamson, Gerhards & Rucht, 2002).[92] However, such a detailed breakdown is not necessary here. The objective of our investigation of the apology's environment is modest: we are concerned with identifying social actors and their interpretations in the public arena in order to understand how official apologies become meaningful. Our conceptualization of the multi-actor environment can remain modest in scope and depth.

3.4.2 Equivocality & authority

Defining the environment in terms of multiplicity introduces a problem. It implies that social actors do not necessarily coalesce around values and norms. This makes the whole idea of "moral communities"

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apology is (or means) something, and is (or means) not something else. Instead, I argue that meanings of social acts are not per se binary and mutually exclusive.

[91] Modern democracies are, amongst many other features, defined by freedom of speech and a multitude of media channels.

[92] If we would apply their model, we would select cases in countries with (dis)similar systems and reflect on the role of the state (ownership of media), the type of democracy and the degree of pluralism. These are important variables in the work of Hallin and Mancini (2004).

problematic. If the ongoing conversation in the public arena (either on moral issues in general or official apology in specific) is so equivocal, how can such communities exist? And how than can a moral agent act on behalf of a community and make claims that its members subscribe to? Is agency on behalf of moral communities possible?[93]

In mediatized, multi-actor environments, a “shared system of meaning” can no longer be assumed, argues Hajer, and without shared (moral) discourse politicians cannot readily exercise (moral) leadership (2009, p. 57). Political communication expert Susan Herbst adds that “structural and cultural changes in our system of political communication […] have wreaked serious havoc with the conventional meanings of authority” (2003, p. 482). She directs attention to the diffusion of media, which makes it difficult for political figures to attract attention: they have to make themselves noticed through a wide variety of channels.

Let's take up these questions and first define some of the key terms introduced above. I propose to define moral communities in minimalist fashion and take them as ad hoc, momentary, and merely concerned with the values and norms central to the apology. Agreement on other moral matters is not a necessary condition for its existence. Moral authority refers to an agent can act on behalf of such a community, because its members recognize his or her "authority": he or she considered to be an expert who can vouch for the reliability of particular information (Raz, 1990, p. 2).

This includes not just information in the narrow sense of the word (on which car insurance to buy), but also judgments of that is right and wrong. For this authority to exist, notes philosopher Hannah Arendt, neither coercion nor persuasion through argument is necessary (1970, p. 45). The status of the speaker is “decisive” and there is a "belief in the correctness of his commands or utterances," political scientist Richard Friedman further analyzes (1990, p. 67, 68). In plain wording, you buy the car insurance *because the authority says so*.

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[93] This is a major discussion topic in theories of collective apologies. As noted, many scholars state that for a collective apology to be meaningful, it must be supported by members of the perpetrator group (which I will call the “consensus requirement”).

This kind of moral authority, vested in persons – or, in our vocabulary, residing with agents – can only exist within like-minded groups in which someone is recognized as an authority based on some kind of "prior social agreement" (Friedman, 1990, p. 84). Translating this idea to moral communities in present day multi-actor environments, some kind of agreement among social actors is necessary for moral authority to exist. As noted, I proposed to define this agreement in minimalist terms: its members only have to temporarily coalesce around the set of values and norms that are key to the apology. In the case of the UK apology, we observed such a minimalist orientation: social actors agreed upon the necessity to rehabilitate the alleged IRA perpetrators and do justice to these innocent individuals. Even among the criticasters who slashed the apology as politically fuelled, such agreement existed.[94]

Additionally, there must be agreement on the special status of the agent within the community, so that its members value his or her judgment. Such status, I argue, is not necessarily difficult to acquire. Observing public debates on moral issues, I suggest that such status can be obtained (and lost) surprisingly fast. Not much "prior agreement" seems necessary. For example, in the aftermath of 9/11, victim's relatives suddenly obtained special status: they were perceived as more sympathetic and virtuous than other citizens. Press and "publics" attributed qualities to them, such as wisdom, braveness and decency (Stern, 2010, p. 1). These novel moral authorities made frequent media appearances and were questioned on matters of right and wrong, including topics as retaliation and forgiveness. Other social actors eagerly recognize such authorities for the occasion (as well as get rid of them a day later). And the occasion can very well be an official apology.

> ***Moral authority*** refers to a social actor whose moral judgments temporary resonate within a particular community.[95]

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[94] Since moral communities and authorities are important concepts in our framework, I will formulate a set of indicators in this next chapter.

[95] Although individuals are central to this discussion, one can imagine that collectives can be moral authorities as well. Think, for example, of an organization as Greenpeace with regard to environmental issues.

Lastly, apart from moral authority one may also "have authority," meaning that the social actor at issue is formally entitled to act on behalf of a group.[96] Having authority implies a *de jure* right or permission to act. The social actor has some kind of legitimized (or statutory) power. For instance, the US president has the right, or the authority, to command the armed forces. This kind of authority presupposes a legal convention or a system of rules: it is codified by law or regulation (Friedman, 1990, p. 60).

Applying this notion to official apologies, the apologizer becomes important as head of the executive branch of government who has the "right" to speak on behalf of this branch. We can also distinguish others who may be formally entitled to act with formal authority. An attorney of a victim organization can be entitled to speak on behalf of his or her clients, or a member of Parliament who advocates for the rehabilitation of victims in his or her constituency can function as a formal spokesperson. Moral and formal authority can overlap, but the latter does not necessary imply the former.[97]

Formal authority resides with those who are legitimized (de jure) to act on behalf of a group.

3.5 Alternative approach

This conceptual framework should offer an alternative to the traditional concept of apology as linguistic practice. In this classic outlook, the act is taken as a discursive practice in the narrow sense of the word: discourse references mere "talk" (formal speech). Maintaining the idea of apology as discursive practice, this framework connects the act to a broader notion of discourse. For this, we needed not just to introduce a suitable definition of discourse (Hajer, 2009), but also to establish a new connection between apology and discourse that was not solely linguistic in kind. Building upon the works of Tavuchis and Smith, I proposed to use the notion of moral interlocutorship as a connector. This conceptual framework can perhaps also serve as an alternative to the concept of apology as self-expressive act promoted by speech act theorist John Searle, sociologist Nicholas Tavuchis, and many

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[96] This kind of authority is much discussed in the political sciences.

[97] The most obvious example here is former South-African president Nelson Mandela.

others. In this view, the interior state of private personae is central, as well as the expression of this state. Sincerity – particularly on the part of the apologizer – is paramount. Absent this sincerity, an apology cannot exist as a moral act.

In contrast, I have promoted a more exterior orientation and conceptualized official apology as a mediatized performance in an open forum in which public personae partake. Expanding the concept of interlocutorship I made a link to *public* moral discourse. Key to the apology as public moral act is the dual notion of interlocutorship, that takes into account the public character of the apology performance and its broader context. At the same time, it honors the intimate moral conversation that takes place between those who stand on stage.

Now that we have constructed the conceptual framework, it is time to operationalize it for further research.

Chapter 4. Operationalization

4.1 Case study approach

Formulated in abstract terms the conceptual framework needs to be prepared for operationalization. Yet, we can only do so when we know what the research objectives will be. So let's identify the work ahead. The framework is to be used to systematically examine apology practices. These case studies should help answer the central question to this thesis; to test the framework and identify weak spots to patch up where necessary.

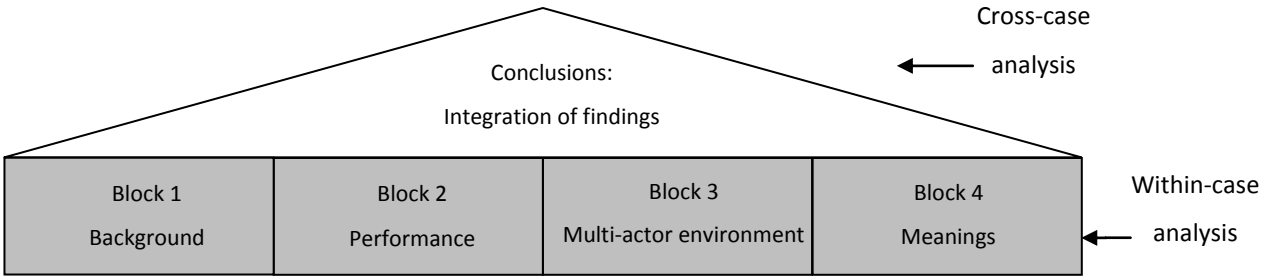
The choice to conduct case studies is, first and foremost, informed by the need for theory building (Dooley, 2002; George and Bennett, 2005). An examination of similarities and differences within and between multiple cases enables us, as researchers, to generalize and make claims that are valid beyond one case (Yin, 2004, p. 47). The choice is also based on the nature of our central question. Case studies can be especially helpful in answering in "how" questions (Yin, 2004), and we seek to understand *how* an apology makes sense by studying *how* it is performed, and *how* the act is interpreted. Based on the answers, we can ultimately establish *what* the act comes to mean. A final consideration is that case studies can deal with evidence collected from a wide range of sources, including documents, pictures, and personal interviews, in order to make sense of a phenomenon. Such a wide source set is necessary to reconstruct the staged events, among other purposes.

I will begin by conducting individual case analyses and investigate apologies within their particular context. The conceptual framework structures this research. Once all the cases have been examined on an individual basis, I will conduct a cross-case analysis to establish common themes and patterns. The results of the latter examination will be presented in the conclusions to this thesis.

Each case study presented in an individual chapter and set up in similar blocks. Block 1 provides the historical background of the apology at issue. Block 2 deals with the performance, and Block 3 focuses on the multi-actor environment. Each case study concludes with an overview of the meanings of the

apology and with a brief discussion of the interpretive challenges that came up in the within-case analysis (Block 4).

Figure 1: Set up of the case research



Throughout the research (internal and external) validity and reliability are constructed. Measures include the use of multiple sources in each case study (such as newspaper articles and photos) and multiple perspectives from various academic disciplines (such as history, sociology, and the political sciences). Operational measures taken include the explication of procedures and the presentation of detailed information on the data collection and analysis, including coding frameworks in which abstract concepts are translated to concrete topics to be examined with the help of tailor made questions.

Table 11. Measures to construct validity and reliability throughout the case research

Purpose	**Details**	**Measures**
Credibility	How can we be sure that the evidence and research are trustworthy?	• Triangulation: ○ Use of multiple sources (e.g., newspaper articles, refereed journal articles, photos) ○ Use of multiple perspectives: studies from various academic disciplines (e.g. historical, sociological, and other studies of apology instances)

Table continues on next page

Purpose	Details	Measures
Internal validity[98]	How can a researcher be sure that phenomenon A is related to phenomenon B? Does A necessarily lead to B?	• Separation of the analysis of speech on one hand, and dramaturgy on the other • Integration of the findings in separate steps: first, through the identification of meanings conveyed through speech; then, through the identification of meanings conveyed through dramaturgy
External validity	To which domain can the findings be generalized? Are they valid beyond this case study?	• Four case studies • Relation of the findings to a well-defined body of literature • If relevant, explications of in which circumstances generalizations can (or cannot) be made
Reliability	Can the research be repeated by other researchers and yield similar results?	• Clearly defined and operationalized concepts • Discussions of the relationships between, and the theoretical backgrounds of concepts • Presentation of quantitative and qualitative information of the processes of data collection and analysis

[98] Despite the fact that this research is not explanatory in nature, creating internal validity is still relevant whenever we try establish how dramaturgical elements of a public performance carry meanings in relation to speech and the degree to which they affirm or undermine what is being said.

4.2 Case research objectives

4.2.1 Objective 1: Historical background

The case studies are conducted with four objectives in mind. The first is ***to capture the historical context of the apology***. We need to examine the wrongdoing, the harm done to the victims, the involvement of government, the way that the government dealt with the wrongdoing after it had been committed, the events leading up to the apology, and the social actors that were key to the wrongdoing and to the lead up to the event.

For this, the following research questions are relevant. What was the wrongdoing at issue and why was it committed? Which parties were responsible for the wrongdoing and what was the nature of their responsibility? Who were the victims and how were they injured? How did offender and victim deal with the wrongdoing prior to the apology? What events and developments led to the apology? Which social actors were involved in this process?

To answer these questions, the research takes account of, amongst other topics, the nature and the extent of the wrong, and the number and the identities of both offenders and victims. It seeks to identify individual "cases" that have become public over the years (such as the one of Gerry Conlon). The examination also includes the rationale for committing the wrong and for handling it afterwards, as well as arguments for seeking and offering apologies.

Making an inquiry into such delicate matters requires us, as researchers, to be attentive to the ubiquitous matter of disputed facts and qualifications. These may apply to the wrongdoing itself, since there may be disagreement about, e.g., the size and nature of the harm. There may also be debate about who belongs to the victim and offender groups. We may also notice shifts in understandings about the involvement of parties: the degree to which a particular perpetrator is implicated in the wrongdoing can vary over a period of time. And we may have to deal with shifting moral or policy discourses over time: original explanations of why the wrongdoing was committed may differ from

more recent perspectives. (Appendix 2 presents details of the data collection and analysis.)

4.2.2 Objective 2: Performance

The second objective is ***to establish how the apology is performed***.

Issues to be examined related to the *casting* concern the invitation policy: who was casted and in what roles. This investigation includes the question: are there parties that are not present at the scene, but could have been, considering the wrongdoing and the events preceding the apology? Topics relevant to the staging include: the site and stage that are chosen for the apology; the set up of the stage and the way it is decorated; and the objects present at the scene. Who brought them and why?

With regard to the *scripting*, we consider the scheduling of the event, the proposed line up of performers on stage and what activities other than the delivery of the apology statement are planned. Finally, we look into *acting* – that is: both speech (action) and other kinds of action. Questions structuring the investigation include: what does the apologizer say? What other statements are made, by whom, and what meanings do these transmit? How can we qualify the relationship between these statements and the one of the apologizer? In what activities do those present engage on and off stage? How are objects and other dramaturgical elements used?

For this part of the research, we use various frameworks. One such framework is designed to establish the contents of the apology statement.[99] It comprises multiple sections, one of which includes basic linguistic elements of apologies, and other sections that integrate additional elements based on our own conceptual framework. These include the mentioning of values and norms at stake; of special target groups and (moral) communities of any sort; and of initiatives throughout society that to act upon these values. (Appendix 3 presents details of the data collection and analysis.)

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[99] Contents are not to be mistaken for meanings. For methodology in establishing the meanings of the apology, see objective 4.

4.2.3 Objective 3: Multi-actor environment

The third objective is ***to establish which other social actors assign meanings to the apology*** in the public arena. This objective is restricted to identifying those who interpret the act. A related objective is to establish if we can speak of moral and formal authority, as defined in Chapter 3.

The primary questions under consideration are: exactly on whose behalf is the apology offered, and to whom is it addressed? Do these parties comprise multiple members? What "third" parties interpret the act and partake in the debate about the apology? Have they been referenced by the performers, and/or emerged in the lead up to the apology? To get a handle on the question of (formal) authority we will ask: Who is *de jure* entitled to speak on behalf of a community? Who, if anyone, explicitly mentions this formal status, and how? Who acts as representative and makes claims on behalf of a community? And who is treated by others as their representative and, or claims to be representing a collective?

In the specific case of moral authority, first, we verify whether or not someone speaks, or is treated, as the representative of a moral community. Second, we take account of any normative claims that are tied to a specific community. (For example, a statement like, "This is not what our country stands for.") Third, we investigate whether a social actors displays or claims to have an in-depth understanding of the inner workings of a moral community. Fourth, we ask if an actor asserts ownership of a moral issue, or if others attribute such ownership to someone. Finally, we seek to establish whether a moral track record of a social actor is referenced – that is, the credentials that (presumably) have been or will be earned by commitment to a relevant moral cause. (Appendix 4 presents details of the data collection and analysis.)

4.2.4 Objective 4: Meanings

The fourth objective is to ***establish what meanings are enacted by performers, and what meanings are assigned to the apology by other parties***. We investigate the meanings that are conveyed through

speech and dramaturgy, as well as meanings that are assigned to the apology by social actors in the public arena. One particular realm of meaning in which the apology must be significant concerns the moral realm, as defined in Chapter 3. In this realm the dual concept of moral interlocutorship and the public process of establishing joint moral discourse are essential. Other meanings of the apology are to be identified in each particular case.

For this purpose, we consider the meanings that the verbal utterances of the apologizer and other primary performers carry; the meanings enacted with the help of dramaturgical tools; the extent to which the performance is a public manifestation of shared moral discourse; and, of course, what meanings are assifgned to the act by social actors who take part in the public debate.

To analyze the latter interpretations, multiple indicators are used. One such indicator concerns the causal relationships in the readings of the apology. We determine whether the interpretations include links between apology and specific interests, social actors, actions, events, developments or topics. We also look for coherence in the interpretation by asking what rationale, if any, underlies the interpretation at issue. Does it offer a logic for the offering, demanding and/or reception of the apology? Perhaps we can find an overt or tacit argument in which the apology makes sense as a particular act, in a specific context, serving a particular actor's interests… (Appendix 5 presents details of the data collection and analysis.)

4.2.5. Objective 5: Interpretive challenges

The last objective is ***to identify the interpretative challenges*** that arose during each within-case analysis. Once we have realized the previous four objectives and composed a satisfactory overview of the meanings of the apology at hand, it is time to step back and take inventory of the problems that emerged during the analysis.

The central question of this thesis — a meta-theoretical question addressed at the research community (how can we, *as researchers*, make sense of official apologies?) — informs this fifth objective. To answer this question, we take a moment at the end of each chapter to reflect on the

analytical challenges that each case presented.

The interpretative problems to be identified do not concern practicalities (for example, whether a source set provided sufficient relevant data or not), but are instead specific to the analytical task of making sense of the individual apologies. The expectation is that in using our novel analytical lens, we will not only learn more about official apologies and their meanings, but also encounter new problems for interpretative research. Expanding the scope of analysis to take account of actions beyond mere speech and actors beyond the primary conversants will present challenges, and the objective is to identify these problems in each distinctive case.

The primary indicators for interpretative challenges concern, first, possible misalignments between various elements of performance and, second, conflicting interpretations that emerge in the public arena. Both of these potential areas of dissonance may offer confusing cues for interpretation and make it difficult to compose a coherent set of corresponding meanings of the apology at issue.[100] (Appendix 6 presents details of this part of the examination.)

[100] We also look for misalignments within an individual interpretation, so between elements of speech, within one statement.

4.3 Case selection

Having established the research objectives, we can now turn to the question of which apologies to study. Based on the accumulated insights from the previous chapters, we can formulate practical and methodological criteria. The practical criterion concerns the confined cultural, political, and temporal space in which apologies are offered: the acts must have been performed in western democracies in the past 10 years.

A basic methodological criterion concerns the inclusion of a formal statement by an official representative of a government and/or state. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 2, that statement has to meet the following requirements: it should be addressed to victims and include at least an expression of regret, an acknowledgement of responsibility for wrongdoing, and a reference to the violation of a (moral) norm.

More advanced methodological criteria are the following. To maximize opportunities to conceptualize the central phenomenon to this thesis's objectives the cases must vary in the dimensions of performance and multi-actor environment. They also must be "rich" cases that include multiple possible variables (Yin, 1994). That's why cases from a variety of countries are studied, as I expect that their particular historical, political, social and cultural backgrounds will result in a diversity of national public debates, in terms of performances, participants and interpretations. (See appendix 7 for details.)

Based on these criteria, the following cases will be investigated, and presented in this sequence: Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apology for the assimilation of Aboriginal peoples through the Residential School System (2008); Belgian Prime Minister Elio Di Rupo's apology for the involvement of government authorities in the deportation of Jews during the Second World War (2012); UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown's apology for a policy program that shipped British children off to Commonwealth territories (2010); and the apology by Dutch ambassador Pieter Jan Kleiweg de Zwaan to victims of a post-colonial massacre in Indonesia (2011). (See appendix 8 a discussion of this selection vis-à-vis the case criteria.)

4.4 Limitations of the research

Beginning with methodological limitations, it is important to note that the research is not aimed at establishing causal relationships between an apology and the level of controversy that it generates. The research is merely aimed at re-conceptualizing the central phenomenon. As a result, its explanatory power is limited; many (potentially causal) relationships will remain unexamined. The research is also limited to official apologies, but perhaps it has some implications for other kinds of public performances by government officials. If so, it will be discussed in the final conclusions.

In terms of practical constraints there are, first, temporal issues to consider. The scope of the inquiry is limited; the focus is on the very short term reactions on the act. The research of the multi-actor environment is limited to 6 months after the official apology is offered. Hence, the research may very well include interpretations of the apology that fade away over time.

Physical constraints are relevant as well. The research of the multi-actor environment is limited to utterances in domestic newspapers in the country of the apologizer. Interpretations in the public arena of the country where victims reside (if other than the apologizer) are not taken into account. This is especially relevant in case #4 (Netherlands/Indonesia).

Next, there are substantial limitations. The analysis focuses on the very short term; the long term consequences of official apologies are not included. The question of intentionality is not included in the research design either. It is only discussed if social actors bring it up.[101]

Research into the multi-actor environment takes merely account of newspaper articles that are produced by press reporters; and of utterances (like op-ed's and readers' letters) produced by the performers and third parties, also published in domestic newspapers. This research effort serves our objectives in a minimalist way. There is no attention paid to the geographical scope of media; the

[101] Intentionality has been discussed in apology literature as an essential element of an apology and tied to the "sincerity" of the apologizer. See also the conclusions of Chapter 3.

space and time of media utterances (e.g., length of a newspaper article); the placement in media (e.g., front page); details of the circulation of the media (e.g., number of copies delivered); relevance of media to particular audiences, etc. Hence, the research cannot be characterized as a full media analysis and to avoid misunderstandings I will use the term "media" solely in reference outlets (such as a newspaper or a TV network).

Finally, research into the capacity of social actors to promote their particular take in the public debate is absent. Such endeavor would require the investigation of many more topics, such as a social actor's access to media; the resources at his/her disposal; power concentrations in large media organizations and their consequences for agenda-setting; inequality in the distribution of other forms of communicative power among parties that interpret the apology; etc. These topics are not part of the research either.

What is left, though, are four analyses of fascinating official apologies, which are structured in accordance with the objectives that we have just formulated. These cases are presented in the next chapters, starting with an emotional celebration in the capital of Canada.

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Chapter 5. The Canadian apology

Dramaturgy & victims' interpretations

5.1 Background

5.1.1 The wrongdoing

In June 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper stood in the House of Commons in Ottawa, Canada. The leader of the Conservative party and head of the federal government had been there many times, but this was an extraordinary occasion. The public galleries were crowded with citizens from all over the country, and in front of his lectern sat the leaders of Aboriginal communities – some of them in colorful traditional attire. "Mr. Speaker," Harper began, "I stand before you today to offer an apology to former students of Indian residential schools" (Parliament of Canada, 2008, p. 6850).

The school system that Harper referred to had been established in the 1880s and had been in place for approximately one century. During its existence, it had taken in between 100,000 and 150,000 children of Aboriginal descent (Durocher, 2002, p. 99; Jung, 2011, p. 223).[102] Underlying the initiation of the system was “an assimilative ideology of civilization" (Milloy, 1999, p. X). The rationale was that native peoples – or "Indians"– should be disciplined according to the socio-cultural standards of British settlers.[103] In order to ensure this, the Canadian federal government had given itself wide-reaching power to exercise authority over native peoples: it had established federal jurisdiction over "Indians and lands reserved for Indians" (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2010).

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[102] A list of all schools can be found on the website of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada at www.trc.ca. The total number of students enrolled throughout the system's existence is unclear; some sources mention the number of 100,000; some refer to 150,000.

[103] They were treated as second-class citizens and not granted full citizenship.

Proper education was seen as the cornerstone of assimilation policy. "It would be highly desirable (...) to obtain entire possession of all Indian children after they attain the age of seven or eight years and keep them at schools..." read the 1890 annual report of the government department of Indian Affairs (Milloy, 1999, p. 7). Children should learn English, and how to do farm labor, housekeeping, and carpentry work. They also had to be Christianized. Aboriginal cultures were to be erased because they were considered inferior and because they were intertwined with spirituality. Their traditions were vehicles of religious expression. Prayers, for example, were offered during the burning of sacred materials, such as sweet grass, sage, cedar, or tobacco.

To realize this ambition, government asked Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and United churches to operate residential schools. Missionaries already ran some boarding schools to evangelize native peoples, and engaging them was less expensive than hiring regular administrators and teachers (Milloy, 1999). Initially, the government funded the institutions, set standards of care, and supervised the administration. In 1892, this arrangement changed when the Department of Indian Affairs introduced a quota arrangement: it would give a grant to each school on the condition that the institution enrolled a certain number of students. When financial needs were dire, some schools took in sick students to ensure they would meet the quota, including tubercular children who posed a deadly threat to others (Miller, 1996). The government would still exercise oversight, but in practice it turned a blind eye towards what happened in the schools.

The wrongdoings associated with this school system are numerous and severe. Pupils were taken from their homes without parental consent, stripped of their spirituality and culture, and harshly disciplined. They were not allowed to speak in their own language. An eyewitness reported that needles were stuck into the tongues of those who disobeyed (Durocher, 2002, p. 118). A former student recalled that at the age of six he was beaten with the buckle of a thick razor strap because upon arrival in the school he did not speak English (Fournier, 2008, June 10).

The attendees of the schools were also subject to widespread sexual abuses. "The schools also became host to a number of sexual predators who exploited their authority and the government’s and churches' lax oversight to indulge their appetites," writes historian Jim Miller (2013, p. 137). Student-on-student abuse existed as well due to the lack of oversight by those running the institutions.

An official Truth and Reconciliation Commission that many years later made an inquiry into the system reported:

> Many people came with stories of harsh discipline, of classroom errors corrected with a crack of a ruler, a sharp tug of the ear, hair pulling, or severe and frequent strappings. The Commission heard of discipline crossing into abuse: of boys being beaten like men, of girls being whipped for running away. People spoke of children being forced to beat other children, sometimes their own brothers and sisters. The Commission was told of runaways being placed in solitary confinement with bread-and-water diets and shaven heads (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2012, p.5).

Finally, living conditions in the schools were generally deplorable. The institutions were chronically underfunded, which led to overcrowding and poor diets. Undernourishment was a continuous concern throughout the entire existence of the school system. There were also many reports about poor hygiene. A 1916 account reported filthy floors, mice in the flour, and pails standing in for toilets in dormitories (Milloy, 1999, p. 130). The undernourishment and unsanitary conditions led to waves of diseases, such as often deadly tuberculosis. To cite just one example: an inspector established that in 1907 in one Alberta institution, circa 50 percent of the pupils had died because of mistreatment, diseases and because so many of them took their own lives (Bryce, 1922).[104]

5.1.2 Policy shifts

In the first half of the 20th century, as the body of evidence on the dreadful situations in the schools accumulated, government officials grew increasingly aware of the problems. They also came to realize that the system was producing thousands of individuals incapable of contributing positively to their communities (Milloy, 1999, p. xvii). Yet, the government's institutional framework allowed those in charge to look away. "The dual leadership tended to diffuse oversight and responsibility, and provide a convenient excuse when things went wrong," concludes Miller (2009, p. 135).

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[104] This was an Indian Affairs chief medical inspector.

In the early 1950s, government policies began to shift. Legislation was amended in response to mounting public concerns about the alarming conditions in native communities. The government made more support available in socio-economic areas, like housing and health, and shifted to an educational policy that put day schools at the center. Many children were now enrolled in local public schools, and more day schools opened on reservations, significantly reducing the number of children sent to institutions far away from home (Presbyterian Church, 2004, p.4). In 1957, the Department of Indian Affairs also set up inspections and supervision guidelines, along with stricter regulations. Due to these alternations the number of schools declined, but the displacement and assimilation of native children continued – and so did the abuses.

The 1960s ushered in more dramatic policy changes. The public attention for the problems in Aboriginal communities continued to grow, and the centennial jubilee of the federal state of Canada sparked "interest in and critical examination of history" (Nobles, 2008, p. 77). In 1967, a government commission published a widely cited white paper that discussed mistreatments of native peoples at length.[105]

From this moment on the residential school system would be dismantled. In 1969, the partnership with the churches came to an end, and the Department of Indian Affairs took over the management of the schools. In that year, the government opted for integration instead of assimilation policies and made efforts to further integrate Aboriginal children into local public schools. However, it was decades before all the residential schools would be closed. The last one shut its doors in 1996.

5.1.3 Lead up

The developments that would result in Harper's apology in 2008 began in the 1990s. Over time the victims became more and more emancipated. In 1990, the Grand Chief of the Assembly of the Manitoba Chiefs, Phil Fontaine, spoke about his gruesome childhood in a residential school at a

[105] This is the so-called "Hawthorn report."

gathering of Aboriginal leaders organized by the Assembly of First Nations. (AFN)[106] He called for recognition of the abuse by the government and asked for compensation. His public acknowledgement encouraged fellow victims to speak about their own experiences of abuse. Shame and stigma kept many make survivors quiet about especially the sexual abuses in the schools. In 1994, the First Nations Summit founded the Indian Residential School Survivors Society, which would provide counseling and other forms of support for school attendees. (By 2008, the society had 50,000 members.)

Second, the churches made a series of moral gestures. The United Church of Canada was the first to apologize. In 1986, its leaders walked in a procession to meet leaders of native tribes to ask them for forgiveness (United Church, 2007).[107] In 1991, both the Oblates and the National Meeting of the Roman Catholic Church offered apologies, and two years later, the Anglican Church of Canada followed suit (Wilson, date unknown; Oblates, 1991). Its Primate acknowledged that, "We failed you. We failed ourselves. We failed God" (Anglican Church, 1993). Soon after, the Presbyterian Church issued "Confessions and apologies" (1993).

Third, in 1991 the Canadian government convened the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples to investigate and report on the situation of native peoples. There was an evident lack of physical and emotional well-being. The suicide rate among Aboriginals was extraordinarily high; many of them had issues with substance abuse (alcohol) and suffered from extreme poverty.[108] The government responded to the sobering report with the launch of an Aboriginal action plan called "Gathering Strength" (Jung, 2011, p. 219). Introducing the plan, the Minister of Indian Affairs stated that "the days of paternalism and disrespect" were over (Stewart, 2010). To that end she made "a statement of reconciliation" on behalf of the government, in which she singled out the residential school system

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[106] This was an organization of First Nations chiefs that acts as the representative of 630 native reserves. The AFN is funded by the federal government.

[107] The church also issued an apology in 1998.

[108] In 2008, 1.1 million Aboriginals formed 3.8 percent of the Canadian population; the ratio of Aboriginal births to general population births was 1.5 to 1 (Hogben, 2008). Additionally, the life expectancy for Canadian Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men in 2008 was 70 and 77 years, respectively, and 76 and 82 for women (Hogben, 2008; Health Canada, 2006).

that had "left legacies of personal pain and distress that continue to reverberate in Aboriginal communities today" (Ibid.).[109] It was emphasized by the government that this was not to be taken as a an apology.

The emancipation of the victims and the statements of regret resulted in a flood of civil lawsuits against both churches and government. Legal counselors to former students decided to pursue a major class action lawsuit to settle all claims for all victims. It resulted in an out-of-court deal in 2006. This Indian Residential Schools Settlement was approved by court and by parliament, dominated by the Liberal Party.[110]

This agreement included compensation to all former residential school students in the form of “common experience” payments (at least CAN $1.9 billion in total payments); a process to allow victims of sexual or serious physical abuses to get additional compensation (individual payments between CAN $5,000 and CAN $275,000); money for programs for healing, truth, reconciliation, and commemoration (totaling CAN $195 million); and the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address the legacy of the residential school system (Residential Schools Settlement, date unknown).

Upon this verdict, the leaders of the native communities, including Phil Fontaine, called for official apologies, but the Conservative (minority) government refused.[111] Its leader, Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who had made budget cuts that severely affected Aboriginal communities, openly turned down the requests. This sparked protests by members of the opposition and Aboriginal leaders. "What we take issue with," said Fontaine in the spring of 2007, "is the government's refusal to apologize. We want our apology" (MacGregor, 2009).

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[109] Liberal PM Chrétien made clear that he would not apologize.

[110] Victims could opt out. If they decided to stay in, they would never again be able to sue government, the churches who had joined in the settlement, or other defendants in the class action suit, over residential schools.

[111] This government had been in office since 2006.

An official report, published in April of the same year, made it known that tuberculosis had killed half of residential school children in the first stage of the system, and that nothing had been done for decades despite warnings about the situation as early as 1907.[112] This put more pressure on the government to apologize. Over the summer PM Harper reportedly took home a series of files about the issue, including "a moving and private letter" written by Fontaine (Curry, 2008, June 13; Globe and Mail, 2007).

During recess, two cabinet ministers, a Métis[113] senator, and the New Democratic Party's leader Jack Layton all made pleas to the PM, telling Harper that "an apology would help build trust and secure support for the First Nations initiatives the Conservatives hoped to advance," and that "residential school students were dying at the rate of four per day, which would mean that many would not live to hear an apology at the end of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's] mandate of five years" (Jung, 2011, p. 234, 235). The lobbying ultimately paid off. In October 2007, Harper changed his mind (Howlett, 2008). It was announced that there would be a government apology and that it could be expected before the summer of 2008.

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[112] In response to the report, a member of parliament tried to move the House of Commons to apologize, but initially failed to get support of the MPs of the ruling Conservative and Liberal parties. A second attempt was successful though: on May 1, 2007, the Canadian House of Commons issued a statement of apology with a vote of 257-0 (Parliament of Canada, 2007, p. 1020).

[113] Métis refers to persons of mixed European-Aboriginal heritage.

5.2 Speech

5.2.1 The statements

At 3:00 pm on Wednesday, June 11, Prime Minister Harper made the official apology in parliament. "The Government of Canada built an educational system in which very young children were often forcibly removed from their homes and often taken far away from their communities," he said. "Many were inadequately fed, clothed, and housed. All were deprived of the care and nurturing of their parents, grandparents, and communities. [...] Tragically, some of these children died while attending residential schools, and others never returned home."

Harper acknowledged the ongoing legacy of the school system, and praised those who had come forward with their stories. He also acknowledged students who had died "never having received a full apology from the government of Canada." He then offered specific apologies for the forcible removal children from their homes, the separation of children from their rich culture and their families, and, finally, the abuse and neglect within the inadequately controlled institutions. "The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the Aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly."

The final part of his statement was dedicated to the ongoing healing process. He mentioned the recent creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which he called "a positive step in forging a new relationship between Aboriginal people and other Canadians."[114] The PM closed with the words, "God bless all of you. God bless our land" (Parliament of Canada, 2008, p. 6850-6851). (See appendix 9 for details.)

Harper stepped down and other politicians stood up to respond. Stéphane Dion spoke first, and confessed his own party's inclusion in the community of perpetrators: "As the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, a party that was in government for more than 70 years in the 20th century, I

[114] This commission had just started and not yet held any hearings.

acknowledge our role and our shared responsibility in this tragedy" (Ibid, p. 6851). The leader of Bloc Québécois, Gilles Duceppe, spoke next, and parliament's final speaker was Jack Layton, leader of the New Democratic Party, who had lobbied for the apology. He noted that it was "this Parliament that enacted, 51 years ago, the racist legislation that established the residential schools." He urged all parties to take collective actions to reverse the "horrific and shameful statistics" afflicting native populations today (Ibid. p. 6853, 6854).

Five Aboriginal representatives were then invited to respond. Phil Fontaine (National Chief of the First Nations) stepped forward first, praising the apology as "the achievement of the impossible" (Ibid, p. 6854). He honored the "brave survivors" who had come forward with their stories and addressed his final remarks "to all Canadians today in this spirit of reconciliation" (Ibid., p. 6854, 6855). Chief Patrick Brazeau (National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples) followed Fontaine. Brazeau spoke to the "survivors" in the gallery and said: "Not only is it a historic day, but it is a positive step forward in the history of this great country of ours. [...] Surely in a country that the entire world knows because of its great opportunities and hope, surely that belongs to those from whom it was taken so long ago" (Ibid., p. 6855).

Then started speaking Mary Simon (President of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami). Her opening sentences were expressed in native tongue, because, she explained, "...I wanted to illustrate to you that our language and culture are still strong" (Ibid., 2008, p. 6855. Then she spoke of Aboriginal peoples' efforts to rebuild strong and healthy families and communities and affirmed that values and rights such as dignity and respect should be "mirrored in our relationships with governments and other Canadians" (Ibid., p. 6856).

Clem Chartier (President of the Métis National Council) and Beverley Jacobs (President of the Native Women's Association of Canada) both spoke briefly and expressed gratitude. The first said that he believed the apology statements and also pleaded to parliament to include his people, the Métis, in the school settlement. Jacobs highlighted the suffering of women – they have "taken the brunt of it all" – and ended asking what this government was going to do in the future to help her people. "What is going to be provided?" (Ibid, p. 6857). After Chartier had finished, the official parliamentary proceedings were brought to an end.

5.3 Dramaturgy

5.3.1 The casting

Harper had of course spoken many times in the House of Commons, but he delivered his apology to an unusually crowded House. He was surrounded by not only some 300 politicians, but also many unfamiliar attendees who had never before set foot in the House. The public galleries were packed with citizens of native descent. Some wore traditional attire and carried spiritually or culturally significant objects, such as drums and feathers. In front of the prime minister sat ten Aboriginal guests, invited especially for the occasion.

Picture 1: The House of Commons, in Ottawa, Canada.
View from a public gallery (June 11, 2008) (Flickr, 2008a).

This had not been Harper's original intention. The PM initially wanted to speak alone, but the opposition party had put pressure on him to share the stage. Two weeks before, its leader had requested in an open letter that each party leader in the Commons be permitted to deliver a statement (Fitzpatrick, 2008). Harper relented, and in the week prior to the apology, it was announced that the leaders in the House would have the opportunity to respond. The public was now promised "a sincere apology to be offered on behalf of all parties" (Duffy, 2008).

In addition to the House leadership, some of the five leaders of major Aboriginal organizations who had been invited to witness the apology, including Fontaine, also wished to play an active role (Curry, 2008,).[115] They asked to see the PM's statement prior to the event so that they could shape a response (O'Neill, 2008 a&b, June 10). Several politicians joined them in asking the PM to allow them to speak. A Liberal MP raised the topic in parliament. "Surely, this House owes survivors the courtesy of listening to them in return, right here, immediately, on the official Hansard[116]," she had said (CBC News, 2008, June 10).

Harper refused on grounds of precedent and tradition, urging the Liberals to get behind the apology and stop playing politics. The Indian Affairs minister added that the MP should keep this a solemn occasion and give it the gravitas it deserves (O'Neill, 2008b, June 10). The Aboriginal leaders would be able to respond in a separate reception room afterwards (Curry, 2008, June 10). However, the lobby continued and on June 11 the prime minister changed his mind (Martin, 2008, June 12). One hour before the parliamentary session the Aboriginal representatives were told that they would be permitted to speak on the floor (O'Neill & Dalrymple, 2008).

These were not the only attendees that surrounded the prime minister, ready to hear his apology. The Office of the PM had further arranged for a large number of special guests to witness the apology. Six formers students of residential schools had been invited to sit in the chamber. Among them were Crystal Merasty (age 17) and Margarite Wabano (age 104), the youngest and oldest members of the victim group, respectively, and Willie Blackwater, a former victim of sexual abuse at a residential school who had given public testimony of his suffering (Curry, 2008, June 11).[117]

In addition to these survivors, about 100 individuals of Aboriginal descent – most of them board members of school survivor groups – had been flown in at the expense of the federal government.

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[115] The five invitees from the victim community included the aforementioned performers who made a statement on the floor.

[116] Hansard is the name of the official parliamentary record.

[117] Merasty and Wanaboo were the youngest and oldest applicants for compensation provided through the Residential School Settlement.

Another 50 special guests, some of them church leaders, had been invited as well (CBC News, June 10, 2008).[118] Finally, there had been an open invitation to the public, extended through channels such as government departments' websites. Because space in the public galleries was limited, seats were available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The invitation policy had caused some turmoil. School survivors complained about the lack of financial assistance to help them come to parliament. After several Aboriginal community organizations stated that they had received many requests for travel assistance, an official of the National Residential School Survivors Society stated that if the government was "sincere" about the apology, it should bring as many people out as possible (Curry, 2008). The Indian Affairs Minister, however, replied that the government would not pay for thousands of students to travel to Ottawa (McIlroy & Curry, 2008).

5.3.2 The staging

The House of Commons had not been Harper's first choice during the preparations for the event. He had preferred another room at Parliament Hill. A senior official noted,"[the] PM will not likely want to sit through opposition leader speeches or five [national Aboriginal] leaders and other speeches" (Curry, 2009).[119] Yet again, the PM changed course: his office had announced that the apology would be delivered in the House. Thus the PM ended up standing behind a lectern in the middle of the House, surrounded by members of his cabinet and members of parliament.

Right in front of him the Aboriginal guests were seated. They sat on chairs arranged in a half circle. National Chief Phil Fontaine wore full Ojibway regalia and headdress, and another representative held a large grayish feather in her hands. In the public galleries, attendees carried drums, feathers, and other small relics. And if the PM would look up, he would see the members of the opposition parties right across the chamber.

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[118] Counselors of Health Canada were at Parliament Hill for support (Curry, 2008, June 10).

[119] This information was found in documents disclosed by the Ministry of Indian Affairs one year later (Curry, 2009).

For members of the public and the press who were unable to get a gallery seat, the government aired the event on large screens in two additional rooms at Parliament Hill: the Reserve's council chambers with seats for about 100 spectators and a large ballroom seating roughly 200 (Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008). Archival photos of residential school students were on display in the back of the large ballroom (Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008). The Reading Room at Parliament Hill had also been reserved for a smudging ceremony led by native elders, who arrived with herbs bundled in smudge sticks to be burned and feathers for the occasion. On the lawn outside parliament, a large TV screen was set up, and many Aboriginal attendees gathered there, dressed in traditional clothing (Curry & Galloway, 2008) and carrying drums and feathers, as well as food and drinks.

Picture 2: Scene at the lawn at Parliament Hill,
Ottawa, Canada (June 11, 2008). (Instablog, 2008)

Finally, local organizations such as tribes' councils, the Indian Residential Schools Survivors Society, and the First Nations Summit, held community events at approximately 40 sites across Canada to view the apology.[120] To cite a few examples: Inuit peoples in Ottawa held a gathering and a feast; close to 1,000

[120] Public viewings included 8 in **British Columbia (**Nanaimo near Campbell River, Inter-Tribal Health Authority; Lantzville, Nanoose & Tsow Tun Le Lum Healing Society; Vancouver, Aboriginal Friendship Center Society; Cranbrook, Prestige Inn; North Vancouver, Chief Joe Mathias Centre, the First Nations Summit; Victoria, Friendship Centre; Kamloops, Coast Canadian Inn; Prince George, suite of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council;

people attended a viewing in Vancouver (British Columbia) at the Chief Joe Mathias Centre (Rolfsen, 2008); 300 more gathered in the gymnasium of the White Buffalo Youth Lodge in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (Warick, 2008). In these locations and many others, Aboriginal citizens came together, bringing ceremonial drums, feathers, pipes, and sage.

Picture 3: Viewing in the Chief Joe Matthias Centre
in North Vancouver B.C., Canada (June 11, 2008). (Tam, 2008)

Terrace, North West College), 6 in **Alberta** (Enoch, Marriot River Cree Resort; Ft. McMurray, Athabasca Tribal Council supported by Health Canada Partner Events; High level, North Peace Tribal Council supported by HCPE; Edmonton, Boyle Street Community Services supported by HCPE; Calgary, Friendship Center in partnership with Aspen; various locations, Live-Feed to Alberta First Nations Health Centers, organized by HCPE), 2 in **Saskatchewan** (Fort Qu'Appelle, Treaty Four Governance Centre; Saskatoon, Friendship Park, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations), 2 in **Manitoba** (Winnipeg, Radisson Hotel, the Manitoba Chiefs; Thompson, MKIO Boardroom), 4 in **Ontario** (Algoma, amphitheater at Algoma University, in partnership with the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association and the National Residential School Survivors' Society; location unknown, Chippewas of Sarnia; Thunderbay, Cromarty High school, the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation; Ottawa, at 301 Savard Avenue, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Tungasuvvingat Inuit), 2 in **Quebec (Nemaska,** Grand Council Band Office of the Crees; Shubenacidie, Indian Residential School & Indian Brook First Nation Community Hall), 1 in the **Yukon** (White Horse, Council of Yukon First Nations), 2 in the **Northwest Territories** (Yellowknife, Tree of Peace Friendship Center; Fort Providence, Residential School Society), and 1 in **Nunavut** (Canadian Legion Cadet Hall/ the Iqaluit) (Indian Schools Resolution Canada, 2008).

5.3.3 The scripting

In the months prior to the apology, Aboriginal leaders had complained about the lack of consultation about the event. In the spring of 2008, National Chief Fontaine had expressed concerns that an insufficient apology could spark unrest in the Aboriginal communities. Complaining that the draft of the text was drafted without consultation with the AFN, he had stated:"If this is the case, not only does the federal government risk having the apology refuted by survivors and First Nations peoples, we also believe the Federal Government would be in breach of the Political Agreement between the AFN and the Government of Canada executed on May 30, 2005". (Curry, 2008, February 11).

Quelling some of the unrest, Harper had met Aboriginal leaders. And a week before the apology was set to take place, the Indian Affairs Minister released more details of the planned proceedings. He announced that the PM would make a speech in the House of Commons and that the choice of location entailed a formal procedure: a motion had to be accepted to allow guests other than members of the House on the floor (Curry, 2008, June 11). It was arranged for a Conservative MP to ask the House for consent for the motion (Parliament of Canada, 2008, p. 6849).[121] In addition, the Assembly of First Nations Ministry announced that it would host festivities around the event, including a reception on the eve of the apology with speeches, dancing, and singing, and a sunrise ceremony on the morning of June 11, which would include prayers and the burning of a sacred fire (AFN Media Advisory, 2008).[122]

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[121] This motion would require the House to resolve into a special committee that consisted of the entire parliament (after the PM's statement). Such a committee operated according different rules and governing proceedings. The Speaker would be asked to preside over the committee. This had to be especially requested; normally the Speaker would leave this chair and exit the House (Parliament of Canada, 2012).

[122] The Assembly of First Nations organized three events in Ottawa that were included in the official program of events that were handed out by government. The first was a reception on June 10 in the ballroom of the Westin Hotel in Ottawa. The second was a sunrise ceremony at Victoria Island in the Ottawa River, followed by a hot breakfast. Essential artifacts here were items such as a totem, and items for the sacred fire, such as tobacco.

The availability of seating space in the House also became topic of debate. A week prior to the event, it remained unclear how exactly additional spectators would be accommodated. In the opposition leader's open letter criticizing the administration's planning of the event, he noted that the public galleries could not house the number of attendees that wanted to attend and suggested that a TV screen be set up outside (Fitzpatrick, 2008). When asked about the issue, the Minister of Indian Affairs stated, "We have no idea of how many people are coming. And neither does the Assembly of First Nations. So we're doing our best" (Curry, 2008, June 6). Admitting that emotions would run high, he added on another occasion: ""I think it will be an emotional moment for many people. Some people are going to hear for the first time the depth of what went on" (Smith, 2008, June 10)

5.3.4 The acting

On the day of the apology, all the concerns raised by victim communities and political figures appeared to have faded away. In the early hours of the morning, members of the First Nations lit a fire at Victoria Island in the Ottawa River near Parliament Hill, that would burn the entire day. In preparation for the apology, Fontaine took part in a ritual to receive his special headdress, and spiritual leaders burned herbs near parliament buildings to dispel negative thoughts.

In the early afternoon, the official program began. Prime Minister Harper met with the native leaders in an office on Parliament Hill. They brought gifts, and the PM posed for photos holding the objects, such a small, engraved bust. Together, they walked to the floor of the House of Commons and were joined on the way by the six former school students (Campion-Smith, 2008). In parliament, the MPs moved the motion to allow the guests with unanimous consent, and, at approximately 3 pm, the guests walked onto the floor, receiving a standing ovation from the MPs and the visitors in the galleries. As one reporter noted, "... Harper had yet to utter a single word [...] when the cheering began. Native drumming and shouts turned into loud, simultaneous clapping" (Curry & Galloway, 2008).

Picture 4: PM Harper and guests walk to the floor
of the House of Commons, Ottawa, Canada (June 11, 2008). (Flickr, 2008)

As the politicians made their statements, more applause followed, especially during the speech of Jack Layton, leader of the New Democratic Party, who had lobbied for the apology. The Speaker then called upon each Aboriginal leader. They each stood up, expressed their gratitude, and received applause during and after their replies. National Chief Fontaine's performance generated some of the most intense ovations (Bailey, 2008, June 12).

The scene was exceptional, in the sense that parliamentary decorum usually strictly regulates the behavior and appearance of visitors in the public gallery. Decorum requires visitors to refrain from any activity that could interrupt the proceedings (Parliament of Canada, 2012). However, on this occasion, visitors applauded, cheered, clasped each other's hands, cried, and bowed their heads throughout the performance (Bailey, 2008, June 12; Curry & Galloway, 2008). One member of the gallery held a solitary eagle feather aloft throughout the entire parliamentary session. When Fontaine rose to his feet, someine cheered, "Way to go Phil! You are our leader!" (Diebel, 2008; O'Neill & Dalrymple, 2008).

Meanwhile, in the large ballroom, 200 seated spectators watched the happening in the House of Commons by live broadcast. They had been welcomed by Aboriginal artist and singer Winston Wuttunee. The spectators clapped enthusiastically for Fontaine and Wabano when they entered the chamber (Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008). Most fell silent through the speeches; some wept. Outside the

building there was a more celebrative atmosphere on Parliament Hill. ["It was] almost festive early in the afternoon, like a big family picnic," wrote a reporter. "Old friends and family members reunited, pinched babies' cheeks and shared cold drinks and ice cream. Music played in the background in the form of traditional drumming and chanting" (Diebel, 2008). A hush fell over the crowd as the broadcast began, and many spectators responded emotionally to the words being spoken on the House floor.

"As Harper read the apology, some in the audience cried and embraced their friends," wrote one reporter. "Others took pictures of the giant television screens with their cellphone cameras. Still others sat silent and stoic. Everyone appeared to be listening intently to Harper's words" (Zabjek, 2008). One woman, smiling while wiping away tears, turned to a friend when she saw Chief Phil Fontaine enter the chamber, saying, "I think this is the first time a First Nations [person] has been on the floor of the House" (Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008).

At other sites across the country, many gatherings appear to have been solemn. Press reporters noted that crowds were silent, and people wept and held hands during the apology (Youds, 2008). When the guests were invited to respond, however, the mood changed dramatically. When the Speaker called upon the Aboriginal leaders, a reporter observed that the people of the Squamish Nation who had gathered in a longhouse in North Vancouver "erupted with drumming, songs, and speeches celebrating the survival of Aboriginal culture" (Fournier, 2008, June 12).

In Ottawa and beyond, both before and after Harper's apology, many more Aboriginal ceremonies and celebrations took place. The Inuit peoples, comprising the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami and Tungasuvvingat Inuit, organized two events in Ottawa, holding a solemn gathering in Ottawa the night before the apology for victims to prepare through prayers, and a reception right after the apology with "a feast of caribou, seal meat, Arctic char and beluga" (Smith, 2008, June 10).

Far to the north in Iqaluit, in the Territory of Nunavut, an elder said prayers and lighted the qulliq (a traditional stone oil lamp) before the start of the viewing (Windeyer, 2008). In Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, people gathered outside the lodge where they had viewed the apology and released yellow balloons in honor of survivors and in memory of those who died in the schools (Cuthand, 2008). In Vancouver, British Columbia, the members of the Squamish people assembled in the Chief Joe

Mathias Centre sang three traditional songs (Lindsay, 2008). And in Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan, the crowd braved pelting rain to plant a tree and release balloons (Strojek, 2008).

Many local leaders also made speeches around the apology. Before the broadcast, a Grand Chief of the First Nations Summit in Vancouver spoke briefly before asking former residential school students in the room to stand up and be acknowledged. After the broadcast the Squamish Nation Chief addressed the crowd in his native tongue. He explained that not many of his peers had grown up with this language and that he wanted to recognize this (Lindsay, 2008).

As the celebrations reverberated across the nation, back in Ottawa the Speaker adjourned the House, and Harper, the Indian Affairs minister, and the special guests marched to the beating of drums through a flag-lined hallway and into the Reading Room (Smith, 2008, June 12). First Nation Elders greeted them there and performed a smudging ritual to cleanse those present of negative energy (Smith, 2008, June 12). Harper, the minister, Fontaine, and others took part.[123] "[A] smoldering dish was brought before the prime minister and an elder swished the smoke toward him with a feather. Harper then fanned the smoke over his head, his face and his chest, as if washing with water, and finally rested his hand on his heart" (O'Neill & Dalrymple, 2008, June 11). The government representatives also offered tobacco and tea to the elders.

The official events in the nation's capital closed with the PM and the Indian Affairs minister signing the statement of apology and presenting a copy to his guests in a golden frame before posing for photos. As the sun sank in the sky, crowds at Parliament Hill and other sites dispersed, and members of the First Nations put out the sacred fire that had burned all day on Victoria Island. The day that countless survivors and broken families had long awaited was over.[124]

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[123] Governor General Michaëlle Jean was present as well.

[124] A National Forgiveness Summit of the first peoples was held from June 11-13 in Ottawa in 2010. At the summit, the leaders gave their formal response to the official apology made in 2008. (A charter was signed.)

5.4 Multi-actor environment

5.4.1 Victims' interpretations

The apology generated strong reactions among the addressees across the country. (See appendix 10 for details.) These included not just the former attendees of the residential schools, but entire Aboriginal communities, including the younger generations who never attended the schools. In North Vancouver, a Squamish elder told the crowd: "They tried to eliminate us, assimilate us, but we're still here and we have to continue to strengthen our children" (Fournier, 2008, June 12).

During the apology, the majority of attendees had expressed appreciation for all performers with clapping, cheering, and drumming. National Chief Fontaine, for example, spoke through shouts and drumbeats that more than one reporter described as “jubilant” (Diebel, 2008; Fournier, 2008). The spectators at remote viewings, in their turn, had cheered and applauded when their own representatives appeared onscreen.[125] As one reporter wrote, “When the ceremony began, the audience clapped enthusiastically as Assembly of First Nations Chief Phil Fontaine stepped onto the floor of the chamber.

The applause died down, but was revived when the oldest living survivor, Margarite Wabano, 104, joined Chief Fontaine and other First Nations, Métis and Inuit leaders on the floor” (Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008). Perhaps even more than the appearance of any one person, some were moved by the collective presence of all the Aboriginal people in the House. "[W]hat really made my day," said one member of the victim group, "was [...] seeing all those brown faces up there. It was a good day for Canada" (Gillies, 2008).

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[125] Seven out of the total of 73 victims cited in newspaper articles brought up this topic. Nine press reporters at remote locators mentioned that the spectators had signaled their approval as well.

Picture 5: Aboriginal guests on the floor of the
House of Commons, Ottawa, Canada (June 11, 2008). (Life.com, 2008)

After the performance, the press reported many more positive responses.[126] Many victims expressed how meaningful the apology was to them personally.[127] "It's done now," said one former student. " I was really full of pain, painful memories, for those who cannot be here. I know in my heart I accept it" (Caranci, 2008, June 12). Others extended the significance of the apology to their wider communities. One addressee stated that it was vital "that we don't continue to be victims" (Caranci, 2008, June 13), and another said that the elders had been waiting a long time for this to happen (Curry & Galloway, 2008).

Others valued the apology in terms of its effects on the relationship with the offender group. Many spoke implicitly or explicitly about reconciliation. One member of the victim group stated, "It gave me hope that it's a start and that we all seem to be united" (The Leader-Post, 2008). A small group of victims situated the apology's meaning solely in terms of the non-native majority: they found the

[126] 73 members of the victim group were cited in domestic press. Most of those cited had been present at remote viewings. See the appendices for details.

[127] 25 interpreters out of 73 victims cited made comments to this effect.

apology to be important because it taught these Canadians about their past.[128] As one victim noted, "I believe that mainstream Canadians don't have a clue. It excites me to know that it's finally out there for everybody to know" (Zabjek, 2008).

However, some addressees found the apology to be long overdue and argued that the harm done had been so overwhelming that the gesture did not suffice to ease the pain, even though many of them appreciated the apology. Others questioned the sincerity of the gesture. (Seven interpreters quoted in the press took the apology to be sincere, but six believed it lacked genuineness.) One group of victims – members of the Nisga'a Nation – tied the sincerity of the apology to future government policies, stating that these would ultimately reveal whether the gesture was genuine or not: "The Nisga'a Nation will consider the sincerity of the Prime Minister's apology on the basis of the policies and actions of the government in the days and years to come," read their press release. "Only history will determine the degree of its sincerity" (Canada Newswire, 2008, June 12).

Other victims reflected on the need for the federal government to improve the social and economic position of Aboriginal peoples.[129] To make the apology meaningful, they argued, the government needed to revise policies and provide substantial and sustainable funding to native communities (Morrow, 2008; Aulakh, 2008). Some even expressed the fear that now that the apology had been delivered, the government would refrain from taking policy action.[130]

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[128] 4 out of 73 victims cited did so. Harper had mentioned this as well. "A cornerstone of the Settlement Agreement is the Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This Commission presents a unique opportunity to educate all Canadians on the Indian Residential Schools system" (Parliament of Canada, 2008, p. 6850).

[129] This subject was brought up 16 times.

[130] 3 out of 73 victims cited mentioned this.

5.5 Meanings of the apology

Having studied the apology and the responses from the victim community, we can determine what meanings the act conveyed. Based on the research, four dominant meanings can be distinguished. The apology can be seen as (1) an affirmation of survival, (2) a coming together, (3) a cultural and spiritual celebration, (4) a teachable moment and (5) the end of a long battle for recognition.

5.5.1 An affirmation of survival

The apology affirmed the survival of Canadian Aboriginals. Consecutive governments had long treated them as inferior citizens, allowing thousands to suffer and die in the residential schools.[131] Their policies had shredded the fabric of family life in native communities, leaving pain and damage that would afflict many generations to come. Many Aboriginals took the apology as an opportunity to let the world know of their will to live on: they joyfully demonstrated that they were still very much alive.

Using public speech, they made clear that they formed an indispensable part of the country. “For the generations that will follow us, we bear witness today in this House that our survival as First Nations peoples in this land is affirmed forever,” said National Chief Fontaine in parliament (Parliament of Canada, 2008, p. 6855).

In the victims' responses, the will to continue in the face of adversity was subtly reflected in the use of the word "survivor” – a term that many favored over “victim.”[132] This term calls into mind people who strive to overcome past trauma, and pays tribute to their continued existence. In contrast, the term "victims" can be interpreted negatively; it can refer to those prone to passivity and desolation because of their suffering.

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[131] The exact numbers remain unknown.

[132] This word was used by 8 of the 73 victims cited in the press. The apologizer, as well as other political leaders and third parties used this word as well.

In terms of dramaturgy, the survival of Aboriginals was manifest in their tangible presence at the scene. Their colorful attire stood out among the dark outfits of other attendees, and attracted much attention. They did not behave timidly, but made their presence known through drumming and clapping that defied ordinary parliamentary decorum. When Margarite Wabano, the oldest former residential school student at 104 years shuffled into the House of Commons, spectators in the public galleries and at remote viewings cheered. The old, wrinkled woman served as a striking symbol of their survival against all odds.

5.5.2 A coming together

The apology was also a public manifestation of shared morality. As for speech, the apologizer spoke of the past wrongdoing and the need to recommit to values that were once transgressed. He mentioned "respect," and politicians spoke of trust, faith, equality and mutual respect (Parliament of Canada, p. 6851, 6852, 6853). Just as important, the victims referenced values that all could coalesce around. Fontaine spoke of truth and respect, and other native representatives spoke of the need to move forward together guided by these values.

Both parties also explicitly named the principles underlying the harm. PM Harper spoke of “assimilation”; NDP leader Jack Layton called it “racism,” drawing applause from spectators; and Fontaine spoke of “white supremacy” (Ibid., p. 6850, 6854, 6855).

In terms of dramaturgy, the staging and scripting allowed for both apologizer and victims to make moral claims. The participation of the latter in the official forum – a place of historical and political significance – turned the act into an exchange between moral peers on equal footing. The dramaturgy allowed for the equality that is crucial for moral interlocutorship and hence, for the public apology to exist as moral act. It provided room for all parties to explicate the norms and values at stake. This way, the apology became meaningful as a concrete manifestation of common moral discourse.

5.5.3 A cultural and spiritual celebration

The apology was also meaningful as a celebration of Aboriginal cultures and languages. Through the residential school system, the Canadian government and the churches had sought to eliminate these. The apology in 2008 was an outburst of pride and a joyful celebration of having survived what a victim had called “cultural genocide” (Ward, 2008). The addressees eagerly demonstrated that their cultures, languages, and spirituality were still thriving.

Some spoke (partly) in native tongues in parliament. The drumming and the single eagle feather raised high in the gallery, the participation of the prime minister and other government officials in the traditional smudging ceremony, the abundance of Aboriginal objects at the scene, and the vision of Phil Fontaine in Ojibway regalia and headdress all served to celebrate the indomitable spirit, languages and cultures of Aboriginal peoples. The celebration went on not just in parliament, but also at other sites near and far. There was the singing and dancing at the lawn at Parliament Hill and the sunrise ceremony at Victoria Island, but also many rituals at viewings across the country.

These manifestations gave the apology a spiritual dimension. “[T]he somber House was dominated by drums,” a broadcaster recounted, “…used to fully alert our spirits to the occasion. Aboriginal people explain the sound is symbolic of a heartbeat for their people – the beating heart of nationhood, the beating heart of the Creator, a mother's heartbeat. The sound has several interpretations, but it is always a tone calling out to the spirit and its sound was repetitive all through yesterday's ceremony” (Dueck, 2008).

5.5.4 A teachable moment

The apology was also significant as an opportunity to acquaint Canadians with a part of their country's history. Many non-native citizens had remained ignorant of the past wrongdoing. This lack of education can be understood in light of a self-image of Canada as a multicultural society guided by principles such as non-violence and tolerance and benevolence towards minorities, including new immigrants and Aboriginal people. In this projection, Aboriginal peoples served “as the colorful

recipients of benevolence" (Mackey, 2002, p. 2). In 2008 when the apology was offered, this image was still very much alive.[133]

Through speech, the government acknowledged past practices in detail.[134] This was expected to generate emotional responses, as many Canadians were unaware of what had transpired. The apology educated not only non-Aboriginal people about what had happened, but young members of Aboriginal communities as well, many of whom were oblivious to the experiences of members of their communities, including their own parents and grandparents. Former students often did not speak openly about the suffering they endured in their childhood.
Although the scripting of the apology event offered room for the survivors present to speak about these experiences, Harper and others also pointed to another forum to bear witness. In 2009 the government's Truth and Reconciliation Commission would begin organizing public hearings across the country in which victims could testify about the abuses in the schools. The commission's official goal was to educate Canadians about the school system and its impacts, and to create a comprehensive historical record of the residential schools and their legacy (Truth and Reconciliation Committee, 2012).

Many Aboriginal addressees appreciated the government's "truth telling" in multiple ways. At a personal level, they saw it as the recognition of the harm done to the victims that was beneficial to their healing. At a community level, it was interpreted as an acknowledgment of the external causes of the current socio-economic problems in their communities. Finally, at the national level, many viewed the act as a valuable history lesson to the uninformed. In this way, the apology signaled the end of "national denial" (Kakfwi, 2008).

5.5.5 The end of a long battle

The apology was a moment of importance in an lengthy legal process, in which counselors had sought

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[133] A survey demonstrated that Canadians cherished their demographic diversity, tolerance, and compassion (Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, 2010).

[134] The act of apology itself, however, does fit into this self-image.

material and moral recognition for the suffering of the victims. This process had started in the 1990s, when former attendees of the schools had started civil lawsuits against the federal government to demand compensation for their injuries and the loss of their culture. A few years later, their counselors decided to start a comprehensive class action suit to settle all claims.

Their initiative led to negotiations for an out-of-court deal, which resulted in the settlement of 2006. It included initiatives in a range of policy areas, including health, education, and social services, and also consisted of payments of damages to individual victims. The settlement was reached under auspice of the federal government that, during the negotiations, was led by the Liberal party, the political competitor of the Conservative party of Prime Minister Harper. With this comprehensive agreement in place, space opened up for an official apology: this gesture would not make the federal government liable for financial claims of the victims, as these would be settled.

Yet, the apology did not signal the end of *all* legal battles. The performance already foreshadowed some of the legal commotion that was looming ahead. One of the victims took the opportunity to stand up for those of mixed Caucasian and Aboriginal descent who had been excluded from the agreement. "We want in," he said on the floor of the House of Commons. His community was not the only one. Soon after the apology, more class action suits against government over residential schools would commence.

5.6 Interpretive challenges

Let ‘s take a step back to discuss the interpretive challenges that emerged during this case study.[135] The table below presents an overview of the issues that came up.

Table 12. Overview of interpretive challenges (Canada Case)

Domain	**Observation**	**Interpretive challenge**
(1) Speech	A performer made an appeal to social actors to step into the shoes of fellow-villagers and imagine the wrong	How to accommodate such appeal in the analytic framework?
(2) Dramaturgy	Dramaturgy reinforced the meanings expressed through speech	None
(3) Multi-actor environment	Two social actors interpreted the apology in various capacities: one reacted as victim and as Canadian citizen, and another reacted as victim and as Christian	How to deal with interpretations of social actors who speak in plural capacities?

(1) Speech

The first challenge came up during the speech analysis: Canadian performers reflected on the harm from various perspectives. One of the politicians asked listeners to imagine a small village without any children playing in the woods. A victims' representative introduced the perspective of the parents and siblings of the children, who had felt powerless to protect them. And a third performer highlighted the suffering of the mothers in particular.

Our framework of analysis was not set up to deal with such differentiated perspectives in mind. Underlying the framework was the implicit assumption that apology statements would depict the wrong from the standpoint of either the apologizer or (more likely) the direct victims—not of social actors in other capacities, such as "bystanders" (the fellow villagers and siblings). It also was not

[135] I will briefly identify the challenges at the end of each case chapter and I will address these at greater length in the conclusions to this thesis.

explicitly designed to take account of active appeals to members of publics. These alternative perspectives raised the question of how to accommodate such appeals in the analytic framework. For now, I propose simply to be attentive for similar phenomena in the rest of the case studies.

(2) Performance

As for dramaturgy, this case raised no noteworthy interpretative challenges. The dramaturgy consistently strengthened the meanings that were conveyed through speech. In the official statement, the apologizer affirmed the value of the victims' cultures, heritages, and languages, and dramaturgical elements of the performance indeed paid homage to the history and culture of the victims. Offering space for members of the victim community to express their cultural identity in parliament made the apologizer's words of respect manifest. Partaking in a smudging ceremony, the apologizer committed himself to the authority of the Aboriginal elders who led the ceremony, demonstrating the moral action that he asked others to take.

The dramaturgy further affirmed the status of the victims as moral peers. They were able to do their share of the moral work in the official forum. Making various moral claims themselves, they vociferously contributed to public moral discourse.[136] In this way, the apology served as demonstration of the (re)commitment of both apologizer and victim to honor shared values and norms. The apologizer did not merely call on the Canadian majority to treat the members of the Aboriginal minority as moral equals, worthy of inclusion, but *actually included* them for everyone to see.

(3) Multi-actor environment

The second challenge that came up has to do with the multifaceted views that some of the meaning makers expressed. One and the same interpreter approved of the apology both as a person of Aboriginal ethnicity to whom the apology was addressed, *and* as a Canadian citizen who longed to live in a society that upholds the values and norms under discussion. Another spoke as both a member of the Aboriginal community and as a Christian. In the first capacity she demonstrated some reluctance to

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[136] The suggestion to somehow engage the victims on stage has been made before by Meredith Gibbs and Janna Thompson (Gibney et al, 2008), but it did not receive much theoretical consideration thus far.

embrace the apology, but as a Christian, she claimed, she had to forgive. (Ironically, this religion had been forced upon her while she attended a residential school.)

Once more, the framework of analysis was not set up to accommodate such comments. The assumption was that each social agent would interpret the apology in a singular capacity. As in the case of multiple perspectives presented in the speech act, the framework does not preclude plural perspectives in the ensuing act of meaning making, but, once again, we must be watchful for this phenomenon. It is probably not limited to this case.

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Chapter 6. The Belgian apology

Dramaturgy & third parties' interpretations

6.1 Background

6.1.1 The wrongdoing

On a warm day at the end of the summer of 2012, Belgian Prime Minister Emilio di Rupo offered apologies for the collaboration of government institutions with the Nazi command during the Second World War. Many administrative and legal bodies had assisted the German occupier with the identification, persecution, and extermination of Jews living in Belgium. "As Prime Minister of the Belgian government," he stated, "I offer the apologies of Belgium to the Jewish community, although the behavior of the time is inexcusable" (Centre Communautaire Laïc Juif de Belgique [CCLJB], 2012).

When Belgium surrendered to the Nazis in 1940, its government went into self-imposed exile, transferring its powers to the secretaries general, the highest ranking civil servants in the federal ministries.[137] During the occupation, the country's political, administrative, and judicial institutions continued to function, but now fell under Nazi military command (Brachfeld, 2007; Roekens, 2011). Officially, they were to help administer the country and uphold the constitution. In practice, this arrangement proved to be an illusion. The Nazis made "maximum use of the existing administrative machinery" (Steinberg & Kotek 2011, p. 91). They bypassed Belgian authorities and implemented their decrees without regard for Belgian legislation (Roekens, 2011, p. 61).[138]

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[137] These officials stayed in place to keep Nazis from meddling into Belgian administrative and legal affairs to a minimum. They were also supposed to prevent a repetition of the atrocities that had taken place during World War I, which were very much a part of the collective memory at the time (Roekens, 2011, p. 59).

[138] Nazi leadership signed an ordinance in July 1941 that forced Belgian authorities to obey the Nazi command even when its decrees contradicted Belgian laws.

A few months into the occupation, the Nazis started to issue a series of anti-Jewish measures. The Belgian secretaries general allowed national ministries and local administrations to assist in implementing these (Fraser, 2003, p. 253). In 1940 the municipalities began registering Jewish people in a newly established separate registry. A year later, they stamped Jewish identity cards with the letter "J" or the words "Jood-Juif", and sent lists to the headquarters of the Nazi security police in Brussels. Between 1940 and 1942, front-line agencies, such as the police, helped the Nazis identify Jews by, for example, making lists of Jewish businesses. And in 1942, Belgian municipal authorities enforced the decree that Jewish people must wear the yellow Star of David badge (Saerens, 2007).

Some municipalities were more helpful than others and especially the city of Antwerp gained particular notoriety for its collaboration. Historians explain Antwerp's collaboration as a result of longstanding anti-Semitic sentiments in the city (Michman, 1998, p. 208). In 1940, municipal leadership deployed 40 additional clerks to quickly execute the special registration of Jewish inhabitants (Saerens, 2007, p. 200). In 1942, when the yellow Star of David badges were to be handed out, the city's civil servants not only fulfilled the task, but also marked the identity cards of the victims with a special stamp on their own initiative (Roekens, 2011, p. 95).

In June of 1942, the central command in Berlin ordered the expulsion of Jews from Belgium to death camps. The administrative measures that Belgian agencies had executed over the previous two years expedited the process. The Nazis now started rounding up thousands of victims and, once more, Antwerp's agencies were helpful. During an infamous mass raid at the central railway station in July, local police guided Jewish deportees to the station. (Later that year, the city police also helped the Nazis during mass arrests.)

Those deported in 1942 – over 16,000 persons – consisted mostly of Jewish refugees of foreign descent (Michiels & Van den Wijngaert, 2012, p. 74). The reason for this is twofold. First, 90 to 95 percent of the 70,000 Jewish people in the country were illegal immigrants fleeing anti-Semitic attacks in their homelands in Germany, Austria, and Eastern Europe (Roekens, 2011, p. 23). (Most of them resided in Antwerp [35,000] and Brussels [25,000].) Second, Queen Elizabeth of Belgium and the archbishop of Mechelen (in French: Malines) had successfully appealed to the Nazi command not to target Jewish people with Belgian nationality (Brachfeld, 2007, p. 43).

In the fall of 1943, however, the Nazi central command in Berlin changed course and decided to deport Belgian Jews as well. In early September, the Nazis organized a mass arrest to try to capture all of them simultaneously. This time, however, Belgian institutions did not assist. After the mass raids in 1942, the Nazis had decided to exclude them: the anxieties of Belgian officials about the raids appear to have informed this decision (Roekens, 2011, p. 11).[139] The arrests of the few remaining Jewish inhabitants of the country would be undertaken by the Nazi security police without local support.[140]

6.1.2 Fate of the arrestees

The fate of the arrestees is well known. When the first deportations took place, Jewish men were summoned to report to labor camps. Many ended up in camp Breendonk, located close to the town of Mechelen. They were incarcerated together with non-Jews whom the Nazis considered "political prisoners," such as communists and members of the resistance. Under the command of an infamous commander who regularly set his dog loose on the prisoners, 450 people were shot to death, 14 were hanged, and hundreds died as a result of beatings, deprivation, and torture (Yad Vashem, date unknown). The first Jewish victim in Breendonk, whose name became known after the war, was Julius Nathan, a 64-year-old male who suffered from asthma. He could not work fast enough and was beaten to death in 1941.

Later, Jewish victims were taken to the Dossin Barracks in Mechelen: that was a transit camp, operated by the SS in cooperation with some members of the Flemish SS.[141] The barracks were adjacent to a railway that ran into Germany. A total of 25,484 Jews and 352 Roma and Sinti would pass through this site (Kazerne Dossin, 2014).

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[139] In the fall of this year, there was also a public outcry when tens of thousands of Belgian males were deported as forced laborers to Germany. The native population was apparently concerned about the fate of the men.

[140] In the years that followed, the Nazi commanders in charge of Belgium had difficulty meeting Berlin's quota. Post-raid deportations consisted mainly of Jewish individuals who had been given away by collaborators, or who had been transferred from prisons and incarceration centers, resulting in fewer transports to Auschwitz.

[141] SS is the abbreviation of the German word "Schutzstaffel," the specialist, competent corps of the Nazi apparatus, which was deeply involved in the extermination of Jewish people in Europe.

After arrival at the Dossin Barracks, the victims were registered, classified, and issued a piece of cardboard with a string to wear around their neck which listed personal information. SS officers searched luggage, confiscated valuables and personal identification papers, and forced victims to sign a declaration transferring all other possessions to the Nazi authorities. The victims stayed in the camp for about two weeks, awaiting their deportation to the concentration camps (Roekens, 2011, p. 102). During their stay they were subjected to the harsh regime of the SS, enduring physical punishments, sexual assaults, and humiliation (Kazerne Dossin, 2014).

The captives at the barracks were all sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau.[142] There, they were taken from the train wagons and forced to leave their belongings behind. Most women, children, and elderly were sent directly to the gas chambers, where they were slowly suffocated. Men who appeared to be healthy and strong enough to work were sent to another camp, where they would struggle to survive under gruesome conditions. Many would die from exhaustion and starvation. In 1944, when the Nazis retreated from Belgium, Jewish presence in the country was almost nonexistent. Only 1,206 Jewish survivors and 15 Roma and Sinti would return.

6.1.3 Post-war silence

After the war, the Belgian public showed little interest in the fate of the Jewish people who had lived among them.143 The Jewish survivors, in poor mental and physical health and without possessions or prospects for employment, were incapable of advocating for their cause. Some chose to stay quiet in an attempt to reintegrate into society; some felt they lacked public support to bear witness; and others were simply too traumatized to speak of their experience. Only one organization emerged: the Committee for the Defense of Jews (in French: Comité de Défense des Juifs) was established to help Jewish children who had survived the war.

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[142] Some smaller convoys would go to Bergen-Belsen and Vittel (France) (Cegesoma, 2013).

[143] Soon public interest turned towards the future role of the monarchy (the so-called "Royal Question"), when Walloon separatist forces, opposed to a unified state of Flemish and Walloon territories, rejected King Leopold III because of his alleged associations with Nazi Germany.

With 27,000 political prisoners and other war deportees returning home, the voices of the few Jewish survivors willing to speak up got lost in the crowd. Instead, much of the public's attention was directed towards Belgian prisoners and resistance fighters, who were held in high public regard. They succeeded in obtaining an official status from the government that entitled them to a disability allowance as compensation for lost income incurred due to either physical or psychological complaints. Jewish victims were excluded from the arrangement (Lagrou, 2000, p. 54-58; Schram 2008, p. 8).

Competing accounts of what happened during the war from Walloon (French-speaking) and Flemish (Dutch-speaking) citizens further drowned out the question of what had happened to Belgium's Jews. Walloons pointed to the Francophone dominance in the resistance and to the cooperation of the Flemish with the Nazis. Flemish citizens, in turn, pointed to the oppression of their people by Belgian authorities in the period before the war as motivation to assist the Nazis. Both sides created distinct myths: in Walloon "everybody" had been in the resistance and in Flanders the Nazi collaborators had only acted "out of love for their people" (Stauber, 2010, p. 96). These forces, argues philosopher Antoon van den Braembussche, "have frequently prevented or postponed a much-needed national debate on Belgium's historical responsibilities, and even on its traumatic experiences" (2002, p. 38). As a result, facts about the persecution and extermination of Jewish people remained largely unknown (The Guardian, 2003).

6.1.4 Lead-up

From the 1980s on, scholarly and public interest in the experiences of Belgium's Jews picked up. Academic studies disclosed facts about atrocities committed in Belgian territory, including bits and pieces of information about the involvement of government authorities (Michman, 1998; Saerens, 2007; Rozenblum, 2010; Van Doorslaer, 2004).[144] At the same time, an increasing number of Jewish

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[144] The first rigorous study about the deportation of Jews was published in the eighties by historian Maxime Steinberg (1983, 1984 & 1986). This study had not been funded, but taken up privately (Michman, 1998, p. 22). Steinberg's books included many facts that had been unheard of, such as the numbers of deportees, the ways in

survivors began to speak publicly about their experiences. The Jewish community had not only grown in size, but also organized itself into a powerful advocacy group. These developments made it harder to turn a blind eye towards the past.

Yet, racism and anti-Semitism were mounting. There was an increase of anti-foreign statements of various organizations, including Flemish right-wing parties and of anti-Israeli collectives. Amongst other pleas for rigorous policy options, the first promoted the deportation of criminal foreigners who otherwise would be imprisoned on Belgian soil, and the resettlement of residents of non-Belgian descent in municipalities, if their number exceeded 15 percent of the total population (De Winter, 2011).

Street attacks were increasing, including several dramatic instances, such as an attack on Jewish children in Antwerp and the murder of a man of French-Algerian descent in Brussels. Social scientists have linked the phenomena to various factors: an economic downturn (the decline of industry and a rise in unemployment); social developments (an influx of Islamic immigrants from Mediterranean countries); the rise in separatist tensions between the Flemish and Walloons (due to an unpopular new government arrangement); and a general increase in racism within society (Merckx & Fekete, 1991).

In response to these troubling trends, the government changed public policies. Consecutive governments adopted legislation to combat racism and anti-Semitism. For example, in 1981, the incitement of discrimination, segregation, hatred, or violence against a person or group on account of race, color, descent, origin, or nationality was criminalized (Brems, 2006, p. 703). From the 1990s onward government started paying attention to the Holocaust, "motivated by the battle against extreme-right," concludes historian Lieve Saerens (2012). In 1995, for example, a negationism act was introduced that recognized Holocaust denial as a specific, punishable form of hate (Federal Public Service, 2012, p. 9).

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which the deportations had been organized and the role of Jewish resistance. His study *L'Etoile et le fusil* had major impact, but solely in Walloon (Saerens, 2012, p. 200).

Federal and local governments also started to acknowledge wartime atrocities.[145] The first funded research into the fate of Jewish assets that had been plundered, surrendered, or abandoned during the war.[146] Memorials were built to commemorate the victims. The city of Antwerp placed a memorial plaque in the city that acknowledged the involvement of the municipality.[147] And the Jewish Museum of Deportation and Resistance, once established by the Jewish community, underwent a major renovation from 2001 onwards, aided by government funding.

The Jewish cause was further aided in 1999 when Guy Verhofstadt became prime minister for 11 years, who ran on a political platform that promoted human rights. He made a remorseful speech in 2002 in which admitted that, "[t]here were too many who sank into the abyss of collaboration, including the administration" (Embassy of Belgium in Tel Aviv, date unknown). Three years later during a visit to Israel, he said that he wanted to repeat his statement of 2002, which he now labelled as "apologies" (Archive Verhofstadt, 2005). However, both statements were not seen as official apologies, but considered to be “a more private initiative" (Saerens, 2012).

In 2004, the federal senate commissioned an investigation into the country’s administrative and legal institutions during the war. It was entrusted to the Center for Historical Research and Documentation on War and Contemporary Society (Cegesoma). After three years of study, it presented its report *Docile Belgium: Government and the Persecution of Jews in Belgium during the Second World War* (Van Doorslaer, Debruyne, Seberechts, Wouters, 2007). It concluded that, despite local dissimilarities, “[the] Belgian state adopted a docile and cooperative attitude in some very diverse, but crucial domains, providing collaboration with a policy that was disastrous for the Jewish population [and] unworthy of a democracy” (Roekens, 2011, p. 158).

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[145] The information in this paragraph is by no means complete.

[146] Its final report was presented in 2001 and led to a restitution agreement in 2002 in which banks, insurance companies, and the Belgian federal state were involved.

[147] In total over 40 such remembrance sites can be found throughout the country in 2012 (Federal Public Service, 2012, p. 22).

Although this report was the first comprehensive study of Belgian authorities' collaboration with Nazi Germany, it did not ignite a political debate. No official response was offered on behalf of the federal Senate or any other administrative body. This can be understood against the backdrop of the political turmoil in those days: after the general elections in 2007 it took over 500 days to form a federal government, and after that four consecutive cabinets failed to establish a stable rule. The turmoil settled down not before December 2011, when Francophone socialist leader Emilio di Rupo (who ran on an anti-poverty platform) succeeded in forming a new government that was expected to last.

From that moment on calls for an official response to the report rose to the surface. These increased in strength in 2012 after the mayor of Brussels offered apologies for the municipality's involved in the persecution of Jewish inhabitants during the war, thereby referencing the Cegesoma report. Finally, in September of the same year, it was announced that it would be Di Rupo’s turn to take a stance.

6.2 Speech

6.2.1 The statements

On Sunday, September 9, 2012, standing outside of the Dossin Barracks in Mechelen, Prime Minister Emilio Di Rupo offered an apology “on behalf of Belgium” to the Jewish community. He opened by saying that 70 years ago, “one of the darkest pages” in the history of Belgium had been written: more than 25,000 Jews and Roma and Sinti, seeking refuge in the country to escape pogroms and Nazi persecution, had been deported to Auschwitz (CCLJB, 2012). This had been made possible by Belgian citizens and authorities who had adopted “a docile attitude” (Ibid.).[148] The authorities had been accomplices in “the most abominable” and “inexcusable” crime (Ibid.). “Seventy years later, we do not have the right to turn over this page without recognizing this important historic truth” (Ibid.).[149] He urged the federal Senate, that had commissioned the Cegesoma investigation, to debate its final report and pass a resolution, since this had not yet been done.

Di Rupo wished to explicitly remove any “ambiguity” that remained regarding the Belgian authorities’ complicity in the extermination of the Jews (Ibid.). “The collaboration of some governing bodies and civil servants from 1940 to 1945 is a reality that has been proven by various studies” (Ibid.). He also sought to reaffirm the government's involvement in commemorating the past, since it held “important lessons” for the future. Without knowledge of the past, people can reproduce past mistakes.

The PM also pledged to combat extremism by promoting a decent standard of living and by taking action in am array of policy domains, including housing and education "We know that the more a person's dignity is acknowledged, the more he is capable of tolerance and respect for others. We must not only transmit values and memory. We also must protect our social model and build devices that people need" (Ibid.).

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[148] Di Rupo quoted the Cegesoma report.

[149] He spoke in both Dutch and French.

Turning attention to recent forms of extremism, he singled out “unacceptable” anti-Semitic attacks. Expressing values and remembering the past formed an important counterweight to contemporary racism, he stated. “At a time of globalization and widespread cross-cultural relationships, promoting respect, tolerance, and diversity is more important than ever” (Ibid.).

He also praised some of the special guests: these were ordinary citizens who had stood up against racism. “These people are worthy of the torch that has been passed on to them. They are up to the new challenges of civilization” (Ibid.) The PM ended his statement with a plea for solidarity within society and mentioned that everyone had the right to live freely. “Thank you for your attention, and I wish the Jewish community a joyful celebration of Rosh Hashanah” (Ibid.).[150] (See appendix 11 for details.)

Four speakers had taken the stage ahead of the prime minister. Bart Somers, the mayor of the town of Mechelen, Mayor of the town of Mechelen, where the Jewish victims had been held awaiting transportation to Auschwitz, had spoken of the Dossin Barracks as "the vestibule of their hell" (Somers, 2012). He had argied that society had "a duty to commemorate": not just to acknowledge the past, but also to make a statement of “humanism and solidarity” for the present and future (Ibid.).

Judith Kronfeld, the director of the Central Committee of Jewish Organizations in Belgium, had spoken next. "It took just a few weeks, and thousands were arrested, caught and beaten, and rounded up in the Dossin Barracks and deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau," she had said (Het Journaal, 2012). Chail Almberg, a former Jewish deportee, then had given a personal account of what happened “because it is important.” “If I do not tell, no one will ever know,” he had stated (Het Journaal, 2012). Last to speak was a female student from the Jewish Beth Aviv school in Brussels.[151]

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[150] This is the Jewish celebration of the new year. Rosh Hashanah in 2012 began at sundown at September 16th, a week after the apology.

[151] Despite several attempts her speech has not been retrieved.

6.3 Dramaturgy

6.3.1 The casting

Prime Minister Di Rupo was not the only notable public figure at the event. He was surrounded by many dignitaries, including Crown Prince Filip, son of King Albert II. Also present were church officials, politicians, and other public figures, including Flemish PM Kris Peeters; Minister of Foreign Affairs and leader of the Reformist Movement political party Didier Reynders; Minister of Justice Annemie Turtelboom; Prime Minister of the Brussels capital region Charles Picqué; President of the Belgian Senate Sabine de Bethune; Antwerp Governor Cathy Berckx (Smets, 2012).

Picture 6. Canopy and stage at the Dossin Barracks, Mechelen, Belgium (September 9, 2012). (Instituut der Veteranen, 2012)

There were also a number of specially invited guests, including representatives of the Jewish community, at least one former member of the resistance, and over two dozen schoolchildren from the Beth Aviv school in Brussels (Nieuws Mechelen, 2012). The event was also open to the public at large.

6.3.2 The staging

When Di Rupo apologized, he stood in front of the entrance of the Dossin Barracks, facing a square and a newly constructed Holocaust memorial. For decades following the war, until 1973, the Belgian army had used the Dossin barracks to accommodate soldiers on active duty (including the father of the author of this thesis). After a period of vacancy, parts of the building were made fit for residential purposes and part of it was rented by the municipal archives. In the 1990s, the Jewish community bought one corner of the facility, and these chambers became home to the Jewish Museum of Deportation and Resistance.

Unable to accommodate the increasing number of visitors, in 2001 the Flemish government, the province of Antwerp, and the town of Mechelen had taken the initiative to create a more ambitious site dedicated to the Holocaust and human rights. It was to be equal in stature to landmarks like the Jewish Museum in Berlin and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., in terms of both its contents and its architectural design (Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs, 2012). The entire barracks were turned into a museum, and a new Holocaust memorial and square were built. White stones were used for the construction. The color was meant to suggest hope and, in recognition of the fate of those sent from the barracks to Auschwitz, the ashes that resulted from the burning of human bodies (Somers, 2012).

Picture 7. Holocaust memorial and square near the Dossin Barracks, Mechelen, Belgium. (KUL, 2012)

At the day of the apology, the square would hold a central stage for the performers, right next to the entrance of the museum. On the stage stood a glass lectern and it was covered by a large white umbrella. There were approximately 1,000 plastic chairs with red seats placed on the square for the public. Special guests, including the Jewish representatives and Holocaust survivors were to be seated closest to the stage, conveying their standing as honorary guests. There was also a canopy set up with folding chairs to shield dignitaries from the sun as they viewed the proceedings.

Picture 8. Central stage in front of the Dossin Barracks,
Mechelen, Belgium (September, 2012). (Het Journaal, 2012)

On the day of the apology, glimpses of color stood out against the white stone of the memorial in the usually somber square. Representatives of Jewish associations held flags on staffs, and many wore medals, dangling from colorful ribbons, pinned to their outfits. Six tall torches, made of dark steel, had been placed on the square close to the stage. Floral arrangements waited to be placed near the wall of the barracks, including a large round garland of white flowers from the royal family, a smaller garland with pink and white flowers from the federal government, and more than a dozen other wreaths and bouquets to be offered by other representatives.

6.3.3. The scripting

The crown prince was set to arrive at 11:00 am to join government officials for a tour of the memorial. This would mark the opening of the building: his father, the king would open the museum on a later date. The public event was to follow. It would start with the lighting of six torches to commemorate the horrors that happened at the site. Mayor Bart Somers of Mechelen would speak first, followed by the placing of garlands. After that Judith Kronfeld, Chail Almberg, the school student and Di Rupo would take the stage. The official program would end with songs from the students from Beth Aviv (Editors Joods Actueel, 2012b).

6.3.4 The acting

When the prince arrived in the late morning, press reporters, officials and spectators surrounded him right away. Mayor Somers served as the official host and greeted the prince with the words, “Welcome to Mechelen” (Het Journaal, 2012). Together with chief museum curator Herman van Goethem, Governor of Antwerp Cathy Berkx, and Flemish PM Kris Peeters, and Somers, Prince Filip walked towards the entrance of the memorial (Chotteau, 2012). The mayor spoke and gesticulated animatedly. They entered the building, followed by over a dozen other official guests, where Van Goethem provided a guided tour. At the tour’s end, the visitors signed a guest book.

While the officials were inside, a crowd began to gather outside. As the noonday sun shone overhead, elderly visitors, including former deportees who had survived the Holocaust, some over eighty years old, some wheelchair-bound, filled the first rows of seats. Members of the public seated themselves in the folding chairs, or found standing room in the shade. The temperature rose steadily to 27 degrees Celsius (81 degrees Fahrenheit), which is quite extraordinary in Belgium (Take-a-Trip, date unknown). To protect themselves from the sun and keep cool many wore hats or scarves, or waved fans or pieces of paper across their faces. A Jewish man handed out yellow Stars of David, resembling those worn during the Nazi occupation, and many Jewish attendees attached these to their outfits (Het Journaal, 2012).

The officials came out of the memorial and settled themselves under the canopy that had been set up for them. While the crowd waited for the official program to begin, Chail Almberg, the former deportee scheduled to speak about his experiences, shuffled towards the dignitaries in an unscripted move. He handed a small piece of paper to the prince.

Picture 9. Holocaust survivor Chail Almberg and Crown Prince Filip,
Mechelen, Belgium (September 9, 2012). (RTBF, 2012)

A short blow of the shofar — the ram's horn used during specific Jewish religious services — signaled the beginning of the program outside. Three well-known Jewish citizens who had recently passed away were commemorated first, followed by a moment of silence in memory of the Roma and Sinti who had been deported from Mechelen to Auschwitz.[152] Mayor Somers made his opening remarks, and Prince Filip, PM Di Rupo, the federal vice prime minister and several other officials stepped forward in turn to light the torches, each accompanied by a citizen. Some citizens were Holocaust survivors, and some were non-Jewish citizens whom Di Rupo explained had "helped build a free society based on solidarity," and were thus "worthy of the torch that has been passed onto them" (CCLJB, 2012). During the torch lightening spectators stood up and remained quiet and respectful (Smets, 2012).

[152] The three were: David Susskind, Georges Schnek and Natan Ramet. The latter had taken the initiative in the 1990s to set up the aforementioned Jewish museum in part of the Dossin Barracks.

Picture 10. Crown Prince Filip and Holocaust survivor,
Mechelen, Belgium (September 9, 2012). (European Jewish Press, 2012)

The prince and the prime minister then each stepped forward in turn to place garlands near the entrance of the museum. Both officials followed this gesture by taking a few steps backward and standing still for a moment to pay their respects (Chotteau, 2012). After that, many other officials offered flowers with similar motions. When all had taken their seats again, speeches resumed, including Di Rupo's apology. Spectators were, again, supportive: quiet at moments where solemnity was appropriate and appreciative when applauding the performers (Smets, 2012). "The PM received a remarkably long and warm applause," a TV reporter noted (Het Journaal, 2012). Upon leaving the stage, Di Rupo shook the hand of Kronfeld, who stood close by.

In closing, twenty or so students from the Beth Aviv school sang in front of the stage, directly facing the dignitaries, all of whom stood to listen. The children performed a partisan song and the Belgian and Israeli national anthems. As the crowd dispersed, some officials and members of the public remained at the site, entering the buildings to explore or take refuge from the sun. Others left the scene right away: Di Rupo, for example, signed autographs for a few eager youngsters, and then departed.

6.4 Multi-actor environment

6.4.1 Third parties' interpretations

The apology did not generate many reactions across the country.[153] (See appendix 12 for details.) Considering the lead up of the event this does not come as a surprise. Di Rupo's move had been preceded by statements from former PM Verhofstadt, as well as by full apologies by the mayors of Antwerp (2005) and Brussels (2012). Especially the latter had already engendered public debates.

In Brussels, a debate had sprung up about the mayor's choice of words. Although he had referenced the report of 2007, he had also said that many questions remained that should be answered by historians who were better able to interpret past developments. "It is not for me to judge," was his conclusion (Editors Joods Actueel, 2012a). Some critics took issue with that. Additionally, an early version of an invitation for the event, signed by the mayor, had wrongly stated that, "Brussels citizens [had been] deported by Belgian authorities appointed by the Nazis." The text was changed after several Jewish organizations argued forcefully that this depiction of past events was inaccurate (Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 2012).[154]

The Antwerp apology had also generated controversy. A well-known leader of a right-wing party, called the New Flemish Alliance, had stated that the mayor's apology was uncalled for, and that it was an attempt to cause damage to right-wing political forces.[155] "Antwerp did not organize the deportation of Jews," he stated. "[The city] was a victim of the Nazi occupation. Antwerp's officials had to make decisions. In my view, attacking them does not seem very courageous" (The Economist Blog, 2007). His comments generated furious reactions, including from important potential allies, which may have

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[153] I have expanded the search for social actors by adding additional sources. More details can be found in appendices to this chapter.

[154] Jewish inhabitants of this city had been deported by Nazi agencies; Belgian authorities had not been directly appointed by the Nazis to carry out the deportation.

[155] The politician, Bart de Wever, specifically mentioned separatist party "Vlaams Belang" (Flemish Interest).

informed his decision to swiftly apologize to Jewish leaders and claim that his words had been taken out of context (Schnek, 2008, p. 405).[156] Thus, when Di Rupo apologized in 2012, much had already been said during these previous debates.

Another reason for the muted response may lie in the scattered nature of political life in Belgium. The focal point of politics is regional and local. This is reflected in its diffuse institutional arrangement, consisting of multiple institutions with powers of their own, and which answer mostly to local constituencies. The federation is perceived as a weak political body, with governments coming and going. It lost much of its standing during the aforementioned political crisis of 2007-2011, when Belgium went without a federal government for 541 days. For these reasons, the reach of the federal prime minister's authority is easy to overestimate, and his actions do not necessarily spark heated national debate.

Six of the eleven third parties that *did* assign meanings to the apology in the public debate mentioned the former apologies of either the local mayors, or PM Verhofstadt, or both. Van Goethem, curator of the Dossin Barracks Museum, described Di Rupo's apology as an act of closure. Both the apologies by the mayors of Antwerp and Brussels had been disputed, he noted, and these debates "have been closed worthily by the statement of Prime Minister Di Rupo about the Belgian authorities as such" (2012). Two researchers from Cegesoma fired an opening short and called for the Belgian Senate to finally react to the publication of its report *Docile Belgium*. Gratified that the PM had referred to the publication, they now urged the Senate to discuss it. They also pleaded for further investigation into gaps of knowledge about the past, including the rescue activities of Jewish victims of Nazi oppression by members of the Belgian resistance (Centre Communitaire Laïc Juif David Susskind, 2012).

Another commentator criticized the apology and the exclusive focus on Jewish victims at the site. The Memorial had been constructed with the help of Jewish communities. Because of their advocacy, the critic argued, the Memorial ignored the ongoing human rights issues surrounding the oppression of Palestinians by Israelis, and focused solely on Jewish victims. Another clairvoyant added that the

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[156] This particular politician, Bart de Wever, would become Mayor of Antwerp in 2013.

special treatment exclusively concerned Jewish victims of wrongdoing, while at the same time contemporary federal policy failed to address other pressing human rights issues, such as the acknowledgement of the Armenian genocide in Turkey (Ibid.).

Little was heard from the victims. On stage Jewish representatives had spoken of the need to remain vigilant and defy anti-Semitism and expressed appreciation for the apology. Besides that, a handful of Jewish addressees made known their opinions to TV-reporters covering the event and in some brief posts online on websites of Jewish organizations. "Elio di Rupo has used very strong words," wrote the chair of a body that coordinated Jewish organizations in Belgium. "Apologies never come too late" and "[the] Jewish community ... feels extremely relieved" (Ibid.). Once more he urged the Senate to discuss the report. This, and other calls for a debate would be answered: the senate would do so in January 2013.

6.5 Meanings of the apology

Having described the Belgian apology and some of the public responses to it, we can examine what meanings the act conveyed. Based on the research I propose to see the apology as (1) a moral message, (2) a history lesson, (2) a political and policy statement, and (4) an act of rehabilitation.

6.5.1 A moral message

The apology served as a declaration of values, such as tolerance and respect, for Belgian citizens to coalesce around. Pivotal to this reading of the act were both the transgressions of these values during the Second World War, as well as contemporary transgressions in Belgian society, including physical and verbal attacks against immigrants and Jews. Racism and anti-Semitism had increased in recent years despite initiatives to counter the trend, such as the introduction of special legislation (The Gatestone Institute, 2013).[157]

Central to the apology were the special honorees: the approximately 15,000 Belgian citizens who had fought the Nazis in the resistance, as well as courageous citizens who had shown courage and stood for tolerance in the face of contemporary forms of extremism. So the act directed special attention to those who stood and stand up against wrongdoings. This way, the resistance against the Nazis during the war was linked with defiance of racism and anti-Semitism in present day society. The apology paid tribute to heroes of the past and the present.

As for dramaturgy, all honorees were put in the spotlight. The scripting and acting included the lighting of torches by pairs of individuals, each consisting of an official and a Jewish victim or an honoree. As for speech, the statements on stage were larded with values and acknowledgements of their transgressions. On top of that, the apologizer made explicit appeals to those listening to act upon these values by standing firm in the face of intolerance. This way, the performance transmitted the moral message: never again.

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[157] For example, registered complaints of anti-Semitist attacks had been on the rise since 2009.

6.5.2 A history lesson

The apology was also a history lesson for Belgian citizens, either actively engaged in forms of (anti-)extremism or not. All had to learn about what happened. Avoiding the divisive narrative that had evolved after the war about Walloons' courage and Flemish' collaboration the apologizer spoke of the ties between the country's government authorities and the Nazi's, thereby aiding the discrimination, persecution and deportation of Jews. Their involvement and the horrific nature of the Nazi practices were not to be disputed again.

As for dramaturgy, the staging of the apology reflected the apology's educational objective. The performance took place at the front steps of the newly erected "Dossin Barracks – Memorial, Museum & Documentation Centre on Holocaust and Human Rights". Dedicated to informing visitors about past en present-day extremist wrongdoings this centre pays foremost attention to the Belgian Holocaust, but also aims to educate its visitors about current human right violations. Its goal is not only to remember past atrocities committed at the site, but also "[to search] for timeless mechanisms of group pressure and collective violence that can result under certain conditions in mass murder and genocide" (Dossin Barracks, date unknown).

As for speech, the apologizer aimed to remove any remaining ambiguities on the subject: "The collaboration of some governing bodies and civil servants from 1940 to 1945 is a reality that has been proven by various studies" (CCLJB, 2012). Solemnly speaking, the victims spoke of the situation during the war and the circumstances in the Dossin Barracks where the deportees awaiting the death camps. This way, the apology disclosed a dark chapter in Belgian's national narrative and encouraged citizens to learn from what transpired, not to make the same mistakes again.

6.5.3 A political and policy statement

The apology was not just a teachable moment to learn about and from the past. It was also a lesson in how to understand the phenomenon of contemporary extremism as well as a promotion of the socialist policies of the prime minister. As for the latter, Di Rupo had ran on a socialist platform,

pledging to combat poverty. Once his formal authority as head of the federal executive branch had been established, he had acted upon his pledge initiating a range of policies in housing, social services and other areas.[158]

This agenda was at the heart of the apology. The socialist leader promised to continue his government's policies in a range of areas to "protect our social model" and "build devices that people need" (Ibid.). Poverty, he argued, deprives individuals of their dignity and diminishes their capacity to respect the dignity of others. The recent recession had led to poverty and prompted a "search for scapegoats" (CCLJB, 2012). Hence, the devices that his government build would, presumably, bring dignity and thereby tolerance to the lives of the deprived.

The object lesson of the left-wing leader also included a lecture about the need to defy right-wing political pressure. Stating that the deportation of Jews had to remain an exception, the PM made a statement against the policy agenda of right-wing Flemish parties. At the time of the apology these parties called for thorough policy actions to remove or harshly punish criminal individuals of non-Belgian descent, and to restrict liberties of immigrants to settle on Belgian soil. Although the statement was primarily conveyed through speech, the site of the apology also enforced the lesson that was taught about the current need to oppose right-wing political influence. The museum's mission mentioned strands of thought that stubbornly remained in Flemish political discourse.

6.5.4 Acknowledgement of the victims

The apology was a rehabilitation of the Jewish community at large, and especially stipulated the Jewish deportees from the Dossin Barracks. Their past and present suffering was acknowledged, and for the first, the apologizer took responsibility. The collaboration of government authorities during the occupation, he said, has had "dramatic consequences for the Jewish community" (CCLJB, 2012).

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[158] As soon as he held office, he had made known that his government would strive to lift 380,000 people out of poverty within a decade through a range of policy initiatives in various areas (Nieuwsblad, 2011).

The dramaturgy put this victim group in the spotlight. Many Jewish citizens were present at the scene, wearing kippahs and/or Chassidic clothing. The dozens of students from the Beth Aviv school took up a entire flank of the square. Jewish representatives had brought objects that drew attention to their identity, such as flags with Hebrew texts. The official public happening opened with a blast of a traditional Jewish ram's horn and concluded with songs that included the Israeli anthem. In between, the line-up on stage once more reflected a strong Jewish presence, embodied by three members of the Jewish community.

Yet, the seating arrangement accentuated the disparate standing of apologizers and victims, with representatives of the apologizing party on stage, and the victims on the pavement. Once outside, after their tour in the memorial, the "dignitaries" took their seats in the shade in an open tent. They looked down from a heightened stage onto the other spectators, including the victims. The latter had to cross a distance at the square to make contact with the officials – as Holocaust survivor Chail Almberg did when he shuffled towards the crown prince to give him his note.

The victim group included physically and mentally vulnerable victims who were fully exposed to the exceptionally hot sun. This feature of the staging did not express the purpose of rehabilitating and honoring the victims. Their seating arrangement was humble and inconvenient, whereas the accommodation of the dignitaries, on whose behalf the apology was offered, reflected a sense of (self-)importance. So although the central statement paid tribute to the victims, not all aspects of the event were well-aligned.

6.6 Interpretive challenges

Now that we have made sense of the apology in Mechelen, we can identify the challenges that emerged during the analysis.

Table 13. Overview of interpretive challenges (Belgium case)

Domain	**Observation**	**Interpretive challenge**
(1) Speech	Apologizer made not only a moral avowal, but also a political plea and a policy statement at the same time	How to understand an apology statement that expresses various meanings?
(2) Dramaturgy	The seating arrangement reflected a social hierarchy in which the victims were placed below government and other dignitaries	How to understand the apology when an element of the dramaturgy is misaligned with speech?
(3) Multi-actor environment	One interpreters spoke of the apology in political terms, and another in terms of government policies	How to deal with interpretations that situate the apology in realms of meaning other than the moral realm?

(1) Speech

The first problem came up during the speech analysis. The apologizer spoke not just as the national leader, but also as a politician with strong convictions of his own and as the head of the executive branch of government, with a vital role in designing and executing public policies. From his point of view, a certain standard of living promotes a sense of dignity within individuals, which, in turn, makes them better capable of respecting the dignity of others.[159] In this way, he connected the concepts of moral community and material community (understood as collective whose members enjoy a minimum standard of living).

[159] This sounded familiar for those acquainted with Di Rupo: he had grow up in poverty himself and poverty relief was a focal point of his interests, ever since he had entered the political arena.

The interweavement of moral, political and policy claims in this apology confronts us, researchers, with a problem. How to understand such multidimensional statement? If an apology carries such diverse meanings should we simply allow all of them to co-exist without further evaluation? And more specifically: how to deal with an apology that is infused with politics and policy? Should we see such apology as a morally meaningful act and, at the same time, as a significant political and policy statement, or do the latter erode its moral meaning?

(2) Performance

With regard to dramaturgy, another challenge arose. One element of the staging in Mechelen was misaligned with the words the apologizer uttered. Though he spoke of “shame” and “regret” for “inexcusable” crimes, and emphasized the need to treat Jewish as well as other minorities in society with dignity and respect (CCJB, 2012), the event itself offered the apologizing party and those in the majority community to which he belonged more dignity than it did members of the victim community. The officials enjoyed a decorum of convenient distinction and were comfortably installed, while the group of physically and mentally vulnerable victims sat on the pavement in the hot sun.[160]

This observation leads to another challenge for aspiring interpretative researchers. How to make sense of such a discrepancy? Should we take it seriously as a factor in the apology’s meaning or ignore it? Putting the issue in more general terms: how are we to understand an apology when an element of the dramaturgy is misaligned with speech? In this case, we are confronted with a misalignment that we could dismiss as a minor issue, but what if such misalignments become more pronounced?

(3) Multi-actor environment

Another issue emerged from the broader context of the apology. The apology, part of Belgium’s emotional process of "Vergangenheitbewältigung," was offered in a tense political setting. Interpreted against this backdrop, one social actor criticized the apology as a political statement taking aim at nationalist tendencies, whereas another saw it as an attempt at closure of the ongoing debates about the past.

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[160] The phrasing is borrowed from a book title: Allen, J. B. (1982).

These dissimilar interpretations prompt us to deliberate on the question of how to deal with interpretations that situate the apology in realms of meaning other than the moral realm more urgent. Thus far, we only have established *that* apologies are followed by public controversy in which critical and conflicting interpretations can emerge, and *that* the salient apology theories cannot fully grasp this. We have not yet discussed the consequences of these diverse interpretations for our own interpretative work. Perhaps the next case study can further our insights.

Chapter 7. The UK apology

Performance, victims' and third parties' interpretations & authority

7.1 Background

7.1.1 The wrongdoing

In 2010, in a room in Westminster (London), Prime Minister Gordon Brown stood solemnly before a group of former migrants, who, decades earlier, had been sent from the UK to Commonwealth territories. They had been shipped off as children, often without the consent of their parents, supposedly to have a better life. In reality, the children had been placed in institutions. There they had been subjected to what the PM called “cruelty” and “neglect” which had led to "relentless hardship” and “utter devastation” (10 Downing street, 2010). For this, he now offered apologies.

PM Brown, leader of the Labour Party and head of the British government, took responsibility for a policy program that had been in effect from the 1920s to the late 1960s. The program sent impoverished children –most under the age of 14 – to live in Commonwealth territories such as Australia and Canada. It is estimated that over 100,000 children were displaced during this time (Child Migrants Trust, 2012). The policy program, however, did not signal the start of the migration scheme. The practice dated back to 1618, when the first group of about 100 boys and girls was sent to Virginia (part of the American colonies) (Constantine, 2008). In the 18th and 19th century, the migration expanded to other parts of the Empire.

Various motivations underlay the scheme. Prior to the advancement of the British welfare state, child migration was painted as a philanthropic effort to provide positive opportunities for the disadvantaged children of Britain. Sending children abroad was rationalized as a way to provide a better life, as well as teach both domestic and rural skill sets. As child migration continued into the 20th century, a more complex set of motivations evolved. "In addition, imperial sentiments and needs suggested that such

children might be profitably decanted into empire territories," writes historian Stephen Constantine, "where they would secure the population growth of white British settler societies and also boost the labour force of these primary-producing territories" (2008, p. 100, 101).

The transgressions associated with the practice began with the selection and recruitment of children for relocation. Many parents were neither consulted nor notified about the fate of their children. They had placed their children in institutions, such as orphanages, run by religious organizations, which usually offered parents the opportunity to pick up their children once they could afford to do so. Parents returned for their children to learn that they had been sent halfway around the world.

Because of poor recordkeeping, the pleas of many parents trying to reclaim their children were in vain (Select Committee on Health [SCoH], 1998). They could not be retrieved. In other cases, parents had an active role in sending their children abroad (Sherington, 2006, p. 2). However, there is reason to believe that parents were misled with promises that their children would arrive in the "land of milk and honey" or "oranges and sunshine" (Burners, 2009; Child Migrants Trust, 2012). Reality, however, proved different.

Upon arrival in their new country, the boys and girls were put to work on farms and in congregate care institutions. The conditions were often grave. "Located outside the supportive networks which formed among residents, differentiated from them on the basis of accent, and, most importantly, with no regular visitors from outside the home likely to be interested in their fate, child migrants were highly vulnerable to [...] institutionalized abuse," note historians Jon Lawrence and Pat Starkey (2001, p. 116). Child exploitation; forced labor; cruelty; deception; psychological, physical, and sexual abuse, including predatory rape, were more the rule than the exception (Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 2001). To cite just one example, "One former migrant said the Christian Brothers had competed to be the first to rape him 100 times" (Ward, 2008).

7.1.2 Institutional involvement

The migration scheme was executed by philanthropic and religious institutions. Barnardo's and The Fairbridge Society were solely dedicated to child migration, whereas Catholic orders and the Salvation Army served multiple causes (Gill, 1998).[161] Prior to the 1920s, these organizations had initiated, funded, and organized the practice and could more or less act as they deemed appropriate, since there was little or no statutory regulatory power (Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 2001, p. 57).

In 1922, however, regulation was introduced when the UK government became involved.[162] The Empire Settlement Act of that year provided government funding for existing migration programs and authority for the Home Office to act in association with dominion governments and with approved organizations (SCoH, 1998, Appendix 7).[163] Funding for the program was structurally extended until 1937. After that the subsidies had to be renewed by parliament every five years (Constantine, 2002, p. 99-132). Twentyfive years later, in 1948, the UK government's role increased, when the Children Act provided it with regulatory power over the voluntary agencies and local authorities, and broadened its oversight (Younghusband, 1949, p. 65). It widened the powers of local authorities to assume responsibility, but they were also required to set up a Children's Committee, to appoint a Children's Officer, and to develop better services (Constantine, 2008, p. 103).

This act was not just an effort to tighten the leash, but also a response to growing criticism: the mistreatment of child migrants had begun to come into focus, sometimes making newspaper headlines. The articles pointed to "[the] lack of educational provision, the overwork and inadequate pay, the suicides following episodes of ill-treatment, and the appalling evidence of protracted physical

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[161] Approximately 30-50 organizations were involved in the child migration scheme (SCoH, 1998, Appendix 1).

[162] The governments of the countries on the receiving end were involved as well. In Australia, child migration met great enthusiasm. The Australian government passed the Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act in 1946 to encourage child migration and it continued to ask British providers to send children (Grier, 2002, p. 266).

[163] The act guaranteed funding until 1937. After that, the subsidies had to be renewed by parliament every five years (Constantine, 2002, p. 99-132).

and sexual abuse" (SCoH, 1998, section 1). In practice, the legislative framework of 1948 did little to improve protection or care for the children.

In the decades that followed, the British government's involvement in supervising the child migrants abroad has been described as passive. There was little monitoring and poor documentation of the migration. As the systemic abuse continued into the 1950s, the public grew increasingly critical of child migration practices. Organized social workers, for example, denounced the deplorable circumstances the children faced. The public outrage coincided with a growing social and cultural preference for keeping children and parents together. This resulted in a revised policy of "family migration", understood as one or two parents accompanying the children. For a while some of the agencies tried to accommodate families, but this proved financially unsustainable.[164] As a result, the number of child migrants decreased.

In response to public and political pressure and changing socio-cultural views about the wellbeing of children, the UK government launched several inquiries into the fate of child migrants. For example, it sent a fact-finding mission to Australia in 1956. The resulting critical report prompted the government adjust policies: it tightened the rules for the voluntary agencies involved and blacklisted 10 out of the 28 organizations inspected (Sherington & Jeffery, 1998, p. 240). The remaining organizations, facing a greater burden of oversight and red tape, lost enthusiasm and as a result, the era of child migration came to an end in the late 1950s. In 1957, the British Parliament renewed the what was once called "Empire Settlement Act" for the last time, but fewer and fewer child migrants were shipped off in the ensuing years.[165] In 1967 or in 1970 (sources contradict each other) the last cohort arrived in Australia (SCoH, 1998, Appendix 1).

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[164] Organizations, such as The Fairbridge Society, had established an infrastructure for child labor and education, often in rural areas. These new migrants were more interested in urban settlement and held their own views about future life (Sherington & Jeffery, 1998, p. 242-244).

[165] The act was now called Commonwealth Settlement Act and had been adjusted over time to foster emigration. It was decided that "...if [the act] is not replaced, there will cease to be legislative authority for United Kingdom contributions after that date either towards the Australian Assisted Passage Scheme or towards the maintenance of child migrants in Australia and Southern Rhodesia" (Memorandum by the Secretary of State, October 1956).

7.1.3 Lead up

The child migration scheme remained far from the public eye. In the mid-eighties, however, the situation began to change. In 1986 a British social worker named Margaret Humphreys received letters from a woman in Australia who wanted help in discovering her family's whereabouts. Shocked by what she learned, Humphreys took action. She founded the Child Migrants Trust to help reunite families and seek recognition and restitution for the victims.[166] Initially, Humphreys yielded little success and her work came at great personal cost. A reporter described one episode in her campaign:

> Alone in a hotel room, in the early 90s, she haemorrhaged and woke to find the bed soaked with blood – but initially refused to go to hospital because she had work to do. One year, unable to cope with the disjuncture between her own family's normality and the migrants' unhappiness, she nearly cancelled Christmas; it went ahead for her own children, but she spent much of it in tears. She couldn't bear to be touched, or let her children go to carol services, because she couldn't separate the church, any church, from all the ill she had seen. She lost weight, and didn't sleep, and was eventually diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder; she had to be professionally debriefed (Edemariam, 2010).

In the nineties, however, the public's interest in the fate of the child migrants gradually increased, thanks to several TV and radio programs in the UK and Australia. One example was a documentary called *Lost Children of the Empire*, aired in 1989. The TV network advertised the number for a help line for victims, and thousands of calls were received (SCoH, 1998, Appendix 2).[167] Another example was a mini-series about child migration, entitled *The Leaving of Liverpool*, that was broadcasted in 1992. Over 10,000 calls came in to help lines during and after its run (Ibid).

The public's ongoing, yet intermittent, interest in the issue meant that UK political leadership could not remain entirely passive.[168] At the end of the 1990s, the parliamentary Select Committee on Health (SCoH) set to work. This House of Commons committee made an eight-month inquiry, creating several

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[166] At present, Humphreys is still working for the cause as head of the Child Migrants Trust.

[167] A book of the same name was also published in that year.

[168] "In 1993 [UK PM] John Major told Parliament that any apology would have to come from the country where the children were sent" (Skynews, 2010).

opportunities for former migrants to tell their stories. It concluded that "[the] Government is under a moral and legal duty to display concern for the welfare of former child migrants…" (SCoH, 1998). The committee recommended that the government establish a central database for the victims to research their records, and apologize.

In response, the government committed some funds to be distributed over a three-year period in order to help people relocate their family and travel. It also pledged to help set up the recommended database to help trace family origins (Coorey, 1998).[169] An apology, however, was not forthcoming. Stating that other voluntary organizations had forcibly migrated the children, it only offered "sincere regrets" and "sympathetic recognition" (SCoH, 1998; Coorey, 1998).

Over the course of the following decades, the pressure on the government to revise policies and make a more meaningful gesture mounted, because various institutions involved in the migration scheme made public statements of contrition. In 1996, the Sisters of Mercy placed advertisements in Irish Sunday newspapers expressing "deep regret to those individuals who, at any time or place in our care, were hurt or harshly treated" (Gill, 1997, p. 286).[170] This was followed by a more thorough apology by the congregation in 2004 (Quinn, 2004). In 1998, the Roman Catholic congregation of Christian Brothers, which was linked to extensive reports of abuse, made its apology, begging "the forgiveness of those who suffered" (Gill, 1997, p. 626).

The final push came in 2009 when the Australian government – once an enthusiastic devotee of the migration scheme – announced that it would offer official apologies for its involvement.[171] Calls for the

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[169] Initially the Trust applied to the Department of Health with a proposal that an effective level of service could be provided with a grant of £111,000 to begin in April 1990, followed by a grant of £92,000 in each of the next two years. However, the Trust received only £20,000 in the first year with no further grants for the following two years. Funding resumed again in April 1993, but with annual grants of £30,000 over the next three years. (Charity Commission, 2012; SCoH, 1998, Section 1).

[170] The apology was also meant for those who suffered from abuses while placed in institutions on Irish soil.

[171] Prior to this gesture three Australian Senate investigations in 2001, 2004 and 2009 had been made into the conditions in state institutions that took in British children. All three had called for the Australian government to

UK prime minister to do the same inevitably followed. “Gordon Brown should hang his head in shame,” said Harold Haig, the secretary of the International Child Migrants Association in Australia. “He is allowing the country that we were deported to apologise before the country where we were born” (BBC, 2009). The former chairman of the House of Commons Health committee, Kevin Barron, also lobbied the PM for a government apology.

The day before the Australian PM would take the stage, on November 15, 2009, it was announced that UK’s apology to the child migrants was in the making. The same Barron disclosed that Brown had written him over the weekend and said that an apology would be offered in the next year. He was reported saying, “The reason why this is happening now is that Australia itself has decided to recognize […] what it did to some of its Indigenous population and to child migrants” (ABC News, 2009; Murphy 2010, February 23). The PM, however, refrained from making such causal relationship. He had written to Barron: "The time is now right" (OriginsCanada.org, 2010).

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apologize (Hui, 2010). They were: *Lost Innocents - Righting the Record* (2001), *Forgotten Australians: A Report on Australians who experienced institutional or out-of-home care as children* (2004), and *Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Revisited* (2009) (Macklin, 2009).

7.2 Speech

7.2.1 The statements

In the afternoon of February 24, Prime Minister Gordon Brown delivered two apologies. He made the first on the floor of the House of Commons during question time. "Until the late 1960s," he said in a statement, "successive UK Governments had, over a long period of time, supported child migration schemes" (UK Parliament, 2010, column 301). "In too many cases," the PM continued, "vulnerable children suffered unrelenting hardship, and their families left behind were devastated" (Ibid.). He then apologized: "We are sorry that they were allowed to be sent away at the time they were most vulnerable. We are sorry that instead of caring for them, this country turned its back…" (Ibid.).

At the close of his speech, members of Parliament had the opportunity to comment. First, David Cameron, leader of the opposition party, made a statement of support. "We on the Conservative Benches join the Prime Minister in sending our good wishes to those affected" (UK Parliament, 2010, column 301-304). Nick Clegg, leader of the Liberal-Democrats, spoke next, adding "[his] own voice and that of [his] party to the Prime Minister's apology" (Ibid.).

Other MPs followed, all expressing support for the apology. They also took the opportunity to press Brown about the consequences of the statement and about current family policies. The PM refrained from getting into specifics. He left open the question of how long government funding would be guaranteed to the Child Migrant's Trust and did not commit to specific policy actions to address claims about malfunctioning state care institutions and families that reportedly had to emigrate "to escape the [UK] family courts" (Ibid.).

After the parliamentary session, the PM went to a gathering at Westminster, where a group of former child migrants awaited him. There he was introduced to the stage by Andy Burnham, Secretary of State for Health. He welcomed all guests, paying considerate attention to Margaret Humphreys. He acknowledged the pain that the victims had endured - "Those hopeful children stood waiting on the dockside – smiling for those haunting photographs – unaware of what lay before them" (National

Archives, 2010). When he had finished his remark a short film with historical footage of child migrants was shown, and after that Burnham welcomed the prime minister. "And now, ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to introduce your Prime Minister, Gordon Brown" (Ibid.).

In this more intimate setting, Brown first complimented the attendees. "Your presence here today is a demonstration of your endurance against pain, your courage in the face of rejection, your bravery even in the face of betrayal" (10 Downing street, 2010). He also spoke about the horrors visited upon the victims, acknowledging their "terrible human suffering" and "utter devastation" (Ibid). "[No] one can fail to be touched by the terrible human suffering that sprang from the misguided child-migrant schemes and the mistakes that were made by successive United Kingdom governments" (Ibid.).

On a more hopeful note, he made reference to three examples of child migrants who had been reunited with their biological families. He also optimistically spoke of the victims in terms of "heroes" and "survivors". "You show a spirit that is unbowed and unbroken; you are survivors who have built good, decent lives despite the trauma inflicted upon you in these most precious early years" (10 Downing street, 2010).

The PM also turned attention to his own work to bring about the apology. "I [was] determined early on when I became Prime Minister to do everything in my power to recognise this shameful episode for what it was in our history," he said (Ibid). He promised that he would be "leading" the campaign for justice for the victims that until then had been led by Margaret Humphreys, who he praised extensively (Ibid). Framing the apology as an important and momentous day, he said that the "pain is recognised, your suffering is understood, your betrayal is acknowledged by the apology that I make on behalf of our whole country" (Ibid). He closed his remarks with a "welcome" to the survivors: "…I say to our sons and daughters here: welcome home. You are with friends. We will support you all your lives" (Ibid). (See appendix 13 for details.)

Margaret Humphreys and Harold Haig, the secretary of the International Child Migrants Association, made brief responses.[172] Both expressed gratitude and appreciation that the suffering of the child migrants had finally been recognized. Haig, a victim himself called into mind "those who took their own lives because the wounds were too deep and too painful to endure", and to parents who suffered for the loss of their children "not even knowing if their child was alive" (Downing Street, 2010).

He then took time to thank Humphreys, whom he called " the conscience of Britain on this human rights issue" as she worked tirelessly to give back to the victims the right to have a family life. As a result of the apology, he concluded, “people who have heard what happened will never allow anything like this to ever happen again to children in the future" (Ibid). With these words, the series of official statements in London that day came to an end.

[172] Haig's organization was located in Australia and worked closely together with the Child Migrants Trust.

7.3 Dramaturgy

7.3.1 The casting

Upon entering the House of Commons on the day of the apology, PM Brown encountered the familiar faces of members of his own Labour party as well as those of members of the opposition (Conservatives and Liberal Democrats). The MPs sat before him, and the Speaker of the House sat to his left, just as they did for all parliamentary sessions. The only new faces the prime minister anticipated seeing were visitors in the public galleries: the approximately fifty members of the victim group who were expected to hear his statement.

These victims (including relatives) had been flown to London for this occasion at the UK government's expense (Murphy, 2010a, February 24). The majority had come from Australia, representing every Australian state; seven others came from Canada.[173] One of them, called Jason gratefully said, "They paid for Auntie Jackie to come from Australia and for us to travel to London to hear it in person" (Carmichael, 2010). During his second apology, Brown would face the other special guests directly, along with camera operators, press reporters, and some officials.

Picture 11. Group photo of the special guests, London, UK (February 24, 2010).
(Australian National Maritime Museum and National Museums Liverpool 2010)

[173] The rest of the guests came from the UK and New Zealand.

7.3.2 The staging

There would be no extraordinary set up for the event in the House of Commons. Nor was anything special done in the Boothroyd Room in Portcullis House (another parliamentary building) where the guests would meet informally with Brown before continuing together to the Attlee Suite, where the prime minister would make his second apology. In the Attlee Suite, however, few special arrangements had been made. Two white lecterns had been placed in front of rows of chairs where the guests would sit. The shades would be drawn during the performance to enhance the visibility of a slide show of black and white historical photographs of child migrants, that played across a screen behind the lecterns. In one corner of the room sat a table covered with a plain white cloth and adorned with a simple flower arrangement. On this table was a commemorative book to be signed by all attending.

Picture 12. PM Brown's apology in the Attlee Suite,
London, UK (February 24, 2010). (MacDiarmid, 2010)

Directly outside the Attlee Suite an exhibition was set up that was dedicated to child migration. It was produced by the Department of Health in conjunction with the Child Migrants Trust. This exhibit was also open to the public – free of charge – from February 22 to March 5 (UK Parliament, 2010). Displayed against backdrops of enlarged, crimson-tinted photographs of children on their way to foreign lands were suitcases and other objects from the migration, and many historical photographs with explanatory text.

7.3.3 The scripting

Prior to the event, it had been announced in advance that PM Brown would make a statement during question time – a regular debate session in the House of Commons. The exact time was unclear given the dynamics of the debate. This choice of setting entailed several rules. Spectators in the public gallery were not permitted to interrupt the proceedings on the floor. Due to a security incident in 2004, the rules also required that seating in the gallery be ticketed (BBC, 2004). Visitors had to obtain a pass, and members of Parliament had to confirm that they knew the guests (UK Parliament, 2011). (In other words, visitors had to be guests of specific MPs.) Further, decorum required that those speaking and present on the floor ignore the presence of visitors in the gallery. Thus, the setting for the apology required PM Brown to address the Speaker and his fellow MPs, not members of the public.

7.3.4 The acting

On the morning of February 24, the special guests prepared to go to Parliament. Some carried small objects, such as photographs of their childhood. A bus picked them up at their hotel. In Portcullis House at Westminster they were offered sandwiches and coffee and taken for a brief tour of the special exhibition on child migration. They then proceeded to the House of Commons, but were unable to enter the public galleries. All the seats were taken. A reporter noted:

> Former child migrants were today having to witness a historic apology by video link – because MPs took all the spare seats in the Commons public gallery. Victims [...] gathered at Westminster to hear Prime Minister Gordon Brown give a national apology in a statement to Parliament. But despite flying up to 10,600 miles, seats in the Commons were not available. An insider said: "It is the fault of MPs because they have taken up the full allocation of guest tickets for the House of Commons to give to their friends. The Commons authorities insist that there is nowhere else for them to sit (Murphy, 2010b, February 24).

The guests were instead ushered back into the Boothroyd Room. At the time they arrived there, the debate in the House of Commons was in progress, proceeding as usual. At approximately 12:30 pm, the Speaker of the House announced a statement by the prime minister would be forthcoming after a brief recess. He also asked for order and requested that members who were leaving during the break

do so "quickly and quietly" (UK Parliament, 2010). After the break, with many empty seats remaining in the room, the PM began, "With permission, Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement" (UK Parliament, 2010, column 301). He then made the apology, hunching over his notes, speaking slowly and seriously. Members of the chamber seated behind him appeared to listen closely, at times nodding discreetly.

Meanwhile, in the Boothroyd Room, the victims listened intently. After the performance the screen switched off, and the visitors sat for a moment in silence. Gradually small talk sprang up in anticipation of Brown's arrival in the room. As one victim, Pat Skidmore, remembers:

> When [PM Brown] was finished, everyone sat back; for the moment, silence permeated the room. [...] Gordon Brown's next stop was to be at this very room. The tension in the room grew with each passing moment. I could feel the electricity mixing with anticipation. Gordon Brown finally walked into the Boothroyd Room, and the relief was palpable. This part of the day – the Child Migrants' moment for a personal word and handshake from the Prime Minister was the only unorganized event of the day (2010, p. 10).

When the PM entered, he spent a moment shaking hands and conversing with guests who seemed eager to have their moment with him. The entire group was then escorted out of room to the Attlee Suite, where Secretary of Health Andy Burnham welcomed the guests. At the end of his introductory remarks, a brief film clip played on the video screen, which included historical photos of child migrants leaving Britain. Then the prime minister stepped up to the small podium and spoke directly to the seated guests and their families. Again, he took his time and spoke seriously, and he frequently looked to those seated in front of him.

It was a solemn event. Some victims wept and were comforted by those sitting next to them. A man seated in the middle of the room held up a card towards the press cameras; it read, "At last, an apology." All the performers received applause from those present in the room (Ibid., 2010, p. 10). After the statements Brown walked to the table in the corner of the room to sign the guest book. All attending did the same and received a House of Commons commemorative pen set. They then continued to socialize with one another and the PM outside the Attlee Suite where the exhibit was on

display (Child Migrants, 2010). Some of the victims showed Brown the objects they had brought with them: one of them had brought his teddy bear, Hector, which he had kept hidden from the abusers who had taken away the toys of all the children in their care.[174] After a time, the visitors and officials parted, making their way back to their homes, hotel rooms, or offices.

Picture 13. Former child migrant Nigel (Owen) Powell
with teddy bear Hector, London, UK (February 24, 2010). (Child Migrants, 2010)

7.3.5. Remote performances in Australia

7.3.6 The casting & the scripting

Although the events in the UK had ended, the apology was not yet over. Special events had been organized for former victims still living in Australia. Nine days before the apology, on February 15, the UK High Commission had put out a press release with an invitation to former child migrants "to attend special commemorative receptions" (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2010). These would be held at the Consul General's Residence in Sydney, the Consul General's Residence in Melbourne, the Parmelia Hilton Hotel in Perth, and the British Consulate in Brisbane. The hosts would be British High Commissioner Baroness Amos and Consul General Richard Morris in Sydney, Consul General Stuart Gill

[174] He had been sent to Australia in the 1950s.

in Melbourne, Deputy British High Commissioner and Head of Post Jolyon Welsh in Perth, and Head of Post Rob Zacharin in Brisbane (High Commission, 2010). These receptions were scheduled for the morning, directly following the apology in the UK. There was an open invitation to former child migrants to attend and it was announced in the release that the hosts would be rereading the prime minister's apology statement as made in parliament. No other special activities surrounding these performances were publicized, other than an assurance that "morning tea would be served" (High Commission, 2010).

7.3.7. The staging

In Sydney the reading of the apology took place outdoors, in the garden of the official residence of the British High Commissioner, which was a monumental, polished, white wooden house. A white lectern was placed close to the wall of the residence, and a small crowd was seated on in front of the lectern, with the first row two yards away. Banners in the garden announced the event: "United Kingdom Government apology to former Child Migrants sent from the UK." Roughly 30 people attended the event in Sydney (Shears, 2010). Some brought objects to the scene, such as photographs from their childhood, and showed these to reporters and the host (ABCNews, 2010; CBC News 2010; Reuters, 2010; UK in Australia, 2010).

Picture 14. UK High Commissioner Valerie Amos' apology, Sydney, Australia (February 25, 2010). (UK in Australia, 2010)

In Melbourne the apology would be read at the mansion of the consul general, Mr. Gill. In the entrance hall, on a polished wooden salon table, a guestbook lay next to a vase full of flowers. Chairs had been set up facing a lectern in a small room. About 100 people showed up, and because not everyone could fit into the room, the hosts opened sliding doors to an adjacent room to accommodate spillover. As in Sydney and London, some guests carried childhood photographs (UK in Australia, 2010).

The largest gathering took place in Perth, where 300 guests gathered in a large, modern hotel function room with grey carpet, white walls, fluorescent light and no windows (Strutt, 2010). Guests sat in black and chrome chairs, facing a stage with a black and white lectern that stood before the UK and Australian flags and two banners, similar to those in Sydney. Once more, guests brought old photos to the event (Canberra TV, 2010).

Picture 15. UK Head of Post Jolyon Welsh on stage,
Perth, Australia (February 25, 2010). (Canberra TV)

The setting in Brisbane was similarly business-like: a modern office space in a high rise, with grey carpet, white walls, and fluorescent light, but this time, with windows. Multiple British flags stood in poles and another banner could be found near a coffee table up against a wall. A wooden table, placed near a window overlooking other high rises, held a guestbook for the visitors to sign, along with miniature British flags and envelopes holding copies of the apology statement for guests to take with them as mementos. The envelopes read: "To mark the occasion of the formal apology by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Gordon Brown to former Child Migrants" (UK in Australia, 2010).

Approximately 70 guests attended (Colllins & Smail, 2010). Head of Post Mr. Zacharine spoke with a hand-held microphone, standing behind a wooden lectern and in front of a British flag. This time, guests had not just brought their own childhood photos: two women had brought objects, including a framed picture of woman. They also lit two candles placed in flower arrangements in glass bowls, making the table look like a shrine for the woman in the photograph (UK in Australia, 2010).

Picture 16. Unknown guests, setting up a table during the apology event, Brisbane, Australia (February 25, 2010). (UK in Australia, 2010)

7.3.8 The acting

At all Australian sites, the British officials read Brown's apology aloud to those attending. Except in Perth, all those who attended signed a guest book, posed for photos, and appeared to engage in polite conversation. The hosts spoke with individual members of the crowd, sometimes examining the photographs guests had brought along or posing for snapshots (Godfrey, 2010, February 24; RTV, 2010). Reporters wove their way through the crowds, conducting interviews for local and national media.

One online report, for example, read:

> Former child migrant Mary Molloy, who was raised in a girls' home in Sydney Cove, attended a reception in Sydney hosted by the Baroness. She said it was an emotional day. “I was a lucky one. I met my mother. A lot of the ones that came out never did,” she said. “It is a good step in the right direction and a long time coming, but it'll never be closure” (Powell, 2010).

In every city, attendees responded emotionally to the apology and many of them wept (Collins & Smail, 2010; UK in Australia, 2010). As a reporter present in Sydney wrote, "Some wiped away tears, a wife clutched her ailing husband’s hand, a pensioner adjusted his hearing aid to ensure he caught every word" (Shears, 2010). In Perth, however, where the largest crowd had gathered, the response was different. A local reporter described the scene:

> There were angry scenes at a reception in Perth yesterday to mark the British Government's official apology to former child migrants. Deputy British High Commissioner Jolyon Welsh was heckled by several members of the audience after he tried to draw formal proceedings to an abrupt end. Officials quickly exited the stage at the Parmelia Hilton Hotel after some members of the crowd became vocal. I've only seen my mother once in 69 years, Paddy Dorrain yelled out from the audience (Strutt, 2010).

Picture 17. Former child migrant Paddy Dorain addresses
the UK Head of Post, Perth, Australia (February 24, 2015). (Canberra TV, 201)

The same reporter went on to explain how and why guests were critical of the event: "they felt offended at how brief proceedings had been" (Ibid.). A guest commented that "it was rude of Mr. Welsh to end proceedings so abruptly" (Ibid.). Attendees also complained that there was no broadcast of the PM's apology. Many of the guests seemed to have expected to see PM Brown on a TV screen. They were also disappointed that they could not respond. "We weren't even allowed to ask questions," one former child migrant stated. Finally, the personal performance of the host had been unsatisfactory. Another former migrant in attendance said, "...We've got no feeling out of what Mr. Welsh just said" (Ibid.). After this gathering and the other Australian events had been finished, the UK apology was officially over.

7.4 Multi-actor environment

7.4.1 Victims' & third parties' interpretations

Surrounding the apology date, dozens of articles about child migration were published in domestic newspapers. They zoomed in on the wrongdoing and al together cited almost three dozen victims who bore witness of the horrors in their childhood. In the days following the apology, victims and third parties also expressed their views of the act. Margaret Humphreys stood out among the interpreters: she was quoted frequently, and also at length. Expressing appreciation for the apology, she said, "[T]his apology is so important to people's recovery –it's the recognition, the acknowledgement that all of these things have suddenly been understood" (Birkle, 2010).

In most articles, she also gave an account of her fight to get the truth out, recalling decade after decade of hearing nothing or “no” in response to repeated requests for information and recognition. In these reports Humphreys was sometimes depicted as a victim herself – not of the wrongdoing, but of representatives of organizations that had executed the migration scheme whose stonewalling had made her pursuit of justice exasperating.

Besides Humphreys, most attention was directed to the views of the victims. Over two dozen child migrants were cited. Nine of them explicitly appreciated the apology as an act of recognition.[175] As one attendee in Melbourne noted, "When I told people what happened they didn't believe me, and this is an acknowledgement that what we were saying all along did happen" (Turnbull, 2010). Their suffering was finally acknowledged, they noted, and some suggested this could help heal the wounds of the past.

However, there was also criticism, both from victims and commentators. The majority of the victims stated that the gesture came (too) late.[176] "It will help,” said one, “but it's a bit late.... When we were

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[175] 9 out of 26 victims cited were grateful for the recognition.

[176] 16 out of 26 victims cited said the apology was "late", "too late", or "long overdue".

leaving school and going out in the world, that's when we needed help" (Godfrey, 2010, February 25). The timing of the apology was further called into question by two other former migrants, who considered it a “must do” that was triggered by the Australian government apology. “They knew about it a long time,” a victim noted, “so they should have done it a long time ago, instead of waiting for the Australian government to say sorry, and then: 'Oh, we better say sorry too because the Australians have done it'" (Collins & Smail, 2010).

This connection was brought up by newspaper reporters as well, yet in a more implicit way. “Mr. Brown's apology follows that of Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd three months ago”, one wrote (Birkle, 2010), and another stated that “Brown's apology comes three months after his Australian leader Kevin Rudd said he deeply regretted what had happened” (Carmichael, 2010).

Other victims took issue with the lack of material compensation.[177] Three of them considered the apology to be an imperfect act of justice because it should have been accompanied by more generous financial arrangement. As noted, the UK government had established a travel fund to accommodate the expenses of child migrants coming to the UK to be reunited with their families, which would be administered by the Child Migrants Trust. However, the package did not include financial compensation for the victims personally. "It is a start, but nowhere near enough. An apology without restitution is not justice," said a representative of a child migrant organization (Perry, 2010).

Four others saw it as a political move. Three commentators challenged Brown to apologize for issues for which he carried responsibility (Reade, 2010), and one accused him of scoring "brownie points" (McGuffin, 2010). One victim stated, "What [PM Brown] said was quite moving but my initial reaction was that it was a political ploy, being an election year. Even so, I can still accept what he said" (Cornish Guardian, 2010). These interpretations appeared in newspapers that were usually critical of the policies of Brown’s Labour party (Philips, 2010).

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[177] 3 out of 16 victims cited mentioned this.

Three other individuals, including one victim, connected the apology to contemporary child care policies in a critical way. It was argued that present-day child welfare services continued to fail the children in their care under the leadership of Brown's government (Robertson, 2010). (This topic had been introduced up during the debate following Brown's statement in the House of Commons by members of Parliament.) Children in state care were still suffering, argued one very critical commentator, in "festering camps" and "detention centers" (McGuffin, 2010). (Appendix 14 presents details.)

7.4.2 Moral & formal authority

As for formal authority, the prime minister, Humphreys and Haig stood out. Other office holders were present, such as the secretary for , but the first three spoke officially on behalf of others. In the public debate, Humphreys occupied an exceptional position because of her decades-long crusade for the victims' cause. Moral authority was attributed to her by members of Parliament, victims' representative Harold Haig, and the prime minister. Humphreys also assumed authority, making claims on behalf of the victims, such as: "Every child migrant will thank him for his statement today," and "[t]he child migrants feel it was truthful and sincere" (Porter, 2010).

Prime Minister Gordon Brown did not shy away from assuming moral leadership. The prime minister made an attempts to assert moral authority. In his Westminster statement he made explicit that he was the right person to speak in this matter of right and wrong by pointing to his prior and future actions that served the moral cause at issue. These actions were, first, his work to bring about the official apology, such as contacting the Australian prime-minister who previously apologized for similar wrongdoing.

He had also taken time to listen to the experiences of the victims, he claimed. Hearing their testimonies had made him "…determined early on when I became prime minister to do everything in my power to recognize this shameful episode for what it was in our history" (10 Downing street, 2010). Asserting that he would commit himself to further righting the wrong in the future, he announced that

he would personally dedicate himself to the campaign that Humphreys had headed thus far. “I will be leading that campaign [for justice for the victims]” (Ibid.). However, no commitments were made to enact or enable accountability.

7.5 Meanings of the apology

Analyzing the performance and the reactions in the public debate, several interpretations of the apology emerge. It can be seen as (1) a welcome home festivity, (2) an attempt to reframe victimhood (3) a display of moral leadership, and as (4) a teachable moment.

7.5.1 A welcome home party

The apology set the stage for a reunion of migrants and their nation of origin. It was a homecoming party for those returning - "a day when we [are] welcomed back to our country of birth," summarized Haig, the victims' representative (Downing Street, 2010). The long wait and the government's history of resisting responsibility for the fates of the children made for an emotional moment. "We have all been waiting for this day for a lifetime," Haig added (Ibid.). The apology marked the end of the wait: the victims' suffering was finally acknowledged. "Today we hear you...," said the apologizer. "Welcome home. You are with friends" (Ibid.).

In this take on the apology, the "government" and the "nation" played distinctive roles. Previous governments formed the guilty party that had committed the wrong and looked away for decades. The nation, in contrast, had been ignorant of the wrong but could now, informed by the apology, care for its lost children. "For us," said Haig, "this apology is a moment in history when there can be reconciliation between the government, the nation, and the child migrants" (Downingstreet 2010).

The events were celebrations of the migrants' physical and metaphorical return to Great Britain, with the exception of Perth, were guests did not experience the recognition and hospitality that victims elsewhere enjoyed. By extending an open invitation for victims to attend (Australia); by offering guests snacks and wine (UK) or morning tea (Australia); and by paying attention to them through conversation (all except Perth), the apologizer welcomed the victims back into the nation's lap.[178]

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[178] The means were modest, though; it was not an abundant feast.

Further, in signing the guest book and posing for group photos, the apologizer signaled an intention to record the reunion as a valuable and historic moment, worthy of being captured and broadcasted.

Picture 18. UK High Commissioner Valerie Amos and an unknown attendee,
Sydney, Australia (February 25, 2010). (AAPNewswire, 2010)

7.5.2 An attempt to reframe victimhood

The apology also carried meaning as a tribute to the "survivors" who had overcome a troubled childhood. The addressees had endured tremendous suffering, stated the apologizer. They been courageous in the face of rejection and had displayed determination to have the failures of the past acknowledged. “The people I have met this afternoon, you do not see yourselves as victims; you refuse to be victims. You show a spirit that is unbowed and unbroken; you are survivors who have built good, decent lives despite the trauma inflicted upon you in these most precious early years” (10 Downing street, 2010).

In contrast, the self-presentation of the addressees was different in kind. Those quoted in the press as well as representative Harold Haig gave a grim depiction of the victim community. They painted a picture of a group defined by pain and loss. Instead of referencing stories with happy endings – as the apologizer did –Haig mentioned the parents who had never known their children and those who had taken their own lives, "because the wounds were too deep and too painful to endure" (Ibid.).
The latter frame was reinforced through dramaturgy. The majority of the attendees were teary-eyed

seniors, many of whom were very modestly dressed in comparison to the well-dressed government representatives. They clutched pictures of themselves as children or of lost family members, and they told reporters of their dreadful experiences. According to a reporter, one attendee in Sydney could count on the fingers of one hand the number of people, including his wife, who had put their arms around him in his life. He reported that when he had been reunited with his long-lost sister, she had asked him to hold her properly. He had replied, "I don't know how" (Shears, 2010).

7.5.3 Display of moral leadership

The apology set a stage for the prime minister to publicly display moral leadership. He presented himself as a future fighter for justice and promoter of the welfare of children, and he offered a moral track record by making clear he had worked to bring about today's gesture. Sharing the stage with Margaret Humphreys, he acknowledged that he was not the only moral leader present. He not only praised Humphreys lavishly, but also aligned himself with her and her cause by claiming that he would be leading her campaign for justice.[179] The apologizer's moral claims made him come out as a champion of justice – not so much as a moral interlocutor seeking to influence public moral discourse.

The dramaturgy of the event offered the victims the opportunity to speak up. The victims' advocate and their representative stood behind the same lectern as the apologizer on equal footing (staging) and were given room to respond (scripting). The first, who had received extensive acclaim throughout the day, refrained from making strong moral claims. For his part, the spokesperson for the victim group took the opportunity to speak of "the right to have a family life" as "a human rights issue" that so many people take for granted. It should have been guaranteed to the victims in the past, he said, as well as extended to all children in the future (Downing Street, 2010).

Hence, the victims introduced values that society could embrace and government could act upon. So in terms of moral interlocutorship this group certainly played its part, but timidly. Their moral claims were modestly presented in comparison with the more audacious ones of the apologizer. Most of their

[179] Others, such as Haig and MP's in parliament, praised Humphreys as well.

members spoke of the horrors in their childhood, and the contribution of their representative on stage was brief. The apologizer, in contrast, certainly displayed moral leadership, but did little to influence public discourse.

7.5.4 A teachable moment

The apology held a history lesson for the public at large. It served to educate Britons about a little-known “shameful episode" of their nation's history, to use the words of the apologizer (10 Downing street, 2010). The lesson was partly contained in the apologizer’s words and in the exhibition set up in Westminster, but it was the press and the victims themselves that picked up most of the work of informing the public about Britain’s child migrants.

Around the day of the apology dozens of informative newspaper articles and television items about the wrong appeared, for which victims were interviewed about their childhood experiences. Many of the articles and items included historical photographs depicting children on large ships or in groups working on farms in the land of their destination. As a former child migrant told a reporter prior to the apology, “The scheme was an amazing piece of British Empire social engineering. […] People don't appreciate how big, and how recent, it all was” (Burns, 2010).

7.6 Interpretive challenges

Having studied the UK apology, we can now identify the interpretive challenges that arose.

Table 14. Overview of interpretive challenges (UK case)

Domains	**Observation**	**Interpretive challenge**
(1) Speech	Westminster: Apologizer and victim defined the victim group in conflicting terms (“strong survivors” vs. ”powerless victims”)	Is it necessary to align or prioritize different perspectives that are offered by the primary conversants? Should we allow these to co-exist?
(2) Dramaturgy	Perth: Victims in the room became upset with the performance and rose in revolt	How to evaluate the meaningfulness an apology when the primary addressees express discontent during the performance, even though the "right words" were uttered?
(3) Multi-actor environment	Critical commentators interpreted the apology in terms of electoral politics and government policy	How to deal with interpretations that situate the apology in other realms of meaning than the moral realm?
	Many victims criticized the apology as coming (too) late. The apology was rendered less meaningful or meaningless because of its timing.	Should we adopt any standard that is introduced in the public debate against which to measure the meaningfulness of apologies? Or should we develop evaluative standards ourselves?

(1) Speech

The first challenge has to do with dissimilar statements from the primary conversants. The apologizer painted a portrait of strong survivors, whereas the victims presented themselves as individuals who had suffered deeply and had stood powerless during their childhood and later in life when they tried to get recognition for their suffering. The apologizer offered sunny anecdotes about families reunited, while the addressees' representative spoke gravely of those who had taken their own lives because of their childhood experiences.

The statements thus evoked conflicting frames. The apologizer conjured up an image of strong individuals who had been able to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, able to build up "decent" lives of their own without help. The victims painted a picture of people that need(ed), but lack(ed), a helping hand and a loving hug. This introduces a problem for researchers dedicated to unraveling the meanings of apologies: should we somehow try to align these perspectives? Or should we prioritize one over the other? And what implications does such a misalignment have for the meaningfulness of the apology?

(2) Performance

Analyzing dramaturgy, a second misalignment emerged—this time during the performance in Perth. A generous invitation policy had drawn hundreds of victims to the event. They found themselves seated in a windowless hotel conferenceroom, listening to the re-reading of the official statement without further ado. The invitees, expected to sit passively through the event, became upset when it became apparent that the official statement was the entire performance.

This misalignment does not present new challenges. We observed a similar situation in Belgium where the staging transmitted a different meaning than speech did. Yet, this case makes the problem a bit more complicated. The dissonance in Mechelen could be dismissed as an isolated mishap in an otherwise soundly orchestrated event. This time, the entire event in Perth was disrupted. So the question becomes how to understand an apology when virtually all elements of dramaturgy are misaligned with (meanings expressed through) speech?[180]

(3) Multi-actor environment

The final challenge in this case emerged during the analysis of the public debate around the apology. Almost all interpreters affirmed that the apology was meaningful as a well-deserved act of recognition. Yet, at the same time, many victims and commentators voiced a similar criticism of the apology: the gesture had come (too) late. Additionally, many social actors interpreted the act in terms of electoral politics and the current child welfare policies of Brown's Labour government.

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[180] One could argue that the casting was well-aligned with the meanings expressed through speech.

These observations re-introduce the question of how to make sense of apologies that carry meanings in multiple realms. They also point to a need to reflect on the problem of developing evaluative standards to measure an apology's meaningfulness. (The notion of “meaningfulness” references the extent to which the apology is significant in a specific realm of meaning.) Should we avoid developing such a standard, adopt those that are introduced in the public arena, or develop an evaluative framework of our own? Let us see if the final case can help answer this question.

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Chapter 8. The Dutch apology

Performance, interpretations & authority

8.1 Background

8.1.1 The wrongdoing

On the morning of December 9th, 2011 the Dutch ambassador to Indonesia arrived in the village of Balongsari. His visit was highly anticipated; a local crowd and dozens of press reporters from all over the world were there waiting for him. The ambassador was here on the island of Java to offer apologies for the mass execution of men and boys. It had taken place in this village in 1947 during Indonesia's fight for independence from the Netherlands. The victims had been rounded up and shot by Dutch soldiers. After a series of introductions at the site, the ambassador took his place behind a lectern. "Today, December 9th, we remember the members of your families and those of your fellow villagers who died 64 years ago through the actions of the Dutch military," he said. "In this context and on behalf of the Dutch government, I apologize for the tragedy that took place..." (Netherlands Embassy in Jakarta, 2011).

The mass shooting in the village that the ambassador spoke of was one of many low points in the centuries-long relationship between the Netherlands and Indonesia. The troubled history of the two nations traces back to the 16th century when four ships sailed from Amsterdam to the archipelago that would be called the "Dutch East Indies." Soon thereafter, Dutch trading companies established permanent posts, primarily on the island of Java, to exploit the riches found there. From that moment on, the Dutch would gradually expand their control over the group of islands, turning it into a colony of their own.

Violent clashes were common in this process. To cite just a few examples: in the 17th and 18th centuries the Dutch colonizers dispersed and killed ten thousand natives and murdered the same number of Chinese inhabitants. In the early 19th century, they introduced a cash crop system that resulted in 250,000 deaths, mainly due to mass starvation at Java. Lastly, in Aceh, conflicts leading into the turn of the 20th century resulted in 100,000 casualties on the side of the Indonesians (Raben, 2012, p. 487).

During the centuries-long occupation of the islands, the Dutch put into effect various exploitation schemes that forced the population to grow crops for the world market. The colonizers made huge profits while the colonized suffered from dreadful working conditions and extreme poverty. In the late 19th century, as Western European society grew increasingly concerned with humanitarian ideals, the exploitative practices in the East Indies came under scrutiny in the Netherlands. These concerns forced the Dutch to adjust their policies in the early 20th century. The government (that had taken over the reign over the East Indies) introduced a new policy aimed at improving the lives of native peoples through several initiatives, such as education, medical services, and infrastructural improvements.[181]

In practice, however, the Dutch continued to exploit the colony. New military expeditions were undertaken to conquer parts of the archipelago that had remained independent, and camps were set up to incarcerate rebellious nationalists. Underlying the ongoing violence was a sense of superiority that prevailed over other concerns. The economic wellbeing of the Netherlands remained the primary objective, which, historian Frances Gouda concludes, translated into "a vision of Indonesians not as members of the same community, but as beasts [that were not] allowed to share in the material or cultural spoils of victory" (1995, p. 20).

In the late 1930s, however, international developments drastically altered the dynamics. The Japanese government set its sight on the group of islands. In an effort to establish hegemony throughout Eastern Asia, it was eager to incorporate it and exploit its reserves of oil, tin, bauxite and other raw materials. After the Nazis occupied the Netherlands, Japanese troops conquered the archipelago in

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[181] In 1848 the Dutch government had taken over control of the archipelago from the trading companies.

1942. The Japanese spared neither the natives nor the Dutch, imprisoning or sending into forced labor hundreds of thousands of natives and detaining Dutch citizens in camps under harsh conditions (Ingleson, 2005, p. 214).

During the occupation, Indonesian nationalist movements grew in strength. The Japanese, seeking to foster anti-western sentiments, strategically cooperated with the nationalist leaders to facilitate their conquest (Aziz, 1955, p. 199). In 1945, when allied forces drove Japan out of the territory, leaving a vacuum of power, these leaders immediately seized the opportunity. They declared independence on August 17th.[182] From that moment, a revolutionary spirit seized Indonesia and without a centralized command to restrain local groups of revolutionaries, violence erupted. Indonesian youths launched attacks on those they considered pro-Dutch or enemies of the new republic, including Europeans, Eurasians, and Chinese.[183]

The Dutch government refused to recognize the declaration and attempted to regain control by military means in the summer of 1947. The campaign began with a push to re-occupy significant portions of Java. The Dutch military was able to advance quickly as the Indonesian fighters withdrew to the countryside (Groen, 1986, p. 81). After just two weeks of rapid progress, however, criticism from the international community led the Dutch government to bring its campaign to an end. Especially the United States weighed in, because it feared that the attempt to curtail the Indonesian revolutionaries would only stimulate the nationalist communist movement.

In the year that followed, Dutch soldiers remained on Java and Indonesian freedom fighters reorganized their strongholds on the island. Both sides initiated violent raids and punished natives whom they suspected of collaboration with the enemy (Groen, 1986, p. 84). In December 1948, the Dutch launched a second campaign to gain control over the island of Java. Much progress was made, but again, international pressure mounted. The US now threatened the Dutch government to halt aid

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[182] It is this day that is celebrated in Indonesia as the birthday of the Republic.

[183] Eurasians are those of European and Asian descent. In the fall of 1945, for example, revolutionaries killed about 3,500 people of mixed descent on the island of Java (Houben, 1997, p. 49; Raben, 2012, p. 491-493).

through the Marshall Plan – its massive financial stimulus to help European nations recover from war and resist communism. This time the Dutch government surrendered permanently: on December 27, 1949, it officially recognized the independence of the Republic of Indonesia.

8.1.2 The massacre in Rawagede

During the attempts to regain control the Dutch military conducted multiple raids on the island of Java.[184] One of these took place on December 9, 1947, when Dutch troops entered the village of Rawagede, now called Balongsari. They rounded up at least over a hundred unarmed men and boys in a field and interrogated them about Lukas Kustario, a freedom fighter who operated in the area. They threatened to kill if the villagers did not give him up. When they remained silent, the Dutch executed the men and boys. Some say this happened in orderly rows; others claim the Dutch simply opened fire (RTL5, 2011). One survivor later said, "The Dutch spy thought [Lukas] was in the village but it turned out, he had just passed through. Nobody knew exactly where he was going. The spy didn't believe the villagers and thought they were hiding him. He did not wait for an answer, but instead opened fire immediately" (RTL5, 2011).

The cover-up of the massacre began right away. Dutch government officials ordered the commanding general not to prosecute the major whose unit had committed the execution (Van der Mee, 2011). The major was also encouraged to stay quiet when a United Nations commission made an inquiry into the case (Janssen, 2008).[185] This cover-up was consistent with the overall PR policies of the Dutch

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[184] Two sociologists concluded that extreme violence was part of a pattern (Doorn & Hendrix, 2012). However, historians generally agree that most acts of indiscriminate violence are excesses. “Although Dutch troops did engage in some horrendous acts of violence and committed war crimes, they remained fairly isolated and rarely can be called genocidal. Some caution is necessary, as little detailed research has been devoted to the question,” concludes historian Remco Raben (2012, p. 491).

[185] This is the UN Committee of Good Offices on the Indonesian Question. It investigated not just Rawagede, but looked into events and developments during the entire post-war period. It was never able to establish any details of the case, such as the exact number of casualties. Nonetheless, the committee called the action in the village “deliberate and ruthless” (Rechtbank ‘s Gravenhage, 2011).

government, which treated the battle in Indonesia euphemistically, referring to military engagements there as "police actions." During the fighting, Dutch propaganda focused on the military providing humanitarian aid to locals. When atrocities took place, the government was quick to downplay or deny them (Jansen Hendriks, 2012, p. 403).

The cover up of the massacre in Rawagede persisted in the decades that followed. Both parties remained silent. Underlying their silence involved was a variety of concerns. In 1949, the Netherlands and Indonesia both agreed to offer amnesty for all crimes that were connected to what was called "the political struggle" (Scagliola, 2012). This helped both governments to cover up their wrongdoings and ensured that neither would have to prosecute any of the perpetrators. It was, after all, not only the Dutch who wished to forget the uglier features of the conflict. Historians note that Indonesian authorities kept quiet about postcolonial atrocities in an effort to establish an idealized picture of the Indonesian war for independence as a unified struggle for a just cause. In practice, high-level Indonesian officers had been involved in crimes against fellow Indonesians whom they suspected of cooperation with the Dutch (Raben, 2012, p. 494).

Many Dutch, for their part, tended to embrace an image of themselves as hard-working, benevolent, and modest mediators who stay away from international power games. Evidence of Dutch atrocities in Indonesia was met with distress, silence, and denial, historian Paul Bijl writes. “It is typical of the generation of Dutch citizens who were in their early twenties in 1945 that the feelings of guilt, fear, or anger these past experiences still evoke are hardly ever spoken about, even within the inner circle of their own families” (2012, p. 53).

The complicated situation on the ground also contributed to the cover-up. On both the Dutch and Indonesian sides, some acted simultaneously as victim *and* perpetrator, suggests historian Stef Scagliola (2012, p. 144). Yet, despite their engagement in brutal attacks, both sides primarily perceived themselves as victims. The Dutch had suffered badly under Japanese rule and, in the immediate aftermath of the war, had been subject to anti-colonial outbursts of Indonesian revolutionaries. Indonesians, in their turn, had been subjected to centuries of systemic exploitation and had fought for freedom from a brutal occupier (Locher-Scholten, 1996, p. 474). As a result, victims of postcolonial violence on either side received little recognition.

8.1.3 Public outcries

The postcolonial atrocities did not fully enter Dutch consciousness until 1969. In that year, Joop Hueting, a Dutch army veteran who had served in Indonesia, gave a series of interviews. He said that Indonesians had been tortured and shot in the back; that innocent families had been murdered in their homes; and that prisoners of war had been killed because of a lack of capacity to properly guard them. A heated debate followed. Hueting had to go in hiding because of threats. The board of editors of the largest national newspaper, the right-leaning *De Telegraaf*, wrote that Hueting's fellow veterans viewed his accusations as betrayal (Jansen Hendriks, 2012, p. 412).

Unable to dodge the turmoil, the government asked a historian to investigate Dutch postcolonial actions. This expert published an overview of hundreds of cases of "excesses" – a term the government preferred to "war crimes," which most associated with Nazi atrocities during the Second World War. Rawagede was listed as one of 76 cases of "violent excesses" (Bank, 1995).[186] Some experts quickly disputed the accuracy of the report, arguing that much of the evidence had been lost. Hoping to put the question of postcolonial atrocities to bed, the prime minister stated that on the whole the military had behaved properly and that any excesses were the result of guerilla warfare waged by the Indonesians (Rechtbank 's Gravenhage, 2011; Scagliola, 2012, p. 248).

The issue remained dormant until the late eighties. Some argue that this was because of both the "rightwing party VVD and Prince Bernard of Orange" helped veterans to keep cases out of the spotlight (Santoso, 2011), while others note that large segments of society refused to take notice of post-colonial practices (Bijl, 2012). This changed in 1986 when a famous Dutch historian intended to publish a volume that discussed postcolonial cases of torture, rape, and plunder in Indonesia in a chapter entitled "war crimes."[187] Outraged by the contents, one of the probe readers of the preliminary draft

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[186] The report was entitled the "Memorandum of Excesses" ("Excessennota").

[187] More precisely, it concerned a manuscript of a volume in a series about the Netherlands during the Second World War. The historian was called Lou de Jong.

spoke to the press and, like Hueting before him, the writer became the lightning rod for another debate. At first the historian stood firmly behind his words, but as the attacks continued, he wavered, finally stating that he had been “too much guided by emotion” in writing certain paragraphs. In the final draft he had replaced the term "war crimes" with "excesses" (Ede Botje & Hoek, 2012).

8.1.4 Lead up

In the 1990s, the tone of the political and public debate shifted.[188] More and more voices began calling for deeper investigations into the postcolonial era. In 1995, these voices gained strength when it was announced that the Dutch Queen would visit Indonesia.[189] Dozens of articles and news items appeared – most notably, a documentary about a mass shooting in Rawagede. The filmmaker had come across a large monument dedicated to 431 casualties of a 1947 massacre while traveling on Java and had decided to investigate the matter.[190]

The TV broadcast of his documentary fueled another debate and, again, the government was forced to investigate. This time, an official of the Public Prosecution Service, responding to a request of the Minister of Justice, undertook a tentative investigation into the 1947 massacre. (The findings were inconclusive.) The Secretary of Justice, in turn, informed parliament about the legal aspects of the matter, stating that prosecution of the perpetrators was not possible considering the treaty of 1949 (Rechtbank ‘s Gravenhage, 2011). No official measures were taken.[191]

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[188] This section does not include all debates taking place in the Netherlands.

[189] Her stay there would coincide with Indonesia’s independence anniversary on August 17th. The Dutch authorities still regarded December 27 as the official starting date of Indonesia’s independence, in congruence with the treaty of 1949.

[190] The queen said in an official speech in Indonesia that, "Holland was at first not prepared to accept the Indonesian endeavor towards complete and immediate independence. Because of this, the separation between our countries has become a long process that has caused much pain and bitter struggle” (Tromp, 1995).

[191] In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs released the report of the UN Committee of Good Offices on the Indonesian Question from 1948 in which the massacre was mentioned. This report had not been previously

Finally, in 2005 the Dutch government took some steps to recognize the past. In this year the secretary of Foreign Affairs expressed "profound regret" over postcolonial actions. “In retrospect […] it is clear that the large-scale deployment of military forces in 1947 put the Netherlands on the wrong side of history," he stated (Nova, 2005). Three years later, the Dutch ambassador to Indonesia, Koos van Dam, took it a step further when visiting Balongsari. Speaking in Bahasa Indonesia, the official language of Indonesia, Van Dam spoke of “a declaration of apologies” for the wrongdoing in Rawagede, but the Dutch translation that was handed out only included the word “regret” (Schouten, 2008). When asked afterwards to clarify the wording, Van Dam said that it was fine by him if people wanted to consider his statement as an apology (Schouten, 2008).[192] The secretary of Foreign Affairs, however, rushed to contradict the ambassador, emphasizing that Van Dam had merely expressed regret (Maas, 2009).

While government officials frayed over the extent to which the past should be acknowledged, other parties begun preparing a legal case for recognition. After viewing the 1995 documentary about Rawagede, Jeffry Pondaag, a Dutchman of Indonesian descent, had decided to take action. “I wanted to do something for those people,” he said (Butter, 2008). In 2007, he established the Dutch Honorary Debts Foundation (“Comité Nederlandse Ereschulden”), which concentrated its efforts on receiving recognition for the widows of Rawagede who had lost their husbands during the shooting.

In his attempt to seek justice, Pondaag turned to an attorney. On behalf of nine widows and one other relative he asked the Dutch state in 2008 to take responsibility for the mass execution. It was the first time anyone had made a legal attempt to hold the state responsible for any postcolonial actions. The attorney argued that the Dutch state had known about the atrocities at the time and that it should have prosecuted the perpetrators. Referencing the 1949 agreement to avoid legal action, he argued, was simply untenable.

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disclosed. The public could now read that this committee had concluded that the Dutch army had acted in a “deliberate and ruthless” fashion (Houben, 2012, p. 60).

[192] Van Dam later acknowledged that the Dutch text of his apology had been approved of by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague, but that he had never sent in the Indonesian statement for approval (Nicolasen, 2012).)

When the state attorney turned down the request, another attorney, Liesbeth Zegveld, took the case to court in 2011 – once more, working for Pondaag's foundation that represented the widows.[193] Adding to the above argument, she stated before the judge that the surviving relatives had not known that they could turn to Dutch courts to make their case. Many of them could not read and write, she contended, and they only had access to justice thanks to Pondaag's foundation (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 2011, August 29).[194] Zegveld sought compensation –and an apology.

In September 2011, the court ruled that a claim on behalf of the widows (not the other relative) could be lodged.[195] "This court finds that the (Dutch) state acted wrongly through these executions and that the state is liable to pay damages in accordance with the law," the judge stated. "[T]he state's argument that the case has expired based on the statute of limitations and of reasonableness and fairness is unacceptable" (BBC News Europe, 2011; Rechtbank 's Gravenhage, 2011).[196]

Accepting the ruling, the government reached a settlement with Zegveld. The Dutch state would pay 20,000 Euros to each eligible plaintiff and apologize. The secretary of Foreign Affairs announced that the Dutch ambassador in Indonesia would do so in Balongsari on December 9th, the 64th anniversary of the massacre. He said that he hoped that the apologies would help the survivors put an exceptionally difficult episode of their lives behind them and enable them look towards the future (Nu.nl, 2011). Zegveld stated that although it had taken court ruling to set the apology in motion, the plaintiffs nonetheless eagerly anticipated the gesture (Nu.nl, 2011). And as it turned out, many villagers looked forward to receiving recognition.

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[193] More precisely, in November 2008, the state attorney argued that the statute of limitations would bar claims by the plaintiffs.

[194] She also argued that Dutch courts still handled cases dating from the Second World War.

[195] This was the District Court of The Hague. One of the plaintiffs, the only male survivor of the massacre, had died a month before at the age of 88.

[196] The court did not set an amount and also denied the claim of one plaintiff, a child of one of the victims, because the limitation period barred her specific claim.

8.2 Speech

8.2.1. The statements

On December 9, 2011, Dutch ambassador Tjeerd de Zwaan made a statement in Balongsari. He first gave thanks for the invitation he was extended. He said that his presence was supported by the Dutch government and endorsed by Parliament. "Today, December 9, we remember the members of your families and those of your fellow villagers who died 64 years ago during an action of the Dutch military in your village," he continued (Netherlands Embassy in Jakarta, 2011).

He described December 9 as a "tragic day" and then stated, "In this context, and on behalf of the Dutch government, I apologize for the tragedy that took place in Rawagede on December 9th, 1947" (Ibid.). He expressed hope that facing past events together would enable "us" to turn towards the future and that opportunities for cooperation between the Netherlands and Indonesia would continue to present themselves. He concluded his brief statement with saying "Thank you" (Ibid.). (See appendix 15 for details.)

Before and after the ambassador's statement, four other people spoke, including Voice Ade, the regent of the Falkrik region in which Balongsari is located; Mr. Sukarman, the organizer of the event; Liesbeth Zegveld, the Dutch attorney who had helped bring about the apology; Jeffry Pondaag, the chairman of the Dutch Honorary Debts Foundation; and Batara Hutagalung, a self-appointed, non-official leader of the Indonesian branch of Pondaag's foundation.[197]

Unfortunately, none of these statements could be retrieved.[198] We do know, however, that all speeches, except for one, were brief. An attendee recalls that Zegveld expressed thanks and said that

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[197] At that time Pondaag and Hutagalung were at odds with each other. Sukarman's first name is unknown.

[198] No records exist. Personal requests to two of the speakers did not yield any results: Pondaag and Zegveld spoke spontaneously and cannot provide a copy of their speeches.

an apology never came too late (Van der Werff, 2013). We also know that Pondaag emphasized that this apology was not “the end,” and that he was about to start investigations into postcolonial war crimes on Sulawesi (Lepeltak, 2012; Pondaag 2013; Van der Werff, 2013). At this Indonesian island, a Dutch military unit had executed citizens without trial and had burned down villages to suppress a revolt.[199] Finally, we also know that the last statement by Hutagalung was quite lengthy, and that it was interrupted by Sukarman, because it held up the program. They had to move on to the next part of the program - a visit of the graveyard.

[199] The most infamous example of the Dutch atrocities at Sulawesi was the chaotic execution of 364 people, who were hastily dumped in a mass grave. No one was ever prosecuted.

8.3 Dramaturgy

8.3.1 The casting

The ambassador was in Balongsari as a guest of Mr. Sukarman, a local citizen who organized a commemoration of the mass shooting each year. Sukarman had taken the initiative to honor the casualties that included the former husband of his mother. He was pleased to have the ambassador show up for the 2011 event.[200] He had invited predecessors with little success – with the exception of 2008 when ambassador Van Dam had attended and caused quite a stir with his "apology" statement. Now, three years later, his successor came, bringing his secretary and another official along for the occasion (Van der Werff, 2013).

The expected apology had drawn hundreds of people to the scene. (Balongsari had approximately 3000 inhabitants.) The crowd consisted mostly of villagers, and national and foreign press reporters. About a dozen Indonesian military were also present, including Indonesian veterans who had fought against the postcolonial Dutch forces as well as officials of the Falkirk government. (Falkirk is the province in Java where Balongsari is located.) The highest ranking officer was Voice Ade, the regent of Falkirk, who was also a colonel in the army.[201]

Mr. Sukarman further expected a special delegation of Dutch guests. He had invited Jeffry Pondaag, Liesbeth Zegveld, and Max van der Werff of the Dutch Honorary Debts Foundation.[202] They would be accompanied by Caspar Ebeling Koning, a sponsor of the foundation, who had decided to come along with his young daughter. Pieter Blauw, a Dutch TV journalist, showed up as well, together with a cameraman. Blauw intended to make a documentary about Pondaag's entire trip: the day after the apology, Pondaag would leave for Sulawesi, where he planned to continue his campaign for justice.

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[200] He expressed his enthusiasm for the ambassador's attendance in multiple newspaper reports.

[201] It is unclear if he was retired or on active duty. There was no delegation of the national government.

[202] Pondaag's foundation had paid for their tickets (Pondaag, 2013).

Picture 19. Ambassador De Zwaan and Falkirk regent Voice Ade at the cemetry, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2011). (Dodane, 2011)

8.3.2 The staging

As always, the commemoration took place at the Sampurna Raga Rawagede Hero Cemetery, located on the outskirts of the village, close to fields. 181 bodies were reburied there in 1951, presumably of the victims of the mass execution, since many had been scattered in hand-made graves (Schouten, 2008). (Other bodies remained buried in the private gardens of villagers, or were lost.) The yard has white stone graves that carry the first names of the dead. The site was built and maintained by Sukarman's local Rawagede foundation.

The grounds also include a pyramid. Inside there is a diorama – a "living scene" with three-dimensional models –depicting the 1947 massacre (Lee, 2010). Dutch soldiers are standing with their backs to a dead body, lying on the ground. A woman kneels over the body, grieving. The walls are decorated with scenes that depict the Indonesian struggle for freedom, and one of the wall panels features a fragment of a poem about the execution by Chairil Anwar (Associated Press, 2010). The outer walls of the pyramid are decorated with reliefs with scenes of Indonesians' struggle for independence. A wall leads to a tomb where Sampurna Raga is buried, the freedom fighter after whom the cemetery is named. There is a plaque at a side of the entrance of the tomb stating that 483 people died between 1947 and

1950, and that on December 9th, 431 lives were taken in Rawagede. The Dutch government, however, insists on a number closer to 150.

Picture 20. The pyramid at Rawagede Hero Cemetery,
Balongsari, Indonesia (Karawang, 2011)

Sukarman had set up a lectern in the parking lot near the entrance gate of the cemetery. All performers would stand behind it. Several microphones were attached to the top of the lectern, many of these belonging to reporters at the scene, one connected to a simple public address system to allow those present to hear the speakers. Chairs were placed directly in front of the lectern under a white canopy to shield officials and special guests from the hot sun (BBC Asia, 2011). In front of the first row, small tables held drinks and snacks (Pondaag, 2013). Near the gate of the cemetery, baskets of flower petals stood ready for the visitors to throw on the graves.

Picture 21. Stage of the apology, with from the far right: the Dutch ambassador, Jeffry Pondaag and Liesbeth Zegveld, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2011) (Okezone, 2011)

8.3.3 The scripting

It was announced that the program would start at 9:00 a.m. No other details were made public. It was expected that the performance would end before noon, as the Muslim population of Balongsari was accustomed to praying at that time (Pondaag, 2013). Sukarman had arranged the seating of the special guests and put nametags on the chairs. There were two sections of chairs under the canopy, one for the male guests and one for the female attendees, including the widows who had lost their husbands during the massacre. However, Zegveld was allowed to sit among the men in the first row. The line up of the performers, as well as their identity, remained unclear until the very end. The Dutch (except the ambassador) were called to the stage to their surprise and had not prepared any statements.

8.3.4 The acting

The Dutch ambassador arrived early, before the other Dutch guests, and conversed with the Indonesian officials and other attendees. When he saw Jeffry Pondaag entering the premises, he turned towards his aide, asking: “Is that him?” Pondaag had overheard this and answered, “Yes, it is me” (Pondaag, 2013). It was the only conversation the two would have during the entire performance, though they were seated next to each other in the front row.

The official program started with the singing of the Indonesian national anthem by approximately 60 girls from a school in the town of Karachi, followed by a moment of silence (Batavia, 2011). Next, one girl read the full poem by Anwar and enacted the pain of the villagers. Her spoken word performance included, “We, who have lain down between Karawang-Bekasi, cannot shout “Independence!” and carry weapons anymore” (Nusantara, 2011). And, "We will never forget that day in Rawagede… We will remember forever in an independent Indonesia" (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 2011, December 9).

Then the series of statements were given from behind the lectern by Falkirk regent Ade Voice, Mr. Sukarman, Liesbeth Zegveld, and Jeffry Pondaag. Pondaag’s announcement that he would expand investigations into Dutch war crimes in other places did not cause a stir. "People did not really realize what I was saying, and if they did, they could not see the consequences," he later reflected (Pondaag, 2013). Some reporters, however, took notice and questioned him afterwards about his plans.

Then it was time for ambassador De Zwaan to step up. He delivered his apology statement without much ado, first in English and then in Bahasa Indonesia. When he uttered the sentence that included the word “apologize” he received modest applause and some of the elderly wiped away tears (Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 2011). After the ambassador had finished, Batara Hutagalung was called to the stage, but, as noted, his speech was brought to an end as it held up the program (Van der Werff, 2013).

When the statements had concluded, Caspar Ebeling Koning, a supporter of the Dutch Honorary Debts Foundation, handed a wooden plate to the widows in the front row. It depicted a windmill and a palm tree, and read "Finally justice for the people of the village of Rawagede” with the date of the court ruling. (Ebeling Koning had it manufactured in Indonesia right before the apology. [Pondaag, 2013].) It was reported in the press that embassy staff gave the plaque away, but in fact it was a private initiative: Ebeling Koning held up the plaque while Pondaag explained to the widows what it displayed, as some of them could barely see. After that, the widows willingly posed for the press.

Picture 22. The wooden plaque, held by the "widows of Rawagede", Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2014). (The Telegraph, 2011)

Sukarman then invited the visitors to enter the graveyard and scatter petals on the graves in accordance with the traditional commemoration. The ambassador went first, together with the regent, and Zegveld followed.[203] While Zegveld walked in the graveyard, Sukarman took the ambassador to the monument to show him the reliefs on the outer walls and explained the meanings of the scenes. The widows and families of the deceased also visited the graves, after Zegveld had made her rounds.

Picture 23. Ambassador de Zwaan at the Rawagede Cemetery (December 9, 2014). (Ibrahim, 2011a)

[203] Pondaag retreated from the scene, saying to Zegveld, "Liesbeth, you go. Here is the basket" (Pondaag, 2013).

Finally, all posed for pictures and spoke with reporters, who were eager to interview the ambassador, Zegveld, and the widows. Frequently asked about the settlement, the latter expressed gratitude. One of the receivers, for example, said that she could now afford the new house that she had longed for (Lepeltak, 2011; Maas, 2011). Some reporters also made inquiries among the villagers about the financial settlement that had been reached. Many of the locals were unaware of this deal and became upset that the widows would receive money from the Dutch government. Suddenly, the group of plaintiffs was "rich" – at least in relative terms, as they would receive an amount of rupiahs worth 17 times the average annual salary earned by locals in the village.[204] One female villager, for example, said to a reporter: "I am sad; this is not fair. When I was six, my brother and uncle were shot. My uncle was like a father to me" (Hupkes, 2011).

Sukarman himself also commented on the financial settlement. Although he did not have discretion to allocate the funds, he said to the press that it would be better that the money would go to all families involved – not just the widows (Pondaag, 2013). (Later he would change his mind and expand the group of beneficiaries beyond the families.) Pondaag, in turn, disclosed more details of his upcoming travels to Sulawesi. "We are not done; this is the beginning," he stated to reporters (Schrijver & Tomesen, 2011).

As the crowds dispersed around noon, the ambassador and other specials guests (including the regent, Pondaag, and Zegveld) were invited to Sukarman's home for lunch. Pondaag and Zegveld, instead, went to the house of one of the plaintiffs for a meeting that they had planned in advance. Zegveld informed the widows about the settlement that had been reached and urged them open a bank account to receive payments of damages. The Dutch government had already paid out and the money sat now at the bank account of her law firm (Tempo.com, 2011).

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[204] Most of the villagers were farm laborers or made krupuk, and had a low income: the average was 1,2 million rupiah a month.

At that very moment tensions were mounting in Balongsari. Upset about the financial settlement, some villagers began to talk. They perceived themselves as victims too. Wasn't the entire village deeply hurt by the massacre? Didn't all villagers lose a relative or a friend?[205] Unware of the situation, Zegveld and Pondaag insisted during their lunch meeting that the money be paid to the plaintiffs personally – and the latter agreed. However, after the Dutch delegation had left the village and the wooden plaque had been placed in the museum, fellow villagers took their chance. What exactly happened remains unknown, but all widows changed their minds (Het Parool, 2011; Maas, 2011, December 24). Within a week after the apology they had given up their money.

[205] According to Zegveld and Pondaag, the widows were forced to do so. The head of the village, however, claimed that they did so voluntarily.

8.4 Multi-actor environment

8.4 1 All interpretations

When press reporters asked what they thought about the apology, the widows of Rawagede made modest comments. Five of the nine plaintiffs, quoted in a total of 81 Dutch newspapers articles about the apology, made statements, such as: "I am old and I do not have feelings of revenge anymore," or "We never meant to take revenge. […] I already have forgiven everyone. I am grateful to the Netherlands" (Lepeltak, 2011; Van der Mee, 2011). One of them stated that she had not realized what exactly had been going on. She remembered that once she had been asked to sign a paper to become a plaintiff in the case and that she had left a thumbprint on it (Schouten, 2011). (See appendix 16 for details.)

In contrast with the reaction of the widows, the emotions in the Netherlands ran high. Taking issue with the apology, nine former Dutch inhabitants of Indonesia gained prominence in the debate. They pointed to atrocities committed by Indonesians in the post war years, called the “Bersiap period”. “If you really want to close a chapter,” one of them claimed, “let Indonesia apologize for the Bersiap period, when thousands of Dutchmen were killed and robbed” (Ego, 2011). Others suggested that a sole Dutch apology resulted in an unbalanced view of history.[206] "[A]s a native of Surabaya, and keeping the equilibrium principle in mind," wrote someone, "other memories come to the surface as well – memories of the Bersiap period, in which many thousands of Dutch people, Indo-Europeans, and Chinese were murdered by pemoedes [armed youngsters]" (Rosier, 2011).

Four social actors provided vivid details of what had happened – a young boy's skull split in two by a traditional Indonesian sword, for example, or an emaciated grandmother who survived the Japanese incarceration camps (Bennema & Marks, 2011). "[...] Liesbet van Zegveld should go and talk to the Dutch from the Japanese incarceration camps," one critic argued. "When the war was over and young women happily walked out of the camp... [and] they were cut into pieces by Indonesians. And what

[206] They had personally witnessed these events or were related to people who had been attacked by Indonesians.

happened to all those boys who were sent [...] to the Dutch Indies? If you disclose atrocities, show both sides" (Van Veen, 2011).

Similar responses came from veterans who had fought in Indonesia.[207] "No one speaks of the Dutch soldiers who died..." said Wil Patist of the Dutch war veterans' association VOMI. "Of course, something happened there [in Rawagede]; we shouldn't deny that. Those things happen during a war. However, we do not receive apologies for our fellow soldiers who were tortured and beheaded [by Indonesians]" (Van der Mee, 2011). The widow of the supreme commander of the Dutch army in the East Indies expressed similar views: "[No] one ever talks of what Indonesians have done. Is Indonesia going to apologize to the Dutch boys that they murdered?" (Van der Mee, 2011).

According to Patist, veterans generally rejected the idea of a nationwide discussion of the postcolonial period, because they expected that they would be judged in retrospect (The National, 2011). This viewpoint corresponded with the stance of veterans during the 1995 public debate – the year the documentary about Rawagede was aired on television. One veteran had said then that, "A national debate serves no interest whatsoever. They will nail us […] to the cross" (Houben, 2012, p. 54).

Next to these emotional interpretations, four commentators interpreted the apology as a legal event and thus as a hollow gesture. It had been brought about by a judge rather than engendered by moral concerns, they argued. If it had been dictated by good conscience, the apology would have come sooner. The financial ramifications of the reparations were noted as well. As one reader cynically wrote to a newspaper, "You wait [64] years until almost every surviving relative of the 431 murdered men has died and then you give the remaining survivors 20,000 Euros each? That saves [the Dutch state] a whole boatload of cash" (Kuijer, 2011).

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[207] The viewpoint of veterans was expressed in 5 articles of the total of 81 articles in Dutch domestic newspaper. No direct perpetrators were heard from. All had died by now. One sergeant was heard of in November 2011. In a TV documentary an army physician revealed what the sergeant had acknowledged to him: that he had shot villagers himself, that there had been about 120 casualties, that the army unit had followed orders of an officer of the Dutch central command,s and that the massacre had taken place a week before December 9th. (In the same month this veteran would die (De Volkskrant online, 2011).

8.4.2 Moral & formal authority

In the public debate, Liesbeth Zegveld and Jeffry Pondaag stood out as moral authorities. Both had sought justice for the victims who could not do so themselves, being old and illiterate and unaware of legal opportunities. Zegveld praised the apology, saying that it had been valuable to the victims, that it was fortunate that the Dutch government had fast-tracked the negotiation process, and that the apology could close a chapter in history. In her case, formal authority overlapped with moral authority: Zegveld had represented the plaintiffs in the court case and was entitled to speaking on their behalf.[208]

Jeffrey Pondaag, the founder of the Dutch Honorary Debts Foundation, put his moral authority to good use by announcing his intention to carry on with his campaign for justice.[209] His organization would now look into post-colonial wrongdoing in the village of Suppa on the island of Sulawesi, he stated, since over two hundred of its inhabitants had been shot there without trial on the orders of a Dutch army captain. We will continue, he announced at multiple occasions (Noord Hollands Dagblad, 2012).[210]

In contrast, the widows of Rawagede presented themselves – not as authorities, but as unpretentious, humble old women who had other concerns in their lives now. As one of them said, "...[I]t happened so long ago, it does not matter much anymore. As long as I have enough to eat and my children are happy, I am happy" (Van der Mee, 2011). The widows were frequently shown in photos accompanying the newspaper articles. The pictures showed the wrinkled faces of the old women, dressed in what appears to have been their fine clothing.

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[208] Her name appeared in 10 articles in the total of 81 articles; she was quoted 4 times.

[209] He was quoted 6 times in the total of 81 articles.

[210] Zegveld suggested on another occasion that this situation probably differed from Rawagede; it appeared that Indonesians there had used firearms as well.

Picture 24. Widow Wanti Dodo at the apology performance,
Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2014). (Gacad, 2011)

Those carrying formal authority in the event and the debate surrounding the apology included Pondaag and Zegveld, as well as spokesperson Patist of veterans' association VOMI and Sukarman of the Rawagede Foundation. Most notably and explicitly, the Dutch ambassador to Indonesia acted on behalf of his government. He was sent to Balongsari by his direct supervisor, the secretary of Foreign Affairs. The secretary would soon after the apology announce that he opted for a policy arrangement to pay damages to victims of similar wrongdoing without judicial intervention, up to a set amount.

De Zwaan and his superior, however, did not partake any further in the debate about the apology. Reporters wanting to include a statement of the apologizing party had to turn to a press release of the ministry of Foreign Affairs. It included one “substantial” sentence: “Apologies give credence to the seriousness of the events that occurred” (Nu.nl, 2011).

8.5 Meanings of the apology

Having examined this last case, I propose to understand the act as (1) a spectacle of legal defeat; (2) a tribute to Indonesian heroes; (3) an attempt to close the history book; (4) a hard-fought recognition and (5) the start of new policies.

8.5.1 A spectacle of legal defeat

Situated at the end of a legal battle for justice, the apology was an exhibit of the defeat of the Dutch state. Unwilling to prosecute perpetrators and profoundly investigate post colonial wrongdoing, Dutch governments had held on to a policy of denial from 1947 on. Failing to put the Rawagede case to bed, the government had been forced to change its policies because of the ruling of the District Court of The Hague. The apology hence was imposed by an external legal authority.

The Dutch fulfilled their obligation in a minimalist fashion. As for speech, the ambassador uttered only 233 words, including polite "ceremonial" statements, such as words of gratitude for the host's invitation. The phrasing of the statement did not signal any moral calling. For example, the ambassador closed with nonspecific terms common to those involved in international affairs when he spoke about the objective of the apology, which was to prolong the productive relations between the two countries.

As for dramaturgy, the Dutch government made no attempt to create a meaningful event. The ambassador was invited as a guest to the commemoration and politely took cues from the host. When the widows were offered the plaque that carried the jubilant inscription "Finally justice for the people of Rawagede" and the date of the court ruling, the ambassador was nowhere in sight. He acted diplomatically and dutifully as the government's representative: doing what needed to be done, making sure to do nothing more.

8.5.2 A tribute to Indonesian heroes

The apology was a tribute to Indonesians' struggle for independence. Because the Dutch had not organized the event, the Indonesian host was able to orchestrate it in great detail, dedicating it to the "heroes" who fought against the Dutch – as he did every year. These heroes consisted of both unarmed Indonesians who had died during the postcolonial fight for freedom as well as other freedom fighters who had taken up arms against the Dutch. The latter included Lukas Kustario, the commander that the Dutch executioners had sought in 1947 because of his involvement in raids against them.

The homage to these fighters could not be missed. The site was dedicated to their struggle: everywhere texts and visuals pointed the visitors to their heroic status and their laudable fight *and* to atrocities committed by the Dutch. Scenes in the reliefs on the walls of the monument, for example, showed an Indonesian soldier impaling a Dutch soldier with his bayonet, while another depicted a Dutch soldier holding a toddler upside down, while Indonesians sit on their knees as if they are praying or begging (see picture below).

The scripting included the reading of Chairil Anwar's poem, which was dedicated to those who had given their lives for the free republic of Indonesia. As for acting, the ambassador was drawn into an event dedicated to the heroic fight for independence. He had no choice but to apologize at the Heroes' Cemetery, to partake in a guided tour of the monument that displayed manifold brutal acts of the Dutch military, and to throw petals on the graves of the heroes, inadvertently honoring their fight against the brutal Dutch colonizer.

Picture 25. Ambassador De Zwaan and Sukarman walking along at the monumental wall, Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2014). (Ibrahim, 2011b)

8.5.3 An attempt to deliver closure

The apology was meant to bring closure. As the ministry of Foreign Affairs announced in its press release, it was officially intended to help the surviving relatives put an end to a difficult episode in their lives. In addition, the apology was intended to bring closure in another way not related to the victims' healing process. The Dutch government hoped to put an end to the discussion of its postcolonial past and avoid further digging into possibly messy facts that might capture the public's interest. The lack of will to open up this chapter of Dutch history was evident in the consecutive government's policies: it had consistently refused to address the atrocities committed by its military in Indonesia – a situation that Zegveld had referred to as a continuation of the government's illegitimate acts.

The hope that the apology might put an end to the discussion of the Netherlands' postcolonial past went unfulfilled. The 2011 apology may have marked the end of the case of Rawagede, but it was also a starting off point for debate. The act prompted calls to examine other postcolonial affairs. Both Jeffrey Pondaag of the Dutch Honorary Debts Foundation and former Dutch inhabitants of Indonesia during the post war period made a case for future inquiries. They did so, however, for very different reasons.

Jeffry Pondaag was eager to seek justice for other victims, such as the surviving relatives of those killed in mass executions at Sulawesi. Just as in Rawagede, he claimed, these had happened without fair trial, in the open fields, after rounding up the villagers. Dutch citizens, in their turn, called for inquiries into the violent actions of Indonesians who had looted and killed thousands of Dutch who had been left unprotected after the collapse of the Japanese military command in 1945. Apologizing for Rawagede was one thing, they argued, but it was now time to turn towards Indonesia and demand that this government do its own "truth telling." Why shouldn't the Indonesian government take responsibility for crimes that its youth had committed in the name of the new republic? Yet, their call remained unanswered.

8.5.4 A hard-fought recognition

The apology was the result of the work of Jeffry Pondaag, who had sought justice for the widows of Rawagede with Zegveld on his side. His endeavor begun in 1995, when he took notice of the televised documentary on Rawagede. Since then, he personally made inquiries in Indonesia to gather evidence with which to build a legal case and he also gathered the funds to pay for expenses. His efforts were key to the apology, since the widows were too ignorant and illiterate to seek justice themselves. If not for Pondaag's persistence, they would not have been involved in any legal battle against the Dutch state. Although they appreciated the apology and the payments, they had already moved on with their lives.

During the entire event, however, the apologizer failed to recognize this work. The apology recognized the wrong, but *not* the party who had worked to have it recognized in the first place. The ambassador kept his distance from Pondaag all along. Seated right next to him during the program, he paid no attention to him.[211] In contrast, he engaged with the widows, politely shaking their hands in front of the press cameras. By turning to this party, he made a safe choice: the widows were too old to create a precarious situation. In contrast, engaging with Pondaag certainly carried that risk: he could have

[211] Pondaag stated in hindsight that he had felt "discriminated" against (Pondaag, 2013).

functioned as a very critical counterpart – as the one with a deep understanding of the moral flaws of the apologizing party and with the capacity to expose these.

Picture 26. Ambassador De Zwaan, the widows, Zegveld
and Pondaag (with name tag), Balongsari, Indonesia (December 9, 2011). (Wilujeng, 2011)

Pondaag himself did not look for common ground either. Without addressing the ambassador directly, he insisted on carrying on his crusade against the Dutch state during his public speech from behind the lectern, whereas this state's representative deemed him unworthy of his attention.[212] They failed to act as each other's moral interlocutors. So although both parties were physically close, between them there was large meaningful distance.

[212] Pondaag himself did not display many emotions in Balongsari. "Of course, I was happy at the day of the apology," he said in hindsight, "but I had already been very happy and relieved in September [when the court ruled against the state]" (Pondaag, 2013).

8.5.5 The start of new policies

The apology signaled the start of novel policies to pay damages to victims of Dutch postcolonial atrocities. It set an example. After the apology has been offered, the secretary of Foreign Affairs stated that he sought a structural arrangement to compensate similar cases. The idea was to apologize to victims, and pay the same amount in damages without legal intervention in accordance with the settlement for Rawagede. Commenting on the policy change in a press briefing, the Dutch prime minister emphasized that the government would not offer an encompassing apology for postcolonial actions, but only for specific cases in which victims had been executed without trial. "History goes as it goes," he explained (Rijksoverheid, 2013).

Perhaps government had anticipated such cases looming ahead, as Pondaag pursued his quest for justice on the island of Sulawesi. Indeed, Pondaag managed, together with Zegveld, to get a second apology from the Dutch government in 2013, in accordance with the novel policy. Once again, De Zwaan carried out the task, this time delivering the apology in Jakarta, Indonesia's capital, for the specific "excesses" that had taken place in Sulawesi. It was accompanied by payments to ten surviving relatives – once more, 20,000 Euros to each widow.

8.6 Interpretive challenges

For the very last time we will take inventory of the challenges that emerged during the case study.

Table 15. Overview of interpretative challenges (Netherlands Case)

Domains	**Observation**	**Interpretative challenge**
(1) Speech	Statements promoted a historical perspective contradictory to that of the apologizer	Is it necessary to align or prioritize different perspectives that are offered by the performers? Should we allow these to co-exist?
(2) Dramaturgy	The entire performance promoted a historical perspective contradictory to that of the apologizer	Is it necessary to align or prioritize different perspectives that the performance promotes? Should we allow these to co-exist?
	The apologizer failed to recognize the victims' most notable advocate; neither looked for common ground	How to make sense of elements of performance that offer dissimilar cues for interpretation?
(3) Multi-actor environment	Critical commentators considered the apology to be a legal obligation, not driven by moral concerns	How to deal with interpretations that situate the apology in other realms of meaning than the moral realm?
	Dutch members of the offender group presented themselves as victims and treated Indonesians as perpetrators	How to categorize social actors when the categories of victim and perpetrator "overlap"?

(1) Speech & Performance

The performance in this case was noticeably at odds with the apologizer's speech. The entire event was dedicated to honoring the Indonesian heroes who had fought for independence. All statements and dramaturgy—except for the apologizer's speech—offered a particular perspective on what had transpired during the postcolonial fight for independence. From the Dutch perspective, many of the "heroes" honored in the apology event were killers and torturers of Dutchmen. Former Dutch inhabitants of Indonesia and former Dutch military remembered their raids as vicious acts that went far beyond the bounds of traditional warfare.

The Dutch government certainly did not send its ambassador to the scene to pay tribute to individuals that many Dutch citizens considered to be vicious killers. Rather, the ambassador found himself in a performance that he could not direct.

In this case, we have to interpret a performance that, except for the statement of the ambassador, is dedicated to producing a historical perspective that the apologizer does not subscribe to. This challenge re-introduces a question that we already identified in previous cases: how to make sense of elements of performance that offer dissonant cues for interpretation?

(2) Multi-actor environment

Analyzing the public debate, we encounter three relatively new difficulties. Many viewed the Dutch apology as an obligatory action—the result of a legal process, not of a process of moral reflection and due deliberation. Suggesting that the apology would never have happened if it were not for the court ruling, some parties claimed that the Dutch government did not, and would never, act out of a moral calling.

A second challenge that arose has to do with the most prominent categories of social actors in apology philosophy: the (symbolic) offender and the victim. This case blurred the lines between these two. So far, our framework assumed a strict role division between (symbolic) offender/apologizer on one side and the victim community on the other. Apology philosophy assumes such a dichotomy. Uncritically adopting this model leads us into trouble in this case, where both offender and victim placed one another in opposite categories. This leaves us uncertain about how to categorize social actors in cases where both parties may have simultaneously done wrong and been wronged.

Beyond the problem of categorization, there is the complication that former Dutch victims of Indonesian violence displayed a need for "moral reciprocity." I define this as a situation in which all parties in conflict have acknowledged their wrongdoings and rehabilitated their victims as moral equals. (Such a *situation serves as an ideal construct.*) The idea behind this form of reciprocity is that each party is entitled to expect and assume from the other forms of behavior through which the other feels recognized (Benhabib, 1985).

By demanding a comparable gesture from the Indonesian government, Dutch commentators introduced a new standard against which to measure the meaningfulness of the apology. In the UK case, the question of the apology's timing similarly introduced a new standard; in this case, it was the question of whether others should offer a similar gesture.

This challenge is the last one to be identified in this thesis. Having scrutinized the four apologies in Canada, the United Kingdom, Belgium, and the Netherlands, the case research has concluded, and it is time to cross-analyze the findings and return to the questions at the heart of this endeavor.

Chapter 9. Conclusions

9.1 Summary of the argument & research approach

Official apologies for historical missteps spring up around the globe, attracting the interest of an increasing number of scholars and tantalizing fragmented publics with their moral and social potentials. Theorists optimistically note that they can offer estranged parties the opportunity to coalesce around shared values and norms. They can promote mutual understanding and allow former antagonists to settle their differences constructively. They can provide a foundation for a renewed social order that is more conducive to inclusion and peace, and pave the way for "atonement and reconciliation" (Barkan, 2006, p.7).

Yet, in practice, government apologies do not always produce these desired effects. When an official makes an apology on behalf of a democratic state, the potential for reconciliation and renewed commitment to common morality lies in a space that holds not only the apologizer and those who suffered the wrong, but also numerous individuals and collectives with particular interests and agendas. In fact, official apologies are often followed by heated public debates in which many critical views rise to the surface. The controversies in the public arena demonstrate the difficulty of realizing the moral and social promise of the act in practice.

The gap between theory and practice piqued my interest. When many social actors interpret official apologies through their own particular critical lenses, how can we, as researchers, determine the meanings of these acts? Before rushing to seek answers, it was necessary to verify that this question was indeed worth exploring. In order to pinpoint issues for further investigation, I needed to establish exactly how far the applicability and the explanatory power of existing apology theories reached, and what was beyond their scope.

For this purpose, I conducted a case study to test apology theory against one case–UK Prime Minister Tony Blair's apology to a group of citizens who had been falsely accused and unjustly convicted of carrying out bombings for the Irish Republican Army. This test case defined the independent variable

("official apology") and the outcome variable ("reconciliation") in such a way as to facilitate comparison with the salient apology theories.

The case study revealed that there was indeed much worth investigating. The UK apology had sparked criticism even though there was broad societal agreement about the need to rehabilitate the victims. There were conflicting opinions about the location of the apology and its mediatized character, and the prime minister was criticized for his lack of concern for victims of other miscarriages of justice and for his poor moral judgment on previous occasions. A brief inquiry into leading apology theories indicated that these features of the case could not be readily captured and explained.

Informed by this first case study, I defined official apologies as public performances in which the apologizer not only uses speech to enact meaning, but also employs dramaturgical tools. These performances are staged and mediatized, and thus susceptible to interaction with a broader set of social actors than those physically present at the scene (Hajer, 2009). As a result, their meaning is co-created by dynamic and heterogeneous "publics" that take interest in the act for a range of reasons (Dewey, 2012). The case study further led me to refine the research goal: it now became a matter of making sense of official apologies as public, staged performances that take place in multi-actor environments.

Before delving into the undertaking, I sought a more profound understanding of the state of the theory. What rationales underlie the salient theoretical approaches? What avenues of analysis do these approaches open up? Why do these approaches not address elements of dramaturgy and the multi-actor environment more deeply? Thoroughly reviewing the growing literature on apologies from a variety of academic disciplines, I concluded that analyses of (official apologies) focused on the victim-perpetrator relationship and used examples of apologies between individuals in the private realm as point of reference. When studies took the broader societal context into account, they tend to rely on wide-ranging notions, such as "society" and "state", which were too broadly defined to offer the refined equipment necessary to analyze the equivocality that defines the multi-actor context of official apologies.

The theoretical approaches also focused on speech, with reference to J.L. Austin's speech act theory (1961). This left the non-verbal elements of the performance largely unexamined. If these elements were considered they were primarily discussed in terms of either the sincerity of the apologizer or the ritualistic character of the act – a Turnerian approach in which repetition, convention, and univocality were central, endowing the performers with well-established ways to enact meaning.[213] The latter approach, I argued, was not helpful for developing a better understanding of the dynamics of the multi-actor environment.

Hence, apology studies proved to be incapable of fully capturing the dramaturgical elements of apology performances, nor the heterogeneity of the context in which they take place. These important features of official apologies remained undertheorized. The case study and the literature review further led me to conclude that I had to start at the very basis of theorizing and *re-imagine the concept of official apology*. Building a conceptual framework I could perhaps offer a model with greater analytic potential to understand the elusive phenomenon of official apology. This undertaking was at the core of this thesis.

9.1.2 A novel framework

Drawing from studies in the fields of philosophy, anthropology, sociology, theatre studies, and the political sciences – most notably those of thinkers such as Judith Butler, Charles Taylor, Nick Smith, and Maarten Hajer – I developed a framework for interpreting offcial apologies from the foundation up.[214] Some elements of the framework were basic, like the specific expressions in the verbal statement of the apologizer. This is an oft-used approach to determine if the utterance "counts" as an apology. Examples of such expressions include an acknowledgement of responsibility for the wrongdoing and an expression of regret.

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[213] Turnerian refers to anthropologist Victor Turner who wrote a well-known theory of rituals, which those discussing apology as ritual cite frequently.

[214] From the foundation up: that is, I infused the conceptual framework with insights from other academic disciplines than apology scholarship.

Other elements were novel and more complex, such as the notion of “moral interlocutorship”– a dual concept that is crucial for an official apology to exist as a public moral act. It references, first, the intimate interaction between apologizer and victim who look for common moral ground as peers who are susceptive to each other’s feedback and who, in so doing, become interdependent. This concept was originally developed by philosopher Nick Smith (2008) for individual apologies in private settings and had remained underexplored in apology studies.

Translating Smith’s idea to the realities of the public arena for the first time, I proposed to add a second dimension: in cases of public apology moral interlocutorship also references the ongoing civic conversation about moral issues, which involves not just the inner circle of apologizer and victim, but also numerous other parties throughout society who contribute to public moral discourse and take notice of the apology performance through the media.

The framework that I developed at that point resembled a house in various stages of construction. One room was done – carpeted, painted, and ready to use (the domain of "speech"). It was built on well-established, strong foundations (apology theory). Other rooms ("dramaturgy" and "multi-actor environment") were built on a foundation made up of bricks from a variety of adjacent fields (philosophy, anthropology, sociology, theatre studies, and political science). The construction seemed solid, but real life conditions would have to prove its durability.

With this framework erected, the four case studies in this thesis represent the endeavour to finish the house and make it fit for habitation. In other words, empirical data would have to test and enrich the theoretical work-in-progress. I operationalized the conceptual framework to conduct these four studies. This process produced measures to guarantee validity and reliability in each case study, such as the use of multiple sources, and it also resulted in a concrete plan for the collection of data, multiple frameworks for systematic data analysis, and a set of viable research objectives and questions for each case study.

Selecting the cases, I relied on practical and methodological criteria. For example, to maximize opportunities to reach the research objectives, cases varied in terms of the apology performance and multi-actor environment (Yin, 1994). I then conducted four within-case analyses, to examine four

apologies in their individual contexts. This examination, aided by the novel analytical framework, has informed the findings in the individual case chapters, and this final chapter presents the conclusions of the cross-case analysis. The goal of the latter was to find common themes and patterns, and to help provide an answer to the central question that is valid beyond one case (George and Bennet, 2005; Yin, 2004).

9.1.3 Rationale for sequential presentation of the cases

Before discussing the findings in detail, one last issue needs clarification. In the introduction to this thesis, I discussed my choice for a sequential presentation only in practical terms: a systematic thick description of each case would have resulted in excessively long chapters and very bored readers. For that reason I included only the parts of the case descriptions that helped accumulate insights.[215]

However, the sequence of the cases was also based on another principle, previously underemphasized: their relative *level of ambiguity*. Each apology case introduced greater interpretive challenges. Establishing a coherent set of meanings of the apology at issue became increasingly complex. In the first case (the Canadian apology), the dramaturgy of the performance reinforced the meanings that speech transmitted and little criticism emerged in the public debate afterwards; in the last case (the Dutch apology), however, the event elucidated that the perspectives of offender and victims on the actual wrongdoing were incongruous, and the act engendered critical reactions in the public arena.

Unsing the broad analytical lens to interpret official apologies, enriched our understanding of the acts, but, as cases grew more complex, also revealed complications that required further reflection, including misalignment of elements of the performance and conflicting interpretations in the public debate. In other words, using the heuristic facility of a new analytical framework, more aspects of official apologies became noteworthy, and these aspects presented new challenges in making sense of these acts. This approach allowed a new fundamental question to emerge: how to deal with confusing cues for interpretation?

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[215] The full case reports are available upon request.

So, after exploration, the central question of this thesis can be defined more precisely and more succinctly: *how to make sense of public, official apology performances in multi-actor environments – and of their ambiguities?* I shall try to answer it in the remainder of this chapter.

9.2 Interpretive challenges

In order to answer this question, it is important to take stock of the misalignments that became manifest in the cases. These misalignments between (elements of) speech and dramaturgy present confusing cues for interpretation, contributing to the ambiguity of official apologies. To get a better understanding of this ambiguity, we can turn to the interpretative challenges that were identified in the conclusion of each case chapter.

Proceeding from the most straightforward case, no noteworthy misalignments could be observed in the Canadian apology. The dramaturgy of the event in Canada reinforced the meanings that were expressed through speech. The apologizer sought to recognize the cultures, heritages, and languages of Aboriginal peoples, admitting that the brutal attempt to erase these through the residential school system had been wrong. The non-verbal elements of the act turned the performance into a lively celebration of the survival of these cultures, heritages, and languages. The apologizer not only said that these had to be recognized and cherished, but also made room for public rejoicing in Aboriginal cultures at the very moment of the apology.

The second case—the Belgian apology for the persecution and deportation of Jews in the Second World War—showed a lack of alignment between speech and just one element of dramaturgy. The event in Mechelen had drawn about two dozen dignitaries to the scene, including high-ranking government officials on whose behalf the apology was extended. They were conveniently and comfortably seated on a stage under a canopy, shielded from the hot sun, whereas the victims—seniors of 80 years and up—were seated in chairs, sometimes their wheelchairs, on the pavement in the unusually hot sun. This element of the staging was misaligned with the rehabilitation of the victims that was central to the apology statement.

The UK apology for shipping impoverished children off to Commonwealth territories without parental guidance and consent introduced two more serious misalignments. Examining the various apology events in London and Australia, we observed a difference between the statements of the apologizer and the victims' representative. The latter defined the victims' community in terms of pain and loss,

and spoke of those who had taken their lives because of the childhood traumas inflicted on them, while the apologizer praised the addressees as resilient "survivors" and spoke of happy family reunions.

The second misalignment in this case emerged in one performance at a remote location. In Perth, Australia, where a government representative made a perfunctory reading of the UK prime minister's statement , the event was so poorly orchestrated that there was an immediate outcry from attendees. The victims made clear that the event itself and its abrupt ending were far from satisfactory.

In the final case of the Dutch apology, the event put the contradictory perspectives of the apologizer and the victims in sharp relief. According to the Dutch government, its own military had executed about 150 men in the Indonesian village of Rawagede in 1947 after the villagers refused to give up a local commander known for his vicious raids against the Dutch. Forced to apologize to the surviving relatives by a court ruling, the Dutch government's representative did not deliver a *mea culpa*, but spoke briefly and vaguely about what had happened.

His performance stood in contrast with the Indonesian representative's portrayal of the wrongdoing: the Dutch, according to the latter, had shot over 400 blameless men and boys, and the mass execution constituted a war crime committed by brutal suppressors during the Indonesians' just war for independence. The entire apology event, organized in the village where the massacre had taken place, sought to transmit this perspective.

Based on these cases, in order to help researchers navigate the various interpretative challenges that they may confront, I propose a typology of misalignments in public apology performances.

Table 16: Types of ambiguities in public (apology) performances

Ambiguities	**Definition**	**Example**
Textual ambiguities	Misalignment of elements within a verbal statement, or misalignment of multiple verbal statements	UK: Westminster
Dramaturgical ambiguities	A lack of unity within casting, staging and scripting	UK: Perth
Performance ambiguities[216]	Misalignment between speech and other elements of performance (including acting)	Belgium, Netherlands

9.2.2. Conflicting interpretations

Considering the ways in which meanings of official apologies are subsequently constructed in the public arena makes their ambiguous nature even more evident. The public's diverse and even conflicting readings of the acts add to the list of interpretative challenges that we have just identified. Let us discuss the four cases again to see what issues came up.

In the Canadian apology, few critical voices were heard. Some victims said the apology was long overdue and would not ease all of the pain inflicted. Others urged government to live up to the expectations set by the Residential School Settlement that preceded the apology. But the overwhelming response to the apology was positive: victims (as well as third parties) affirmed the meanings that the apology conveyed as an expression of respect for Aboriginal cultures and as an act of recognition that the victims deserved after suffering so profoundly.

[216] Term borrowed from Rocklin, 1988, p. 156.

In the Belgian case, however, some problems arose. Treating the apology as a political statement, one commentator criticized it as a leftist action against contemporary right wing discourse. Urging government to align its policies with the values expressed in the apology, another criticaster saw it as a statement that was inconsistent with government actions in the field of foreign policy. These interpretations could be understood in relation to the apology statement itself, which included prominent references to contemporary politics and policies.

The third case (in the UK) seemed uncomplicated at first sight. Stating that the apology was either welcome or well-deserved, victims and commentators alike approved of the act. At second sight, however, complications emerged. As in the Belgian case, some critics treated the apology not just as a moral act, but also as a political and policy event. They linked it to contemporary child care policies or saw it as a ploy to help the prime minister getting re-elected. Moreover, the majority of the victims discussed the apology's meaningfulness—or, better said, its lack of meaningfulness—in terms of its timing. The majority said that it was long overdue, that many of the victims had not lived to receive it or that they had needed help a long time ago when the UK government turned a blind eye.

In the analysis of the Dutch response to the ambassador's apology for the postcolonial mass execution in Rawagede, members of the offender group gained prominence in the debate. They offered accounts of violence on the part of Indonesians that had occurred in the same timeframe as the massacre, and from which the Dutch inhabitants of the archipelago had badly suffered. Blurring the line between Dutch "perpetrators" and Indonesian "victims," they infused the debate with examples of atrocities that had been committed by the latter.

Others focused on the legal procedure that had brought about the apology. Critics took the view that an apology mandated by the court had no moral meaning or value. Adding to the complexity of the meaning making process, some voices in the debate demanded that the Indonesians apologize to the Dutch for their transgressions. Those promoting this view cited a need to establish a balanced view of history; the apology was a teachable moment that taught only half of the history lesson.

Table 17: Typology of the public debates in the case studies

Multi-actor environment	Description	Case
"Consensus"	• Relative consensus on the meanings of the apology and on its meaningfulness	Canada
“Dissenting voices”	• Modest criticism in both quantitative and qualitative terms • Interpretations situate the meanings of the apology in other realms than the moral realm (politics, policies)	Belgium
"Substantial Criticism"	• Moderate to heavy criticism, in both quantitative and qualitative terms • Interpretations situate the meanings of the apology in other realms than the moral realm (politics, policies) • Introduction of a standard against which to measure the apology’s meaningfulness (e.g. its timing)	UK
"Controversy"	• Heavy criticism, in both quantitative and qualitative terms • Interpretations situate the meanings of the apology in other realms than the moral realm (legal) • Introduction of a standard against which to measure the apology’s meaningfulness (moral reciprocity)	The Netherlands

Like the misalignments in performance that we have discussed, the debates and criticisms that follow official apologies offer students of apology diverse and even contradictory cues for interpretation. The act is situated in various realms of meaning (moral, political, etc.), and its meaningfulness is evaluated against various standards (in terms of timing, vis-à-vis other acts, etc.). Taken together, these features make official apology an ambiguous act that leaves room for more than one interpretation.[217]

Defining official apology as an essentially ambiguous act does not make things easier for researchers. In fact, it raises many questions. We have already formulated many of these questions in the conclusions of the case chapters.[218] To cite just a few examples: should we see an official apology as a

[217] This definition of ambiguity excludes forms of openness and vagueness, which can also confront those who aspire to make sense of the act with interpretative challenges.

[218] The questions were not complete; they did not address all problems that can emerge during interpretative analysis of public performances, like official apologies.

morally meaningful act and, at the same time, as a significant political and policy statement, or do the apology statement's implications for electoral politics and government policy erode its moral meaning? (Belgium) If all victims and third parties affirm that the moral gesture is significant as an act of recognition, but many victims also criticize the apology's lateness, how to evaluate its moral meaningfulness? (UK) If a court ruling forces the offender to apologize, can the act still carry moral meaning? (The Netherlands)

Situated at the end of within-case analyses, these questions once seemed very different in kind. They also appeared to be difficult, if not impossible, to categorize and answer. Yet, having discussed and organized the underlying issues in terms of ambiguity of meaning, we can see that they are subordinate to the main question that has evolved during the research: how to make sense of official apologies and their ambiguities.

9.3 Research conclusions

9.3.1. "The Centrality of Performance"

Leaving the nuances and complexities that emanated from the case studies aside for a moment, there are two relatively straightforward conclusions. The first is that considering dramaturgy is indeed essential for the purpose of interpreting official apologies and the second is that public apologies are predominantly ambiguous acts. These conclusions are supported by the evidence presented in the case studies and important as such, but also very much “common sense”. I will briefly discuss these two conclusions before I turn to more novel and nuanced insights and their implications for our understanding of public apologies.

First of all, dramaturgical elements of the performances transmit meanings, just as verbal statements do. They can add to or diminish the meaning of verbal statements. They can even make or break apology events. The victims' revolt in Perth, Australia, in particular, cannot be explained without taking dramaturgy into account. Textual analysis of the statement does not have the explanatory power to predict this outcome: the apologizer uttered the exact same words as his colleagues did at other venues. To further support this conclusion, we can turn to cases in which verbal and non-verbal tools were either well or poorly chosen and utilized on stage. In the town of Mechelen, for example, the apologizer spoke at a site dedicated to education and commemoration, which reinforced a meaning that was notably transmitted through speech: to educate the citizens about the atrocities of the past.

In congruence with the views of Maarten Hajer and Jeffrey Alexander that were cited in the opening chapters (2009; 2006), this conclusion directs attention to the importance of performers' capacities to successfully appeal to diverse audiences and to make “an attractively coherent and credible political performance” (Corner & Pels, 2003, p. 57). Continuing this line of thought, the meaningfulness of an apology becomes greatly dependent on the onstage qualities of the performers, as well as the stagecraft of those organizing the public events.

This thesis contributes to theory by providing an enhanced framework, adapted from Hajer, to analyze staged performances. His original framework has been adjusted to enable a clearer analysis of official apologies.[219] Instead of the original notions of scripting, staging, and setting, it promotes the concepts of casting (substantive), staging (spatial), scripting (temporal) and acting (substantive), including speech action and other kinds of action.[220] This framework has been tested in the case studies and ready-to-use in future research.

9.3.2 "Apologies are ambiguous"

A second conclusion is that an official apology is, in essence, an ambiguous act. The case research demonstrates that it can have multiple meanings. The performance carries multiple meanings – not merely a moral one and its significance also depends on subject-bounded considerations, i.e., the angles and interests of the social actors interpreting the public enactment. Listening closely to the voices that can be heard in the multi-actor environment, researchers can make more sense of the ways in which the apology becomes significant.

The acts' significances can be studied from different academic angles. To develop a deeper understanding of each meaning researchers can resort to partial analysis based on their own established areas of interest. Philosophers can study its moral meaning; political scientists can focus on the political implications and experts in public management can take up the act's ramifications in terms of policy. This approach, though, leaves us with incommensurable frameworks for evaluation, but this corresponds to the essential ambiguity of the act.

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[219] As discussed in chapter 2 and 3, the framework was not designed to take account of (the quality of) one's personal performance.

[220] The term "casting" introduced is not part of Hajer's framework; the notion "setting" has been merged with "staging", since both referred to the spatial dimension of performance; the term "scripting" has been partially redefined and there is more emphasis now on its temporal character and, consequently, on the *sequence* of actions; and lastly, the concept of "acting" is added to provide a tool to analyze action.

9.4 A novel approach

In order to fully appreciate the differences, similarities, and nuances in meanings of official apologies, we need to look beyond the statement, the dramaturgy, and the subject-bounded interpretations in the public arena. Apologies have multiple meanings at the same time, depending on the context in which they are interpreted. While apology literature has primarily interpreted apologies in the moral context, my research shows that both performers and publics, consciously or not, take the apology out of that context and place it in other contexts as well.

Looking closely at the meanings of the four apologies, and taking into account their distinctive and common features, we can discern multiple domains in which apologies are interpreted. Distinguishing these domains and determining the salient realms in which apologies carry meaning can help address the fundamental ambiguities that we found to be characteristic of apologies as public events.

I propose to treat an official apology as an act whose meanings can be constructed in four different realms:

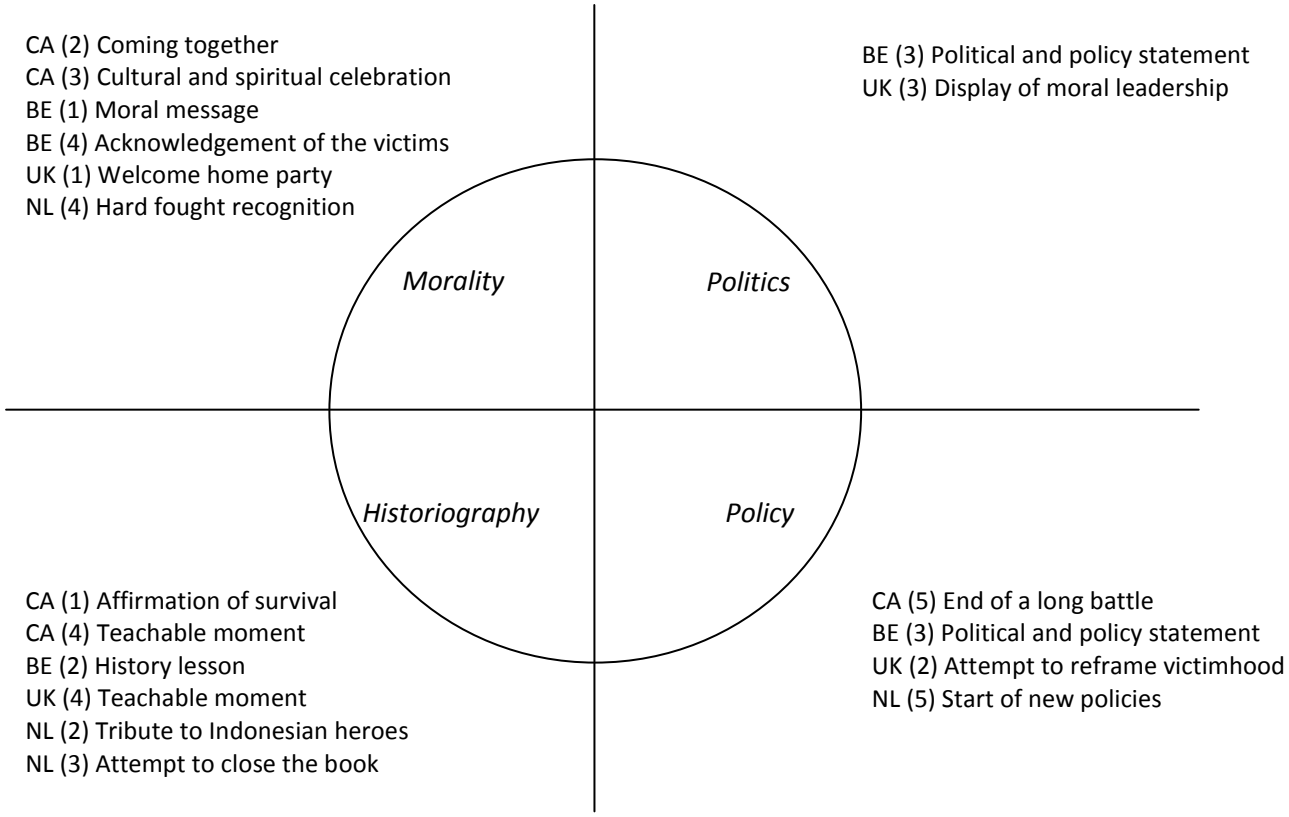
1. The moral realm: the apology as a moral act
2. The political realm: the apology as a political move
3. The policy realm: the apology as policy decision
4. The historiographical realm: the apology as a constitutive event

These realms of meaning are not meant to be exhaustive or mutually exclusive. This typology is intended to organize inquiry and advance our understanding of the practice of official apology, and may very well be refined after application on a much larger number of cases.

Only one realm was given from the outset: the moral realm. In accordance with salient theories, I argued, an apology must exist as a moral act in order to belong to the group of social acts that we understand to be "apologies." (The conceptual framework has explained this more fully, taking

the dual concept of moral interlocutorship to be essential.) The other realms were discovered through interpretative analysis of apologies in theoretically uncharted territory. They were distilled from the case studies with the help of our newly developed, broad analytical lens. So the alternative realms of meaning that I will now discuss in greater detail are developed from the "bottom up" and based the original case research.

Figure 2. Overview of the apologies' meanings in terms of morality, politics, policy, and historiography



9.4.1 Apology as moral act

Official apologies are, by definition, moral acts. What makes them moral is not just that they are about what is right or wrong, or that they address a transgression of a norm that should have been upheld. The moral meaning of official apologies lies first and foremost in their capacity to affect public moral discourse. For this, the apology should publicly establish moral interlocutorship—a process by which both apologizer and victim look for common ground that can situate them in a shared moral community.

As Nick Smith (2008) defined it, pointing to the Hegelian notion of mutual recognition and interdependence, moral interlocutorship entails actively treating one another as peers worthy of engaging one another in a conversation about values and norms. Translating his idea to the *public* act of apology, we must acknowledge that the conversants also speak to and potentially engage numerous actors throughout society that take notice of the act through the media. Hence, although the apologetic exchange that takes place may feel very personal, it is not intimate. Because the apologizer and victim enact meanings during a mediatized event for everyone to see, they do not act as private personae, but as moral agents who, through performance, influence broader public discourse. They speak not just amongst themselves, but to all.

This perspective places those involved in distinct roles. The apologizer serves as symbolic offender who represents the collective that violated a norm. The victims, in turn, having suffered directly or indirectly from the violation, own a moral right to receive an apology *and* to openly establish themselves as moral peers.[221] Both offender and victim are in a strong position to influence public discourse. Other social actors, such as press reporters and television viewers, serve as intermediaries and witnesses and, as moral agents themselves, can reinforce or undermine the apology's impact through future normative behavior.[222]

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[221] The latter idea also departs from existing apology theory.

[222] As discussed in Chapter 3, I take all social actors to be functional moral agents who understand themselves, and discriminate between right and wrong, in reference to public discourse.

Performance

To establish joint discourse, performers can use various dramaturgical tools. Victims can be included on stage, take a public stance, and use the verbal and non-verbal tools at their disposal to put their mark on the performance, as we saw in Canada, but also in Belgium and Indonesia. In addition to that, victims can be invited to attend. The presence of members of the victim community among the spectators at the event puts performers directly under the scrutiny of those who have been harmed, reminding representatives of both the apologizing party and of the addressees that they act on stage as public moral agents, in the presence of other moral agents. And the simple presence of fellow victims, especially in abundance, can also be meaningful to the victim community. "[W]hat really made my day," said an Aboriginal attendee in Ottawa, "was [...] seeing all those brown faces up there [in the House of Commons]. It was a good day for Canada" (Gillies, 2008).

Through speech, performers can call to mind shared norms and values for publics to coalesce around. In all (but the Dutch) cases, performers cited values like "respect," "justice," and "dignity."[223] They can also propose concrete actions to reinforce such values. Introducing an individual action perspective, the apologizer in Belgium asked those listening to defy discriminatory practices and, in Canada, the prime minister asked for attention to the victims' testimonies during future hearings of a truth and reconciliation commission.[224]

Multi-actor environment

Addressing spectators as moral beings, apologies summon them to re-examine their moral identity.[225] Victims may be encouraged to reflect on their resentment, and to stop treating members of "the guilty party" as those responsible for their suffering and therefore, undeserving of their trust. Those on whose behalf the apology is offered may be asked to change their language and their tone, and to see

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[223] Cases indicate that these values are often formulated in the abstract: see Smith (2008) for a critical discussion.

[224] The suggestions made in this chapter for uses of speech and dramaturgy to enact specific meanings are not complete.

[225] The term "moral work" is adapted from philosopher Charles L. Griswold (2007) used it in relation to "forgiveness".

the victims in a new light. “Let us think twice before speaking again of ‘the drunken Indian,’” a Canadian commentator suggested, revising the negative stereotyping of Aboriginal victims in recognition of the fact that the childhood trauma inflicted on them has rendered many incapable of living happy and healthy lives.

In this sense, the public moral apology is a galvanizing act that affects the ways in which members of publics understand their communities and themselves as moral beings. That is why the act can, and often does, engender controversy. For members of the symbolic offender group, identification with the collective that perpetrated the harm may disrupt individual self-perceptions as "good" people with no intention to exclude or enjoy privileges at the expense of others. For members of the victim community, the implicit call to "move on" may be upsetting, since the legacy of the wrongdoing may continue to present challenges to their personal capacity to do so.

On top of that, performers seek commitment to do the moral work that is necessary to right the old wrong. The call to action implicit in official apology can also stir up debate. Some may feel content with how public moral discourse has evolved and settled thus far, and feel reluctant to take up the work that is asked of them. Others may applaud the act because it insists on a norm that they value in the abstract, but still have difficulty changing immoral behavior in practice.

Seen from this angle, heated debate in the aftermath of an official apology does not immediately erode its moral significance. Although salient theories often treat controversy as evidence of the act's failure, the presumption that official apologies can smoothly transform public discourse and readily integrate the public into to the proposed moral framework is unrealistic. In insisting or implying that the absence of public consensus spells an apology’s failure to fulfill its moral potential, theorists create an impossible standard. They overestimate what any public moral act can accomplish in heterogeneous western democracies. Further, official apologies are situated in series of developments and events that all together have the potential to help moral agents move forward. Taking a long and broad view, the apology can be a valuable step in the slow march toward a more inclusive and just society.

Moreover, the idealism that treats controversy as failure blinds us to opportunities. If those interested in promoting reconciliation and social justice—researchers and practitioners alike––look deeper into debates, they will find that they point to a wealth of topics, perspectives, and parties relevant to this process. The debates around public apologies can enrich reconciliation processes, but only if our disappointment in the lack of unity does not cloud over our capacity to discern the many opportunities that exist.

Moral authority

One last note on apology as a moral act is required.[226] Early on, we established with the help of critical thinkers such as Hajer and Van Zoonen, that the political leaders and/or officials who typically offer government apologies lack prescriptive powers in contemporary society. In order to enact meaning and "make their claims resonate" throughout society they have to appeal to a multitude of social actors who do not necessarily share norms and values and may refuse to heed their moral call (Hajer, 2009). Whether or not those on stage have the ability to act as moral authorities remains a question: they may very well call on a moral community that does not (yet) exist.

The case research shows that indeed, such communities are not to be taken for granted. The lead up to and aftermath of an official apology often involves controversy over the wrongdoing, the framing and handling of the transgression, the values and norms at stake, and many other topics as well. Hence, performers on stage will have to *call into existence* such community by making its potential individual members aware of their shared values (Moore, 2013). They have to construct an imaginary community that others can feel part of, to use the words of public management expert Keith Grint (2000, p. 6; 't Hart, 2014, p. 23). This way, moral authority becomes an activity—not something that someone *is*, but something that has to be exercised.

Exercising moral leadership includes what leadership expert Elizabeth Moss Kanter called “integrative work” that needs to be done to call into being a (temporary) community (Nohria, 2010, p. 575). At maximum, this work comprises three distinctive efforts. First, it entails the construction of an offender

[226] This notion has been conceptualized and operationalized in chapter 3, 4 and the appendices.

community on whose behalf the apology is offered. It is assumed that this work is the hardest: calling upon individuals to assume membership of this particular group is, of course, not very attractive. The Belgian PM referenced the resistance of approximately 1,500 citizens to the Nazi command during the Second World War, as well as courageous citizens who had recently acted against extremism. This kind of acknowledgement can serve to avoid stigmatization of all members of the offender community, and enable them to identify themselves with those who stood and stand "on the right side" of history.
The second community that needs to be called into being is the victim community. Although at first sight this effort may seem the easiest, the cases presented indicate that this work can be tricky. From the onset it is not always clear who exactly qualifies for victimhood from the perspective of either offender or victim communities. The Dutch case in particular showed that if the addressees of the apology materially benefit from some kind of policy arrangement, other "victims" may step forward and claim their share of the benefits that are offered. And even without such arrangements in place, we saw a similar mechanism at work in the very first case study of Blair and the alleged IRA bombers: other victims of miscarried justice demanded a comparable gesture.

The third effort is to create a moral community that members of both the offender and victim groups can join. Through speech, the performers can outline the values that all can coalesce around in the present and future. They can also present the apology as a journey towards higher moral ground that everyone can partake in. Quoting Churchill, UK Prime Minister Brown said, "All people make mistakes, but only the wise learn from their mistakes," thereby inviting members of the offender group to take their place among "the wise" (10 Downing street, 2010).

Through dramaturgy, performers can set up inclusive events that hint at the desired integrated community. The Canadian apologizer took part in a smudging ceremony and followed the lead of Aboriginal elders conducting the ritual. The Aboriginal representatives, in turn, respectfully offered gifts to the prime minister. Introducing an individual action perspective, they modeled actions that other moral agents in society could take in order to do their share of the moral work necessary to realize the apology's moral potential.

To conclude, both speech and dramaturgy offer performers opportunities to do the integrative work (plural) that is required in fragmented societies. Strategically appealing to the spectators, they can

carefully craft their words, model the desired moral actions, and make the most of other opportunities to enact meaning. As such, partaking in an apology performance becomes an act of moral leadership.

9.4.2 Apology as political move

Official apologies are also *political* acts. They have meaning in the world of politics, which is, broadly speaking, the realm of competing views and interests, support and opposition, accrual and loss of power and status, and the exercise of influence in pursuit of collective and/or individual goals.[227] The cases indicate that social actors who make sense of the act focus on a subset of political processes—namely, the competitive activities associated with winning and holding control over government.[228] These activities involve, most prominently, those who seek to hold office (e.g., parties, politicians) and the electorate that selects representatives and allows them to use the public authority that comes with the office.

Official apologies are political not just because of the conspicuous involvement of office holders and the electoral interests that they may have in mind. The case research shows that the nature of the responses to apologies makes them essentially "political": consciously or not, many social actors who see political representatives on stage interpret their performances *as voters*. A purely moral perspective would cast the apologizer in the role of symbolic offender and moral agent, but the cases show that many spectators view the apologizer first as a political actor with an interest in holding office. They suspect that he or she self-servingly seeks to pander to constituencies.

When apologies are offered in parliament, the venue can reinforce this view. Parliament has become known as *the* place for competitive debates in which politicians try to set themselves apart. Hungry for

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[227] This is my own, colloquial operant definition of "politics", which serves the purpose of this study. More formal definitions of politics refer, for example, to "state politics" in terms of formal governance structures and the organized control over state affairs, or to "organizational politics" in terms of power struggles and turf wars in organizational behavior. Rather than further complexifying or even contaminating the conceptual framework with exogenous terms, I choose to be employ my own conception of "politics" based on the case research and specific to the phenomenon of official apologies.

[228] This focus is congruent with the dictionary definition of politics (e.g., Webster's dictionary).

drama and excitement, the press often ignore consensus voting on broadly supported policy initiatives in favor of breathless reports on and broadcasts of the clashes in parliament. Thus, when an apology is offered in this venue, the public is primed to treat it as a political scene that is defined by the habitual competitiveness of the actors.

Interpreting the apology as a political rather than a moral act recasts the roles of all those involved. The apologizer becomes a political representative with an interest in putting forth his or her best performance to appeal to voters.[229] Seen from this angle, the victims either become instrumental to the politician's performance, or play their own part as representatives of a particular voter group that is to be courted. Similarly, those who respond to the apology do so in political capacity as well—for example, as political opponents of the apologizer who compete for office, as fellow party members, and as members of the press corps that reports on all things political.

From this perspective, the official apology ultimately serves electoral interests and is to be treated as an attempt to attract voters.[230] When Prime Minister Gordon Brown apologized for the UK's child migration scheme, third parties saw the act as an expression of leadership and, consequently, of the apologizer's fitness for office during an election year. When his predecessor Tony Blair apologized to alleged IRA bombers, many understood it as an attempt to draw voters to the SDLP, the Northern Irish political party that had lobbied for the apology. The SDLP was seen as one of Blair's important allies in the Northern Irish peace process in those days.[231]

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[229] Or, in case of the Dutch ambassador to Indonesia, it concerned a representative of a government, led by a coalition of political parties that regularly face general elections.

[230] There are, of course, more nuanced effects possible.

[231] As noted in chapter 1, the SDLP, an ally of Blair, faced elections. The British PM, went the argument, needed the SDLP to win so its members could provide a counterweight to the hardliners who sat at the negotiation table in the Northern Irish peace talks. These hardliners were the representatives of political party Sinn Fein, that competed for seats in Northern Irish constituencies with the SDLP in the upcoming elections.

Performance

Using dramaturgical tools, apologizers can lay claim to the qualities that they desire to be endowed with as political representatives, and in so doing, engage in what some call "identity entrepreneurship" ((Haslam & Reicher, 2007; 't Hart, 2014, p. 23)). Aiming to impress the electorate, they may signal compassion for the victims and create an impression of empathy. Placing a garland at a remembrance site and conversing with the victims made Belgian Prime Minister Di Rupo look respectful and kind-hearted.[232] Performers also can use speech to this effect. Prime Minister Brown claimed that he would be heading the future campaign for justice for the victims. He blatantly positioned himself as moral leader alongside a much admired social worker whom the victims hailed as “Britain's conscience” (Downing street, 2010).

Many spectators are quick to make sharp criticisms of the political dimension of official apologies, as the cases and the literature review show (Negash, 2008). An apology should not be taken as an opportunity to boost one’s own approval ratings, goes the argument, because this erodes the moral meaning that the act should convey. However, the political (electoral) aspect of an official apology does not necessarily undermine its moral meaning. Under certain conditions, the act can be meaningful in the realms of politics and morality at the same time.

Two hypothetical situations serve to explain this argument. First, suppose that a political leader offers apologies during the election year to a substantial minority group, thereby securing their votes and guaranteeing re-election. Some may scoff that the gesture is motivated by electoral interests and has nothing to do with morality. Yet, even though the apology is indeed deliberately organized around an upcoming election, it can still serve a moral cause. The shared moral discourse that the act establishes may inform the platform on which this leader runs, and if he or she, once re-elected, works to realize the values the apology affirms, it may aid the cause central to the apology. In such a case, the political and moral dimensions of the apology are aligned, since the ploy ultimately serves the moral cause at issue.

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[232] Intentionally or not.

The second hypothetical situation supposes that a leader offers an apology without due political consideration: it is ill-timed, and other events and developments immediately overtake the news cycle. The act goes unnoticed, and the minority voters (either actively or passively) help elect another candidate whose political agenda reflects the interests of the majority and whose track record ignores the minority's concerns. In this scenario, though the minority members have received an official apology, the recognition will be short-lived and the corresponding treatment as moral peers undermined, since the electorate endorses the candidate who will not live up to the apology's moral promises.

This take on the political and moral dimension of apology brings into mind the Aristotelian perspective of ethics and politics: the good of the individual (what Aristotle called "ethics") stands in immediate relation to the good of the polis ("politics"). An apology can strategically serve the electoral interests of a politician and, at the same time, serve the (moral) cause of the victims.[233]

Multi-actor environment

In public debates, political evaluations of apologies are inevitable. These may be separated from moral assessments or entwined with them. Critical (and often cynical) interpretations come from press reporters, commentators, fellow politicians, and common voters who do not need any cues from others to detect electoral interests. “What [the prime minister] said was quite moving, but my initial reaction was that it was a political ploy, being an election year,” one of the victims in the UK case stated. “Even so, I can still accept what he said” (Cornish Guardian, 2010).

Such interpretations should not be too disappointing. Those who would like to see apologies and debates in their aftermath as purely moral matters might have to acknowledge that in heterogeneous western democracies, members of publics participate in debates in multiple identities—not just as moral beings, but also as parents, citizens, and (as the cases indicated) voters, to name just a few.

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[233] A common argument is that politics are always moral (e.g., Etzioni, 2003). Yet, in these discussions politics are defined in the broad(est) sense– for example, as the application, reallocation, and legitimation of power in society– not in the limited way as I defined it.

It remains true, however, that controversies around official apologies can drag the acts and those who perform them into the mud, and cynical political interpretations sometimes prevail over the view of an apology as a morally meaningful act. Ideally, the "meaning making" process should remain balanced: it is incumbent upon the performers not to inject too much politics into the act, and, for their part, those interpreting the act should be cautioned not to take an apology as pure pandering without due consideration of its moral worth. Yet, the degree to which a given polity can produce such a balance of views remains an open question.

9.4.3 Apology as policy decision

An official apology is not just moral and political in nature. It is also a policy event: a critical, temporally located decision point situated in a broader process that produces a specific policy outcome.[234] This process involves formulating, advocating, and selecting courses of action that result in public policies to resolve specific substantive problems. (Definitions adapted from Laumann & Knoke [1987, p. 10].)[235] In the case of the Canadian apology, these problems concerned the socio-economic and health issues affecting AboriginalCanadian communities, and in the Belgian case, problems of social exclusion and the lack of a universal decent standard of living.

The apology can have significance in the realm of public policy in multiple ways. For example, it can be a statement with material and immaterial consequences; a gesture that makes the government subject to rulings of national and international law; a move that makes the state liable to legal claims for compensation and reparation, and even indictment; or an illustration of more generic government policy.

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[234] In the original definition - see the next footnote - this outcome is called "option".

[235] The original definition of policy event is: "a critical, temporally located decision point in a collective decision-making sequence that must occur in order for a policy option to be finally selected" (Laumann & Knoke, 1987, p. 251).

As such, official apologies can either signal policy reform or affirm policies that are already in place. In the Dutch case, the 2011 apology came with a novel compensation policy. The foreign minister announced that from then on, the Dutch state would agree to pay damages up to a set amount, without judicial intervention, to victims in cases similar to Rawagede. In Canada, the apology was situated at the end of a decade-long battle over Aboriginal concerns, which had resulted in a comprehensive policy package that included groups' rights to systems of social and health support, as well as individual entitlements to financial compensation.

In the policy making process, the executive branch of government, whose representatives offer official apologies, is deeply involved. In fact, apologies themselves are examples of executive decisions that are typically made with formal discretionary authority.[236] (In that sense, they *are* policy decisions.) It is important to note that these decisions are not made abruptly: they are informed by prior policy arrangements. The options that apologies reflect and endorse build on previous attempts by government to solve problems (Skocpol & Finegold, 1995).[237]

This perspective situates those involved in the apology in a context that influences what is acceptable, manageable, and doable at the time of the performance: performers enact meanings not just in reference to moral and political discourse, but also in reference to policy discourse, with all the opportunities and limitations that come with it.[238] One apologizer who was very much constrained by established policy was the Dutch ambassador to Indonesia who, following his personal moral compass,

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[236] In all cases the executive branch's decision to apologize has been within the boundaries of discretionary authority. This is not to say that these decisions haven't sparked debate among legislators, but generally speaking this decision did not require legislative action. In the Dutch case, parliament had approved of the apology (as the ambassador mentioned), but it could have been offered without the appreciation of the legislators. The initiative to pay damages in similar cases was taken by the executive as well.

[237] Policy legacy theory has been developed in studies of social welfare, most notably by Theda Skocpol and Kenneth Finegold (1995) in *State and Party in America's New Deal*, a book about the incremental development of US welfare policies.

[238] Both apologizer and addressees are placed in this context. Yet, the apologizer has (de jure) formal authority in the policy making process.

apologized to the Indonesian widows of Rawagede in 2008. He was swiftly reprimanded by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs: the Dutch government was not yet prepared to make such a generous gesture. Three years later, apparently, it was ready to change course.

Treating official apology in terms of policy again recasts the roles of those involved. This time, social actors are involved in their capacity as "policy makers" who have specific interests, concerns and preferences to pursue a particular policy option.[239] The apologizers act as heads of the executive who use public authority in the process of producing policy outcomes, and who can draw attention to these options during the apology performance.[240] The apology also engages everyday citizens on whose behalf options are formulated, advocated, and selected, and who are subjected to the policies that result from this process.

Other actors may try to influence the policy making process, such as opinion makers and representatives of advocacy groups. These include individuals like Jeffrey Pondaag and Liesbet Zegveld, respectively advocate and attorney for the Indonesian victims, who put pressure on the Dutch government to apologize; Margaret Humphreys, the Nottingham social worker who fought to disclose UK child migration policies and to get official recognition for the victims; and Will Patist, who advocated on behalf of Dutch military veterans.

The victims are involved as the group of citizens that usually stands to experience the consequences of the policy option at issue. This puts them in the position to hold the executive's representatives accountable. They can critically question them about the (lack of) alignment of the values and norms that they claim to be important and the public policy options that they endorse; the victims might reasonably ask executive branch leaders "to put their money where their mouth is."

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[239] Policy makers to be taken as a very broad category that includes citizens.

[240] In three cases the apology was offered by heads of the executive; in one case it was offered by a representative who spoke on behalf of government.

In Canada, one of the addressees indeed asked what the government would be providing, and another representative of a victim group that was left out of the Residential School Settlement claimed that it wanted to enjoy similar benefits. "We want in," he declared during his reply in parliament.[241]

Performance

Through dramaturgy, performers can bring to mind current or past policies.[242] The Belgian prime minister apologized in front of the Dossin Barracks, a grand, new, government-subsidized museum established to promote Holocaust awareness—a national education policy goal to combat present day extremism. In Canada, a legislator who was allowed to react to the prime minister's statement made a link with past policies. The House of Commons where all had gathered for the apology, he pointed out, had been home to the legislators who had enacted the racist policies that were central to the apology.

Through speech, the performers can also establish a connection with policy. The statement can provide tacit or overt justification for the (lack of) policies to serve the victims' cause or the more generic public values that are articulated in the apology. Statements may even foreshadow the specific policies that governments intend to cease, create, or prolong, whether subsidies to individual victims or provisions with an aggregate function, such as funding a monument to commemorate the wrong.

The connection can be made directly and explicitly. The Belgian prime minister apologized on behalf of heads of government organizations at the federal, regional, and local levels. Connecting the apology to a range of policy areas, he pledged that these policy makers would all work to fight present-day racism and anti-Semitism. "The battle against fascism and all other forms of extremism is complex," he stated. "It demands a considerable investment in education and culture, but also in employment, housing, and social integration" (CCJB, 2012).

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[241] In the UK the prime minister was questioned by members of Parliament about the support to the victims' trust and about government's current child care policies, as he offered his statement during Question Hour in the House of Commons.

[242] Apologizers can turn the events into occasions to make their policies resonate among publics that are perhaps not likely to take interest in any government actions, but who, as spectators of public and political drama, are drawn to the event.

A more indirect connection could be observed in the UK. Using specific wording, well-chosen anecdotes, and other literary devices, the prime minister created an image of the victims that had implications for public expectations regarding restitution policies. His description of them as "survivors" conjured up an image of a group of resilient individuals, capable of pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps, building lives on their own. He did not extend a helping hand to these individuals, as they (presumably) did not need one. Establishing a travel fund for family reunions, he did not opt for a more costly policy that would entitle individuals to payment of damages.

Multi-actor environment

Marking an inflection point in a history of government denial or acknowledgement of the wrong, the official apology may function as a pivot around which policies can bend and take a new direction. This makes the apology a potential lightning rod for public debate. The policy implications of making (or not making) official apologies include legal ramifications, financial impacts, allocation of resources, recognition of status, etc. None of these implications typically go undisputed.

Even when the apology does not make an obvious impact on policy, social actors can be quick to insert policy issues into the meaning making process. Besides the political question of who loses or gains the hearts and minds of constituencies, there are evident policy concerns, such as the extent to which the apology illustrates and reinforces policy, or signifies a deviation from existing policy, and its exact ramifications. The legal, financial, and public affairs implications alone can convince commentators to support or reject the apology. Seen from this angle, their endorsements, or the lack thereof, do not necessarily signal their degree of *moral* support for the apology.[243] Rather, they display very real policy concerns.

[243] Salient apology theories do not differentiate between sorts of consensus, nor do tey tell apart arguments for (not) endorsing apologies. In contrast, this framework distinguishes disagreements on moral, policy etc. issues.

9.4.4 Apology as historiographical event

In addition to the moral, political, and policy dimensions, official apologies have significant impact on historiography. Apology events contribute to the narrative through which citizens understand themselves and their nation. More specifically, a public apology can profoundly revise or modify the narrative of historically relevant facts and events (Hühn, Meister, Pier & Smid, p. 164). The apology points to a dark chapter of history that was missing or misrepresented in the national narrative and that needs to be (re)written.

The event will not likely go unnoticed: after all, official apologies are highly mediatized performances that attract attention from press and publics. The performers have the opportunity to present novel historical facts and promote a renewed understanding of the past. Making the most of this teachable moment, they can educate broader publics about the wrong, the harm that it has caused, and elucidate the responsibility that national government has had for designing and executing harmful policies on behalf of its citizens.

The historiographical understanding of an official apology emphasizes the role of narration in structuring reality and forming understandings of the self and, in this case, the nation (Polckingthorne, 1991). It also appreciates the singularity and the instantaneous nature of the performance, as well as the agency of those involved. (From a structuralist view of history, the act of official apology would be treated in terms of supra-individual, long-term processes and constructs.)[244]

This view adds to existing outlooks of apology, which some theorists have captured as "truth telling." Apologies can provide factual accounts of what transpired, in which the offender provides accurate information of the wrongdoing, so that the "right wrong" is recognized and responsibility is taken. Ideally, writes Smith, offenders, victims, and sometimes the broader community should reach agreement over what happened (2008, p. 30-32, 140). Truth telling in public, adds Tavuchis, puts matters on record. He proposes to see the documentation as "a prelude to reconciliation," which is the

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[244] Once more, agency is limited in reference to discourse.

"singular and significant achievement of collective apologies" (1991, p. 109).[245] In addition to these views, the approach promoted here posits that putting things on record is a means to influence national historiography and, with that, national identity.

The perspective of official apology as an act with historiographical significance reshuffles the identities and roles of those involved once more. Placed in a pivotal position, the apologizer now functions as a national leader who makes claims about what happened in the past and what that means for the present and the future. Using his social standing—not his discretionary authority—he or she weighs in "to set the historical record straight." The victims can do their share of the historiographical work as experts with first-hand insights into the past. They can help co-create a historical record with facts, anecdotes, and pictures. Functioning as intermediaries and record keepers, the press plays an important role in investigating, composing, and publishing accounts of the past. Lastly, ordinary citizens, if interested in the subject, can help realize apologies' significance by re-telling the revised story of their nation's past.

Performance

It is especially through speech that performers can realize this meaning.[246] They can point to detailed records of what happened, such as authoritative reports of official committees with a mandate to make inquiries into the wrongdoing. (The cases show that such reports often precede apologies.) Performers themselves can also offer facts. In the Belgian case, the apologizer mentioned the numbers of the Jews, Sinti, and Roma that had been deported from Belgian soil and murdered in the death camps. He also repeatedly made clear that his apology served as an acknowledgement of the collaboration of government authorities with the Nazis and as an expression of the will of the current federal government to face what he called "the truth" (CCJB, 2012).

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[245] Tavuchis also briefly suggests that the record can be used in court.

[246] These conclusions are based on the four case studies. Systematic inquiry into a larger number of cases may result in non-verbal strategies to enact this particular meaning.

In contrast, the Dutch apologizer failed to use his apology to give an unflinching account of painful historical events. The ambassador spoke in vague terms about a military “action” that had taken place in 1947. The number of deadly casualties, the nature of the event, and the question of who bore responsibility for it all went unmentioned. This way, he deliberately missed the opportunity to educate Dutch citizens and introduce a more balanced understanding of how their nation had come into being.

To maximize significance in this particular realm, the performers can encourage citizens to follow up on the event. Lacking prescriptive powers, performers can only try to motivate citizens to take action. In two cases education was central. The Belgian prime minister called upon citizens to educate themselves about the past in order to avoid repeating past mistakes. The Canadian apologizer asked publics to be attentive to the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that would start organizing public sessions in which victims would step forward to bear witness of their experiences in the residential schools.

Motivating citizens may not be easy. Members of the offender group may not be inclined to take up civic responsibility; often the wrongdoing was committed by people in the past to whom they do not feel connected. Instead of thinking of national history in terms of a collective past, they may perceive their nation as a collection of individuals who are solely responsible for their own actions, and who happen to live in the same geographical area. Apologizers thus have to make it attractive for citizens become engaged and to take action. They can refrain from playing upon feelings of guilt, but appeal to, for instance, individuals' righteousness in order to provide them with an alternative to feeling bad about past transgressions.

Prime Minister Di Rupo addressed Belgian citizens as members of a community that once transgressed a moral norm and, at the same time, as potential courageous and watchful citizens. He called into mind the 1,500 members of the resistance who had fought against the Nazis and put citizens who had recently stood up against racism and anti-Semitism in the spotlight. In defining a plural identity, he gave them opportunities to identify themselves with past and present heroes on the “right side of history.”

Multi-actor environment

The rewriting of history can be an incremental process, in which contemporary perspectives on the past gradually replace previous ones. Yet, at times, the revision or creation of national narratives become a matter of political turmoil and public concern.[247] In the face of globalism, many individuals, collectives, and their institutions have become preoccupied with the construction of national identity. As political scientist Désirée Kleiner-Liebau writes, "Public debate about immigrant integration has often led to a heightened awareness or even a collective redefinition of identiy" (2009).

Museums of national history, either existing or proposed, have become subject of public and political debates (e.g., in the Netherlands, Canada, and Germany), as have been proposals for civic and history curricula in (public) schools (e.g., in Belgium, Australia, France, Austria, and Denmark).[248] With national narratives attracting substantial attention, it does not come as a surprise that the historiographical meanings that official apologies convey also become scrutinized.

Even before they are offered, controversies emerge around the *possibility* of a government apology. Except in the UK cases, the prelude to the event has never been without contention. Yet, when the lead up goes unnoticed publics may be unpleasantly surprised by an official apology, when they are abruptly confronted with the revision of the nation's narrative. Even though the act may result from careful consideration and intense negotiation in back rooms, the public at large may be taken aback by the "sudden" need to revise the narrative.

National history and national identity are inextricably linked, and unless this link is understood, acknowledged, and carefully considered, official apologies can generate intense opposition. Conversely, if done well, official apologies may turn out to be extremely meaningful events that help nations re-imagine their past, overcome differences, and bring groups together in a new, more inclusive national narrative.

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[247] Political is to be understood here in the broad sense of the word.

[248] Discussions about a pan-European identity, and implications for education and memory culture, have emerged as well, for example, vis-à-vis the possible entry into the Union of Turkey (Aydin-Düzgit, 2012).

9.5 Evaluating official apologies

9.5.1 Alignment across the four realms

Situated in four distinctive realms, the official apology is an inherently ambiguous act. It can be morally significant and rehabilitate the victims as moral peers even while it helps gather the necessary votes to re-elect the apologizer to office. It can indicate policy reform that is much anticipated by the victims, while also promoting the norms that are articulated in the election campaign of the leader on stage. Yet, the implications of an apology across multiple realms are not always perfectly aligned. The apology may be morally significant as a public call to end discrimination against a minority and at the same time reflect policies that continue to favor the majority. Or, as the Dutch case showed, it may be relevant in the realm of public policy by signaling a change of course (to pay damages), but simultaneously be void of moral discourse.

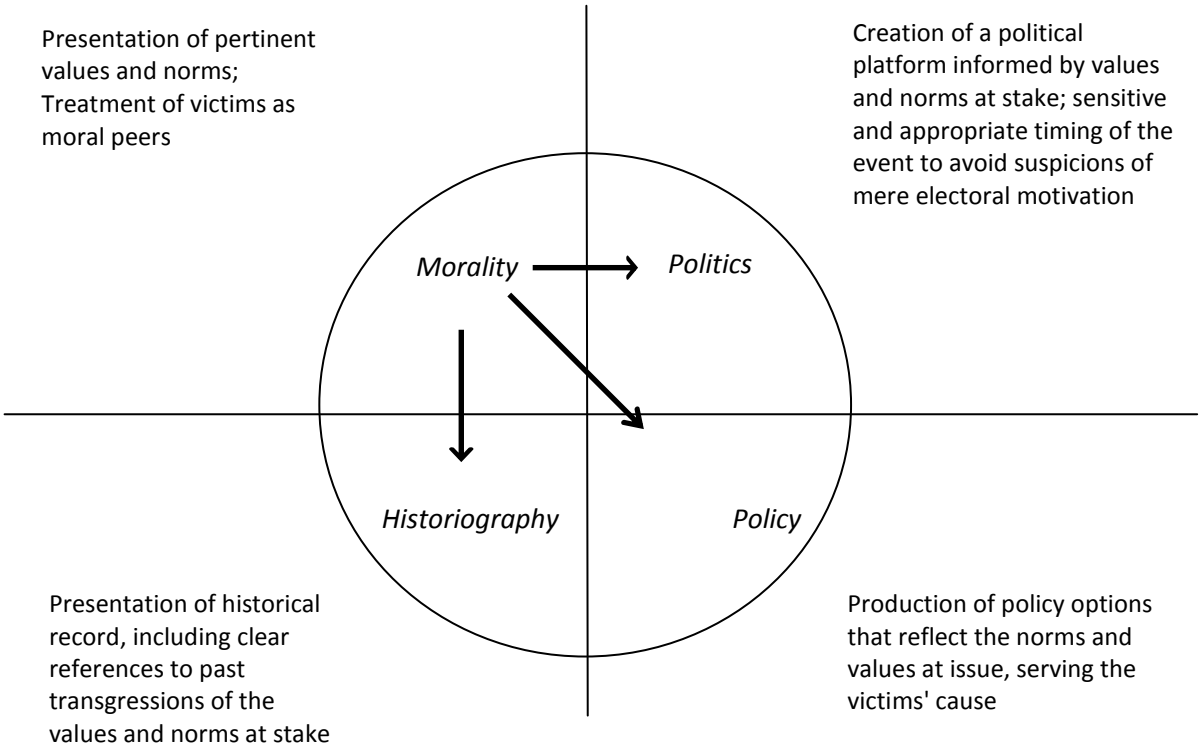
This brings me to a final proposition about how to understand the meaningfulness of official apologies. *Official apologies are most meaningful when their design is aligned across the moral, political, policy and historiographical realms in which they have significance.* Meaningful apologies, then, are acts of alignment—or "reconciliation" one might say, as they “reconcile” meanings within and across multiple contexts and for multiple stakeholders.

To give one practical illustration of how this might work, consider the following scenario. Imagine government leadership offering an apology for a historical wrong. To make a "moral" gesture," the first task would be to consider all the moral implications of such an act in the particular setting, taking the concept of interlocutorship as point of reference. The apologizer could trumpet values and norms and announce that from now on, the victims are worthy of engaging in moral exchange, *and* demonstrate commitment to those ideas through public action and share the stage with the addressees.

Yet, establishing moral discourse jointly with the victims would merely be a necessary condition for an apology: to maximize the act's meaningfulness, it is also necessary to consider the other realms in

which the act has implications. In the political realm, the apologizer can create or modify a political platform that is informed by the values and norms at issue, and choose an appropriate time for the performance that does not raise too many suspicions about the motivation to apologize, and thus, reduce the chance of detracting attention from moral issues in the public debate. He or she can also use executive authority to produce policy options— in terms of compensation or public education, for example—that reflect the values and norms at stake. Finally, by giving an address that presents a factual historical record that explicitly recounts the transgression of values and norms, the implications for national identity can be underlined. The figure below illustrates this alignment effort:

Figure 3. Example of alignment of meanings across realms



Of all the cases examined, the Canadian apology came closest to this ideal. Allowing the victims to perform on the parliament floor signaled moral interlocutorship. All performers made strong moral appeals to those listening. The performance also exemplified the moral actions it sought to elicit across broader publics, with the representatives engaging publicly in respectful interactions and calling upon

others to do the same. At the same time, it served the political interest of the Conservative prime minister by reversing his reputation as a long-time opponent of the interests of Aboriginal peoples. The policy arrangement accompanying the apology included a range of initiatives to advance Aboriginal issues, including financial compensation for individual victims. Finally, the apology statement itself contributed to the historiography of Canada. Broadcasted across the country and included in the parliamentary record, it drew attention to historical facts that many Canadians had been unacquainted with.

9.5.2 Victims as capable agents

The standard promoted here can serve as a point of reference for officials who aspire to offer meaningful apologies. Yet, aligning the distinctive demands and objectives of each realm is easier said than done. In practice, this may prove a difficult or impossible balancing act, since the requirements and objectives of the realms are not always compatible in practice. What makes sense, or is possible, in one realm may undermine the act's meaning in another. There is also no “super rationality” or underlying principle that gives order of precedence, to paraphrase public management expert Ig Snellen (2002, p. 334). In such daunting situations, apologizers will have to prioritize the meanings they seek to realize and be alert to the effects their strategic choices may have on the other potential meanings that the apology may carry. After these choices have been made, they can purposefully select the dramaturgical and verbal tools that will best transmit these meanings on stage.[249]

The standard can also serve as point of reference for the victims. The notion of alignment across realms has profound implications: they do not have to stand by, waiting for the apologizer to make a move. This is, once more, easier said than done, as they may be caught up in personal processes of mourning and healing, and unfamiliar with mediatized public performances. Yet, victims can add to the

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[249] That being said, apology is first and foremost a moral act; its significance in the moral realm is a necessary condition for it to belong to the group of social acts that we call "apologies". See chapter 3 for a discussion of this topic.

meaningfulness of apologies in all four realms. First, *they can claim the opportunity* to publicly fulfill their role as interlocutor in the official forum, so that they can contribute to public moral discourse. Canadian Aboriginal leaders did just this. They persistently requested a voice in the proceedings and, in the very last hour prior to the apology, finally convinced the prime minister to allow them to speak on the floor of the House. This way, they helped realize the full moral potential that only the public act of apology has: to publicly rehabilitate those who were once treated as inferior Canadian citizens as moral interlocutors who stand on equal footing.

In the realm of historiography, victims can position themselves as experts with firsthand knowledge of the wrongdoing and facilitate the composition of a record of the past. They can seek media attention for the harm inflicted on them. They can make strategic use of the media's appetite for dramatic and emotional stories. In the UK case, former child migrants were cited in dozens of newspaper articles. They described their experiences and provided the reporters pictures they had kept of themselves as children, effectively creating a news archive of what happened to them.

These are just two examples of ways in which victims can play an important role in maximizing an apology's significance across realms. Holding the potential to turn the apology into a meaningful event in their hands, *they can do much more than merely accept or reject the apologizer's gesture*. In existing theories, the action perspective of the addressees of apologies has been reduced to the ability to choose between accepting and refusing the offender's statement. The perspective promoted here, in contrast, stipulates that this is not the only possible action for the victims to take.

The figure below presents possible actions to align meanings across the four realms for both apologizers and victims. These are based on the findings of the cross-case analysis and the discussion of the requirements for meaning making in the four realms.

Figure 4. Action perspectives for contributions to alignment for apologizers and victims[250]

Presentation of pertinent values and norms; treatment of victims as moral peers.

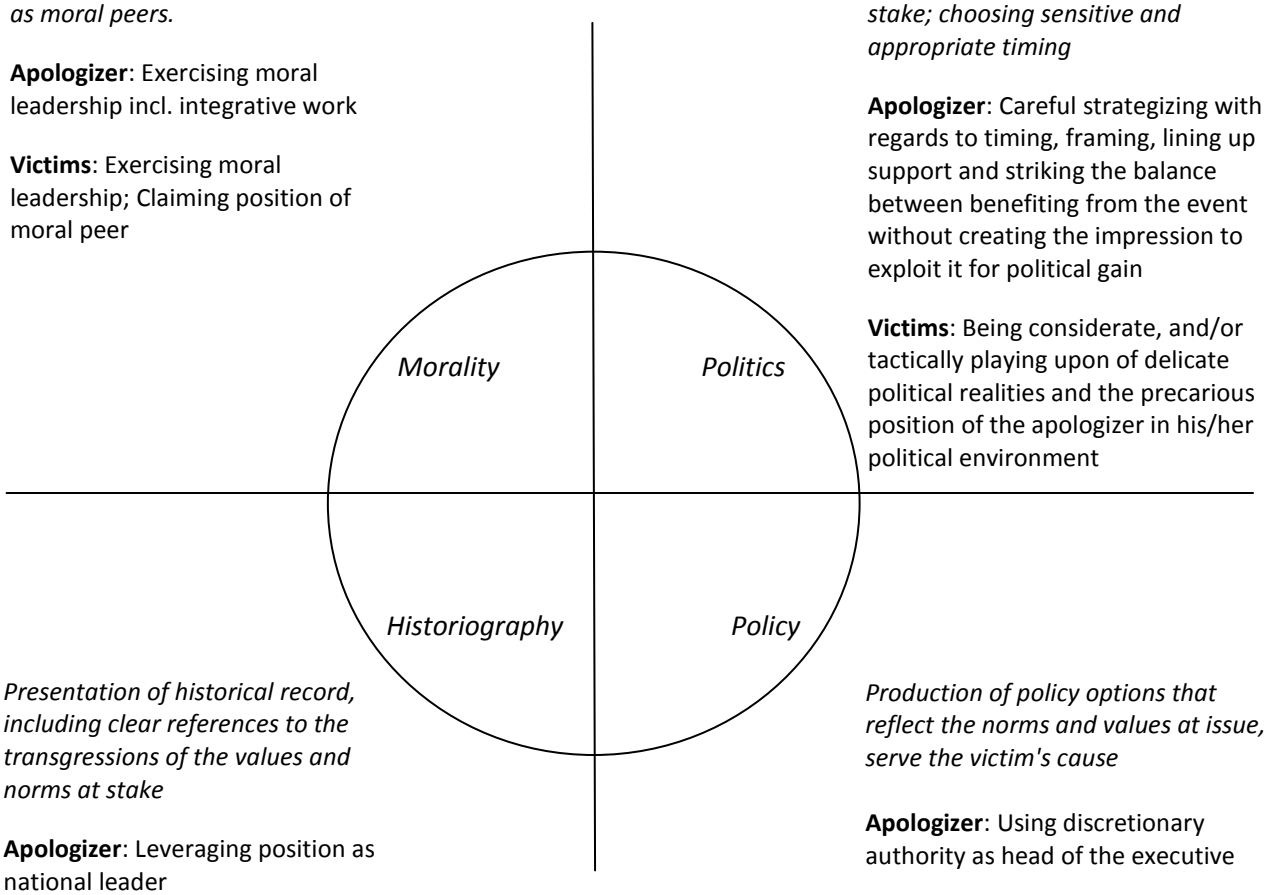
Apologizer: Exercising moral leadership incl. integrative work

Victims: Exercising moral leadership; Claiming position of moral peer

Creation of political platform informed by values and norms at stake; choosing sensitive and appropriate timing

Apologizer: Careful strategizing with regards to timing, framing, lining up support and striking the balance between benefiting from the event without creating the impression to exploit it for political gain

Victims: Being considerate, and/or tactically playing upon of delicate political realities and the precarious position of the apologizer in his/her political environment



Presentation of historical record, including clear references to the transgressions of the values and norms at stake

Apologizer: Leveraging position as national leader

Victims: Leveraging position as experts with first-hand knowledge of historical events to draw attention to what transpired

Production of policy options that reflect the norms and values at issue, serve the victim's cause

Apologizer: Using discretionary authority as head of the executive

Victims: Leveraging position as primary addressees; Forging alliances with powerful advocates; Creating jurisprudence to increase pressure on government

[250] The figure offers some suggestions; there are of course many more actions conceivable.

Hence, underlying the framework presented in this thesis is the assumption that all performers have capacities to enact meanings in various ways. It treats them as capable moral agents who can inform public discourse and promote feasible steps to translate values and norms into concrete action. It also speaks to their capacity to set an example and model the moral action that is required from others. It further speaks to them as political actors who can help set political agendas in election times. It also acknowledges the executive powers of the apologizer as a policy maker, capable of recommending or initiating policies to serve the cause at hand. Lastly, it takes into consideration the (government) representatives' social standing and the victims' expertise as platforms from which to contribute to the historiography of their nation.

9.6 Appealing to multiple publics

To maximize meaningfulness across all four realms, performers must not only align meanings but also somehow engage those watching. If they fail to do so, the apology will not be very significant for social actors outside the inner circle of primary conversants. The apology's moral substance will wither on the vine if moral agents throughout society refuse to acknowledge members of the victim group and continue to prevent them from enjoying the privileges that they do. The same goes for politics and policies: if social actors endorse candidates for office who ignore minority rights, or throw their support behind discriminatory policies, the apology's effects will be short-lived. And its historiographical significance will not be realized as long as the majority of citizens continue to re-tell the old, grand narrative of their nation, in which its people only engaged in noble acts. Somehow, those making the official apology on the public stage will have to engage others.

Recognizing the necessity of engaging others brings us to the final topic in these conclusions: the heterogeneous environment in which the apology is performed. As expected, the four case studies affirm what many scholars have stated over and over again: that contemporary publics are heterogeneous, that social actors each hold their own particular values and beliefs, and that the meaning making processes in which they partake are multifaceted and dynamic. Naturally, these features of the environment create difficult challenges for public performers, such as government officials, who hope to appeal to members of society and exercise leadership. (This explains why some scholars argue that doing so requires extraordinary personal stagecraft [Alexander, 2006; Hajer, 2009]).[251]

Yet, my framework departs from existing views with regard to the question of *how* to overcome these challenges. Theory suggests the answer is to attempt to merge audiences into one, thereby eliminating or negating the effects of the social and cultural fragmentation that pervades societies (Alexander, 2006, p. 50-65). This viewpoint implies, first, that the better one's individual on stage talents are, the

[251] See chapter 3 for a discussion of this topic.

more effective the performance becomes in merging diverse audiences; and, second, that this coming together is the most desirable effect of the enactment of meaning.

The apology cases presented show that public performers can choose from a range of possible tools to appeal to spectators of the apology event, since one and the same "interpreter" may respond to the apology in various identities. Think of the Aboriginal victim in the Canadian case, who spoke in her capacity as addressee of the apology and as a Christian; and of the British former child migrant, who evaluated Brown's gesture as both a voter and as a victim. And think of the Dutch members of the offender group on whose behalf apologies were offered to Indonesian victims of postcolonial violence: they saw themselves also as victims of violent attacks committed by Indonesians. These interpreters make clear that individual social actors can respond in "plural identity" to apologies and other public acts.

This observation indicates that performers can speak to the multiple identities of individuals and collectives. Rather than restrict themselves to approaching the publics they address as members of one particular group, they can appeal to them in manifold ways during one and the same public performance. If spectators are not moved by an appeal to them as fellow citizens, for example, performers can introduce alternative identities and roles that they may find more meaningful.

This approach corresponds with the thinking of philosopher Amartya Sen, who has pointed to the richness and variety of human identity, and its potential for identification with others:

> In our normal lives, we see ourselves as members of a variety of groups—we belong to all of them. The same person can be, without contradiction, an American citizen, of Caribbean origin, with African ancestry, a Christian, a liberal, a woman, a vegetarian, a long-distance runner, a historian, a schoolteacher, a novelist, a feminist, a heterosexual, a believer in gay and lesbian rights, a theatre lover, an environmental activist, a tennis fan, a jazz musician, and someone who is deeply committed to the view that there are intelligent beings in outer space with whom it is extremely urgent to talk (preferably in English). Each of these collectives, to all of which this person simultaneously belongs, gives her a particular identity (2006, p. XII, XIII).

This kind of appeal to plural identity was most apparent in Canada. A politician invited listeners to think of themselves as fellow villagers and asked them to imagine the impact of residential schools on that village: “[P]icture a small village, a small community. Now picture all of its children, gone. No more children between 7 and 16 playing in the lanes or the woods, filling the hearts of their elders with their laughter and joy” (Commons Debates, 2010, p. 6852). In addition, the victims on stage introduced the perspective of families and explained how parents and siblings had been affected, unable to protect children from the horrible conditions in the residential schools. Another victim added the perspective of women who had taken "the brunt of it all," pleading for respect for mothers (Commons Debates, 2010, p.6854).

Sen’s philosophy of the plural identity and the example of the Canadian apology point to the opportunities for performers to engage social actors. Public performers can call upon those watching as neighbors, family members, members of an underprivileged class, religious persons, righteous individuals, voters of a specific party, national citizens, and so forth. The multi-actor environment does not just create challenges for those who take the public stage; it also provides them with extraordinary opportunities to exercise leadership in all realms of meaning.

9.7 The framework vis-à-vis the literature

The approach to official apology promoted here diverges from conventional apology theory in a number of ways. It emphasizes dramaturgy, rather than limiting analysis to speech alone. It approaches the meanings of public apology not just in terms of morality, but also within to a broader set of meanings. It defines these not just in reference to the victim-offender relationship, but also takes into consideration other agents in various capacities throughout society who assign meanings to the act. And it does not address these agents as mere "interpreters," but as potential "meaning makers" who can help make the act more significant. Finally, it does not advance consensus as a necessary condition for the apology to be "successful" or "effective"—to use the phrasing of theorists of collective apology, but instead offers a differentiated approach to understanding what endorsements and criticisms may mean across realms.

It also differs from aforementioned theories of political and social performances, such as those of Hajer and Alexander, in that it sees the enactment of meanings as a co-production between apologizer and victims, performers and "publics," rather than as a staged event that is merely authored and performed by a (government) leader. Understood as a potentially synergetic exchange between multiple parties, the official apology becomes a strategic performance in which many actors have a part to play.

Utilizing a vast arsenal of verbal and dramaturgical tools, these players can seek to engage members of their publics in the effort to realize the apology's meanings in all four realms. They are not restricted to a (perhaps quixotic) effort to meld diverse “audiences” into one. My approach allows heterogeneity to exist and points to the opportunities that multi-actor environments offer for diversified appeals to various publics in differentiated capacities.

As such, the evaluative standard I propose rejects the notion of skillful individual performance on stage as an indicator for meaningfulness, and even as a predictor for success, in favor of *a more situated, collaborative effort to seek and demonstrate consistency across all four areas through public performance*.

9.8 Conclusion

This approach to official apologies does not simplify the interpretative and evaluative tasks for the researchers who are the primary audience of this thesis. It invites them to widen the scope of analysis and grapple with the consequences. It also invites them to take up the interpretative challenges that the broader lens reveals without relying on the traditional evaluative framework of apologies, in which morality prevails over all other possible meanings, in which speech prevails over dramaturgy, and in which no parties other than victim and offender are included.

It also does not make things easier for those who take the stage. This approach encourages the victims in particular to step into the limelight as public personae and take action to help realize the meaningfulness of apologies. They can show all who are paying attention that they, indeed, are not helpless victims dwelling on the past, but strong moral forces to be reckoned with and equal partners in the collaborative challenge to deal with the past in order to move forward. This may ask them to trade very personal concerns for public considerations and face all the challenges that come with it.

As for apologizers, it speaks to them as strategic leaders who need to think and rethink the meanings that their public act can convey, and prudently assess the impact that one kind of meaning may have on another. They need to come up with a well-arranged set of choices and choose from a range of tools to enact meanings, while strategically tapping into the plural identity of their spectators.

Yet, the approach also points to many opportunities that have remained unidentified thus far. As performances, official apologies offer opportunities to enact and align meanings in unchartered realms. This approach points to possibilities for enactments and alignments that have been derived from the cases, but there are undoubtedly more. Performers can use or develop these to show the connections between the moral and the material, between the good of the individual and the good of the polis, between policies of the past and the future, between stories about yesterday and about tomorrow.

For everyone involved, creating, presenting, studying, and interpreting official apologies is a tightrope walk. Yet, I argue, with many injustices past and present still unacknowledged, the potential these apologies offer for healing and social progress make their practice and study a worthy endeavor.

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Words of thanks

As instigator and advisor, Liesbet van Zoonen has been crucial this undertaking. I had the pleasure of meeting Liesbet for the very first time in the late 1990s. I had asked her to sit down with me in a coffee shop in Amsterdam because of our mutual interest in the rapid developments underway in information technology and the impact this phenomenon would have on society in general and government in particular. Our discussion quickly turned to present day feminism and the book that I had recently written, which was rather critical of the women's movement at that time. Knocked off balance by the fierce criticisms I had heard in the numerous public debates that I had participated in, I stood on the verge of apologizing for the book's critical tone. Yet, before I could start muttering, Liesbet said, "Finally, someone let them know. It was about time." Speaking calmly and decisively, she encouraged me, and in the debates to come, I called her comments into mind and found new courage. Liesbet taught me a life lesson: *do not be too quick to apologize*.

At the end of our meeting, she advised me to get a PhD. "With your experience as a writer, it will be a piece of cake. Done in no time. Think about it." About fifteen years later, I have finally followed up on her advice. It took more effort than she had suggested, but I have been fuelled by her encouragement and her intelligent comments, which reflected her in-depth knowledge of multiple academic disciplines. Working on this thesis with Liesbet as adviser was pure joy.

My family members and friends have been enthusiastic supporters, including (in alphabetical order) Anne Offermans, Anke de Jong, Arien de Jong, Dante de Jong, Dylan de Jong, Elise Panczel, Emine Kaya, Foppe de Jong, Hadewych Cels, Heino Walbroek, Jean Pierre Cels, Jorrit de Jong, Lieve Herregods, Luc Matter, Marc Cels, and Simone Veldema. I look forward to a festive opportunity to thank them, and others, in person.

A final word of thanks goes to examiners prof. dr. Barbara Oomen and dr. James Stanyer who will take the time to read this thesis and sit down with me. I look forward to the conversation.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Additional conclusions of the literature review

Based on the cumulative insights in chapter 1 and the literature review, we can now distinguish the following conditions for our novel analytical framework:

Conceptual framework

- The framework should include speech and dramaturgy (chapter 1)
- It should be able to take in multiple (conflicting) interpretations of the apology, as well as a multiple interpreters (chapter 1)
- It must allow for all kinds of social outcomes of the act and not predefine these outcomes in terms of reconciliation, or in terms of its absence (chapter 1)
- It should take account of developments and events that lead up to the apology, as they can influence the offering and reception of the apology (review part 3)
- The framework should also allow for possible misalignment of the ways in which social actors use (verbal and non-verbal) tools to enact meaning (review part 2)
- The list of requirements that the act of apology has to meet (to make comparison possible with existing theories) should not be used as prescriptive ideal and as a tool for evaluation (review part 1)

Operationalization

- Once operationalized, the framework should include a dynamic role assignment that enables social actors to play various roles in different interpretations of an apology (chapter 1) (review part 3)
- The dramaturgy analysis should include the "cast" of the performance event[252]: that is, the social actors present at the scene (review part 2)
- In the analytical framework speech acting and other kinds of acting should be treated separately (review part 2)
- The method to distinguish groups of social actors should allow for flexible classification (review part 3) The classification should not predefine social actors' interests in terms of the apology or wrongdoing, but allow for unobvious associations and topics to emerge (chapter 1)

[252] Based on the observations of Harris et al. (2009), who discusses the importance of the "audience".

Appendix 2. Research objective 1: Historical background

Data collection

Sources
Basic sources are: Printed sources including books (chapters), articles in refereed journals, newspaper articles, and government communication (such as legislation, commissioned research reports, press statements, transcripts of hearings). Supplemental sources are: Digital media that include background information about specific social actors, events, etc. that are mentioned in the basic sources.

Inquiries
1) First, the statements of the apologizer and other performers are examined to verify in what terms the wrong is referenced, in what terms victims and offenders are addressed, what previous events or developments are mentioned, and what social actors are mentioned in relation to the process leading towards the apology. References to the wrongdoing that are oft-used are selected as keywords in the next inquiry.
2) An inquiry in Google Books, Google Scholar, EBSCOHost, Jstor & ProQuest are made based on these keywords. Its aim is to retrieve scholarly contributions, including oft-quoted works. This enhances the possibility of producing a reliable account of the wrong, which includes relatively undisputed historical facts.
3) A last inquiry is made to retrieve background information of specific social actors, events, etc. that are mentioned in these sources.

Keywords
In the second inquiry the following keywords are used: "Child Migrants" (UK); "Residential Schools" (CAN); "Rawagede" (NL); "Holocaust," "Belgium" & "België," "Joden," "deportatie" & “Belgique,” “Juives” & “Belgique,” “Holocaust” (BE).

Filters & Other selection procedures
1) Duplications are ignored or deleted. 2) The inquiries in Google Books, Google Scholar, EBSCOHost, Jstor & ProQuest take into account the first 15 pages of search results. 3) Only substantive contributions are selected, which contain information about the "what," "where," "who," and "why" of the historical wrong and the lead up the apology, or which add new information related to what has already been retrieved.

Results
To give an impression of the source set I have included the table below. It presents the numbers of sources saved on file after selection procedures are completed.

Table 18. Source set relevant to research block 1 (historical background)

	Books /chapters	Journal articles	Theses	Particularly relevant sources
Case UK	7	5	2	Government reports, commissioned by parliamentary committees Submissions by experts for these reports Official reactions to reports (by parliament, government, stakeholders) Televised documentaries
Case CAN	8	9	1	Government reports, commissioned by parliamentary committee Official reactions to reports (by parliament, government, stakeholders)
Case NL	6	11	-	Historical investigation, commissioned by Ministry of Justice Court ruling Televised documentary
Case BE	16	5	-	Official investigation, commissioned by the federal Senate

Data analysis

The reconstruction of the background of the apology is based on the format below. The elements in this table have already been discussed in the main chapter.

Table 19: Framework for the examination of the historical background of apologies

	Wrongdoing (what & how)	**Victims (who)**	**Offenders (who)**	**Lead up to apology (what)**	**Rationale (why)**
Topics to be studied	Chronology of events	Number Identity	Number Identity	Chronology of events including prior acts of denial, rehabilitation, reparation	…for committing the wrong
	Nature and extent of the wrongdoing Nature and extent of the harm Examples of harm	Examples of the harmed	Roles and responsibilities (esp. government) Examples of particularly active parties (individuals, collectives)	Parties involved Roles Examples of particularly active parties and responsibilities	... for handling the wrong … for disclosing the wrong & seeking rehabilitation, reparation … for offering or denying rehabilitation, reparation

Research strategy	**Attentive for:**				
	Disputed facts of the wrong & harm Dissimilar qualifications of the wrong & harm	Dissimilar views of who belongs to victim group Dissimilar qualifications of the victims	Disputed facts of number, identity, roles, etc. Shifts in the (perceived) involvement of parties over the course of time	Disputed facts Shifts in the (perceived) involvement of actors over the course of time	Original explanations by social actors Shifting moral/political perspectives over time

Appendix 3. Research objective 2: Performance

Data collection

Sources
Basic sources are: Printed sources, including books (chapters), articles in refereed journals, newspaper articles, and government communication (such as legislation, commissioned research reports, press statements, transcripts of hearings). Supplemental sources are: a. Digital media that include background information about social actors, events, etc. that are mentioned in the basic sources. B. Interviews (including personal, email and telephone interviews).

Inquiries
1) An extensive inquiry is made based on keywords, using LexisNexis (domestic and international news), Google Images, Flickr, YouTube, Google Web, Google Books, Google Scholar, EBSCOHost, Jstor, and Proquest.
2) Further inquiry is made to gather background information on specific social actors, events, etc. that are mentioned in these sources. This information is retrieved by a) using supplemental sources and b) examining links, comments, tags, and other points of entry that are available in the source set.[253]
3) References to other data sources are further examined.[254]
4) Lists of the major newspapers and TV stations in each country are checked against the search results to verify whether the results of the above inquiries include coverage by major media. If not, a targeted search is made in their archives to retrieve items about the apology.
5) Finally, to fill in the blanks, interviews are held.

Keywords
See next page.

[253] For example, in Flickr, the examination includes the comments on the picture, the webpage on which it is displayed, the rest of the photo collection, and the tags of the photo.

[254] These inquiries include, among other activities, following links to previous articles on the web, and following up on information displayed in the endnotes of articles and books.

Table 20. Keywords for retreiving sources (research block 2: performance)

	LexisNexis / domestic news	**LexisNexis /international news**	**Google Images & Flickr**	**YouTube, Google Books, Google Web, Google Scholar, Pro-quest**
Case UK	"apolog*" + "Brown"+ "Child" + "Migrants" **Source/By type:** All News – English **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Location / Country:** UK **Duplication option:** High similarity	"apolog*" + "Brown"+ "Child" + "Migrants" **Source / By type:** All News – English **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Location:** World region **Specifics:** Asia, Australia & Oceania, Europe[255], North America	"apolog*" + "Brown" + "2010" "apolog*" + Child Migrants"	"apolog*" + "Brown" + "2010" "apolog*" + Child Migrants"
Case CAN	"apolog*" + "Harper"+"Residential Schools" **Source/By type:** All News – English **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Location / Country:** Canada **Duplication option:** High similarity	"apolog*" + "Harper"+"Residential Schools" **Source / By type:** All News - English **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Location :** World region **Specifics:** Asia, Australia & Oceania, Europe, North America[256] **Duplication option:** High similarity "apolog*" + "Harper"+ "Aboriginal" & "apolog*" + "Harper"+ "Indigenous" **Source / By type:** All News - English **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Location :** World region **Specifics:** Asia, Australia & Oceania, Europe, North America[257] **Duplication option:** High similarity	"apolog*" + "Harper" + "2008" & "apolog*" + "Residential Schools"	"apolog*" + "Harper" + "2008" & "apolog*" + "Residential Schools"

[255] UK publications are deleted manually.

[256] Canadian publications are deleted manually.

[257] Canadian publications are deleted manually.

Case NL	"excuses"+ "rawagede" & "excuus"+"rawagede" **Foreign Language:** Dutch **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Duplication option:** High similarity	"apolog*" + "rawagede"[258] **Source / By type:** All News - English **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Location:** World region **Specifics:** Asia, Australia & Oceania, Europe, North America **Duplication option:** High similarity	"excuses" + "rawagede" & "excuus rawagede" + & "apolog*"+ "rawagede" & "belanda" + rawagede" & "rawagede"+"2011"	"excuses" + "rawagede" & "excuus rawagede"
Case BE	"Di"+"Rupo"+"excuses" **Foreign Language:** Dutch **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Duplication option:** High similarity	"Di"+"Rupo"+"apolog*" **Source / By type:** All News - English **Location:** World region **Specifics:** Europe, North America **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Duplication option:** High similarity	"Di"+"Rupo"+"excuses" & "excuses" + "Holocaust" & "Di"+"Rupo"+"apolog*"	"Di"+"Rupo"+ "excuses" & "excuses" + "Holocaust" & "Di"+"Rupo"+ "apolog*"
	"Di"+"Rupo"+"excuses" **Foreign Language:** French [259] **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Duplication option:** High similarity	"Di"+"Rupo"+"excuses" **Foreign Language:** French **Date:** 6 months before & after apology **Duplication option:** High similarity (already completed, see column to the left)		

[258] The Dutch ambassador to Indonesia offered apologies; his name was often unnoted.

[259] The results include articles in French from Belgium and France. The latter are selected and saved in a separate file that contains foreign news.

Filters & Other selection procedures

1) Duplications are ignored or deleted. 2) The inquiries in other databases than LexisNexis take into account the first 15 pages of search results. 3) Only substantive contributions are selected, which contain information about the "what," "where," "who," and "why" of the apology, or which add new information related to what has already been retrieved.

Results

To give an impression of the source set that was used to reconstruct the performance, I have included the table below. It presents the number of results before and after completing selection procedures.

Table 21: Source set relevant to research block 2 (performance)

	Domestic news	**Pictures**[260]	**Video clips**[261]	**Particularly relevant sources**
Case CAN	(185) 149	(Unknown) 88	(15,390) 34	Local newspapers for coverage of the remote viewings of the TV broadcast of the apology
Case BE	21 (17)	(Unknown) 15	(81) 3	Personal and telephone interviews with attendees
Case UK	(279 initial hits) 63 saved on file	(Unknown) 81 saved on file	(1820 initial hits) 14 saved on file[262]	Eyewitness report in church magazine Photo slideshow on YouTube by a victim who attended the apology
Case NL	(211) 81	(Unknown) 46	(314) 8	Personal and email interviews with attendees Personal photos of the attendees (18 additional pictures)

[260] Google Images only.

[261] YouTube only.

[262] Many hits were related to celebrity singer Chris Brown's apology to formed girlfriend and celebrity singer Rihanna.

Data analysis

Speech

In order to analyze the contents of the apology statements, the following framework is used:

Table 22: Framework for examining the apology statement

Basic elements to make comparison with apology literature possible

1. Expression of regret
2. Acknowledgement of responsibility for the wrongdoing
3. The wrongdoing
4. Reference to values and norms, and their violations

Additional elements (A) to obtain a comprehensive view of the contents, adapted from Blatz (2009)

5. Promise of forbearance
6. Offer of material repair
7. Hurt of the victims: acknowledgement of suffering
8. Consequence of, and/or reason for the apology

Additional elements (B) (of my own midification in acoordance with the conceptual framework)

9. Social actors, their roles & interests (other than victim & apologizer)
10. Special addressees (target group other than victims)
11. Moral communities tied to values and norms
12. Moral/formal authority (see table 26 for details)
13. Miscelanous & Omissions
14. Rationale: Considering all elements in what argument do these elements make sense? (To be used in research block 4: meanings)

Dramaturgy

To produce a reliable account, multiple sources are used. For example, photos and video clips are used to examine the staging and acting from different angles.[263]

[263] Visual media proved to be especially essential to analyzing the staging. In the UK and Canadian cases, all basic sources were available online. In the other two cases, personal interviews were necessary to fill in many blanks. Various unanticipated helpful sources were retrieved. For example, in the UK case, a church magazine (that happened to be available online as a PDF) included an article written by an attendee of the apology, who reported back to her religious community. In the case of the Dutch ambassador's apology, the only way to obtain a full picture of the performance was through personal interviews with attendees, who offered access to their personal photo collections. Some of the statements made on stage (especially the those offered by locals in Bahasa Indonesia) could not be retrieved. In the case of the Belgian apology, the search in LexisNexis generated

Table 23. Framework for examining the performances

Elements of performance	Features	Examples
Casting	Invitation policy Special invitees Primary performers Other attendees and absentees	Open invitation Honorary guests Only apologizer takes the stage Primary advocate for the apology is missing
Staging	Site Stage Decor Objects at the scene	Location Stage with lectern Special banners for the event Gift for a special guest
Scripting	Line up of performers Time schedule Formal rules governing the event	Speaker A, B, C Program starts at.., ends at... Parliamentary code of conduct
Acting: speech action	See table 22	-
Other action	Actions and interaction Use of staging Action vis-à-vis the scripting	Contact between performers on and off stage Reference made to objects at the scene Mismatches between practice and program
Rationale	Considering all indicators in this table: in what argument does the use of these dramaturgical tools makes sense?	The use of a particular tool makes sense in a rationale in which the apology is seen as a specific kind of act act, in a given context, serving the interests of a particular actor...

The following indicators are used to establish whether the performance was a manifestation of shared moral discourse. These indicators correspond with elements 4, 11, and 12 in table 12, appendix XX.

Table 24: Framework for examining moral interlocutorship

Indicators	Questions	Examples
Norms and values	What references are made to norms and values? Can (dis)similar views of (violations of) norms and values be observed?	Victim claims norm A was violated. Apologizer claims norm B was violated.
Application	To whom do the norms and values apply? And how?	

few results; most newspaper articles were retrieved during targeted searches of the archives of newspapers and TV stations.

Interaction (interlocutorship)	Considering the lead up and the performance: What interactions take place between apologizer and addressees? Do these interactions involve any kind of exchange of moral views? Is the morality of the other party somehow mentioned? Do the (inter)actions take place in public? Do the primary parties appeal to moral agents in society?	Apologizer dictates the norms at issue Process towards apology or performance itself includes dialogue between apologizer & victim Both apologizer and victim call upon those watching to take moral action
Narrative	*If* the development of shared moral discourse can be depicted in a coherent narrative, what narrative would this be?	"Perpetrator and victim were alienated, but after many meetings in which they expressed their concerns, they came to consensus..."

Appendix 4. Research objective 3. Multi-actor environment

Data collection

Sources

Basic sources are: Printed sources newspaper articles, newswires, and press releases. Supplemental sources are only added in cases in which less than 3 third parties are retrieved. These supplemental sources consist of visual and digital sources: (1) TV (news) coverage of the apology and (2) informative comments of social actors who were present at the scene.

It is important to note why the basic source set is limited to domestic newspaper articles. The goal of the examination of the multi-actor environment is to add to the analytical toolkit of apology scholars a magnifying glass with an unusually broad lens that can include social actors other than perpetrator and victim. But this does *not* mean we need a complete and detailed profile of all meaning makers in each case. A second issue is also noteworthy. Thus far, for the prior two research objectives, media utterances have been used as potential sources of factual information (the intermediary function of the press). This part of the research treats these as potential interpretations of the apology (the commentary function of the press).

Inquiries

1) No major additional inquiries are necessary. All basic sources have already been saved on file (in research block 2), as have most supplemental sources (in research block 2).
2) Some limited additional inquiries are made into the background of social actors through Google Web and Facebook.[264]

Results

Each case chapter has an appendix that presents the social actors whose comments have been retrieved, as well as excerpts of their interpretations of the apology.

Data analysis

To establish who took part in the debate, the following framework of analysis is used. It presents the codes that are used to identify and label social actors. This is done with the help of NVivo, a software

[264] For example, in the case of the Canadian apology, a newspaper reporter cites a certain “Winston Wuttunee" who appears to be the host of part of the event. A brief background check with the help of Google Web and Facebook made it clear that Mr. Wuttunee is a well-known Aboriginal artist and stand-up comedian.

tool for qualitative analysis. The framework allows for a distinction between the interpreters who physically attend the performance, and interpreters who are absent from the scene.[265]

Table 25: Framework for examining multi-actor environments

Parties
Category: Apologizer
Subcategory: Primary performer (the apologizing party) Subcategory: Members of the perpetrator community, present at the scene Subcategory: Members of the perpetrator community, absent from the scene
Category: Victims
Subcategory: Victims, present at the scene Subcategory: Victims, absent from the scene
Category: Third parties
Subcategory: Third parties present at the scene Subcategory: Third parties absent from the scene Subcategory: Identity of these third parties (social scientists, commentators, etc.)

The following indicators are used to establish whether particular social actors are perceived as moral authorities – that is, agents with special standing who speak on behalf of a group of social actors who (at least temporarily) coalesce around similar values and norms and acknowledge the special status of the speaker.

Table 26: Framework for examining moral authority

Quantitative indicators	**Details**	**Examples**
References (#)	Views of a particular social actor are referenced	"Gerry Conlon found the apology to be satisfactory"
Subscriptions (#)	These views are subscribed to specific parties	"Commentator A was right: the apology was a success"

[265] Yet, the case research did not indicate that this distinction is relevant for interpretive research objectives.

Qualitative indicators	Details	Examples
Vociferousness	Makes (bold) normative claims that are tied to a specific community	"This is not what our country stands for"
Acquaintanceship	Displays an understanding of the inner workings of a moral community	"We do not feel this way; rather, in our culture individual healing is more important." "We, as Christians, are inclined to accept apologies and forgive."
Ownership	***Self-asserted*** Claims ownership of a moral issue	"We have fought for justice for decades…"
	Attributed Is assigned ownership of a moral issue	"They have fought for justice for decades…"
Track record	***Self-asserted*** Refers to personal credentials, earned by previous commitment to a relevant moral cause[266]	"I have fought for rehabilitation for ages…"
	Refers to such credentials of the collective he/she belongs to	"My political party has recently voted for a resolution to compensate the victims…"
	Attributed Is personally recognized based on previous commitments to a relevant moral cause	"He is the Nelson Mandela of the UK…"
	Is tied to a collective that has earned such credentials	"Her political party has voted for a resolution to compensate the victims…"

The following indicators are used to establish whether actors have formal authority:

Table 27: Framework for examining formal authority

Indicators	Details	Examples
Representativeness	Enjoys formal status as legitimized representative of a formally organized collective (here called an "institution")	"I stand before you as Prime Minister to say…" "As chairperson of the victims' association, I can say that…"
	Makes claims on behalf of the institution that he/she represents	

[266] Adapted from Lapsley & Narváez (2010).

Institutional accountability	References the role and responsibility of the institution in relation to the wrongdoing/apology	"This government policy was wrong…" "The burden is ours to carry…"

Appendix 5. Research objective 4: Meanings

Data collection

Sources
All sources that already have been saved on file are included in this part of the research.

Inquiries & results
No additional inquiries are necessary.

Filters & Selection procedures
If a specific reading of the apology emerges in just one utterance and is brought up by just one social actor who does not belong to the group of primary performers, it is left out of the analysis. When a reading of the apology emerges twice and is brought up by two different social actors, it is taken into account.

Data analysis

The research into the meanings of the apology does *not* include an integrated analysis. The question of "what the official apology means" is taken up in the conclusions to this thesis.

Table 28: Framework for examining the meanings of apologies (within-case analysis)

Topics	Research questions
Meanings conveyed by performance	Which meanings were transmitted through speech? Which meanings were transmitted through dramaturgy?
Interpretations in the multi-actor environment	Which meanings are assigned to the act by social actors in the public debate?
Meanings of the apology	Considering the historical background, and all of the above within this table, what are the meanings of this apology?

Appendix 6. Research objective 5: Misalignments & Conflicting interpretations

Data collection

Sources
All sources that already have been saved on file are included in this part of the research.

Inquiries & results
No additional inquiries are necessary.

Filters & Selection procedures
-

Data analysis

Table 29. Framework for establishing dissimilar cues for interpretation

Interpretive challenges	Details	Examples
Misalignments	What conflicting cues for interpretation become manifest in the apology statement and the statements of other parties?	Apologizer says that the act should be seen as act of rehabilitation whereas the victims claim not to feel rehabilitated but see value in the act as value declaring statement: not to repeat the same mistake in the future.
	What conflicting cues become manifest during the performance (e.g. casting vrs. acting; scripting vrs. staging, etc.)	Special invitees do not enjoy any special treatment during the event
	Once established, how can we explain the misalignment?	The treatment of the special invitees at the scene makes sense in this-or-that rationale...
Conflicting interpretations	What divergent meanings are assigned to the apology? And how exactly are these divergent?	Social actor A claims the apology is meaningless, whereas social actor B states it is extremely meaningful in such-and-such way
	Once established, what possible explanations exist for these interpretations?	Underlying the interpretation of social actor A is argument A, whereas social actor B introduces a very different perspective...

Appendix 7. Case selection criteria

Table 30. Case selection criteria

Criteria	Details
Practical criteria	(1) Cases are selected **within a confined cultural, institutional, and temporal space**: apologies must be offered by state officials from western democracies in the past 10 years. The choice for recent cases is based on the expectation of availability and accessibility of (online) resources. The choice for western apologies is informed by the capabilities of the researcher: she has little understanding of cultures other than western. The choice for democracies is based on the expectation that only in democracies are multiple actors able to publicly assign meanings to an official apology.
Basic methodological criteria	(2) As noted, to make comparison with salient apology theories possible, the cases must include **formal speech**. The statement includes at least an expression of regret, an acknowledgment of responsibility for a wrongdoing, and a reference to the violation of a moral norm. (3) The apology is **offered by an official representative** of a government and/or a state (e.g. president, monarch, prime minister, ambassador) on behalf of this particular body.
Enhanced methodological criteria	(4) To maximize the number of possible variables, the research includes **"rich" cases** (Yin, 2004). (5) To maximize opportunities to conceptualize the central phenomenon according to this study's objectives, cases vary in two dimensions: (5a) **Multi-actor environment** To maximize opportunities to analyze the multi-actor environment, cases from various countries are studied. It is expected that their dissimilar historical, political, social, and cultural backgrounds will result in diversified national public debates, in terms of both participants and interpretations. This further "enriches" the multi-actor aspect of the case studies. (5b) **Performance** To maximize opportunities to analyze performances, cases vary in aspects of performance. However, because the concept of apology as performance still needs to be operationalized, these cases are selected tentatively.

Appendix 8. Selection of cases

Based on the above criteria, the following four cases are selected:

Table 31. Selected cases vis-à-vis the criteria

Case	Criteria
Canadian Prime Minister Harper's apology for the assimilation of Aboriginal people through the Residential School System (2008)	• Case meets all practical & basic methodological criteria (#1 – 3) • Rich in multi-actor-variables (generated many reactions) (#4) • Offered by Canadian government (#5a) • Rich in performance variables (included ceremonies and remote viewing parties) (#5b)
Belgian Prime Minister Di Rupo's apology for the involvement of government authorities in the deportation of Jews during the Second World War (2012)	• Case meets all practical & basic methodological criteria (#1 – 3) • Poor in multi-actor-variables (generated only few [critical] comments) (#4) • Offered by Belgian government (#5a) • Rich in performance variables (offered during remembrance ceremony; victims involved in parts of the performance) (#5b)
UK Prime Minister Brown's apology for a government program that shipped British children to Commonwealth territories (2010)	• Case meets all practical & basic methodological criteria (#1 – 3) • Rich in multi-actor variables (generated many reactions) (#4) • Offered by the UK government (in the United Kingdom & Australia) (#5a) • Rich in performance variables (offered at multiple venues) (#5b)
Dutch ambassador De Zwaan's apology to victims of a post-colonial massacre in Indonesia (2011)	• Case meets all practical & basic methodological criteria (#1 – 3) • Sufficient multi-actor variables (generated some mixed reactions) (#4) • Offered by Dutch government (in Indonesia) (#5a) • Rich in performance variables (offered during remembrance ceremony) (#5b)

Appendix 9. Elements of the apology statement (Canada)

Table 32. Elements of the apology statement of Canadian Prime Minister Harper in parliament, June 11, 2008

Basic elements	**Quotations**
1. Expression of regret	"Therefore, on behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians, I stand before you, in this chamber so central to our life as a country, to apologize to Aboriginal peoples for Canada's role in the Indian residential schools system..." "The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the Aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly"
2. Acknowledge-ment of responsibility	A. Own responsibility "In the 1870s, the federal government... began to play a role in the development and administration..." "The Government of Canada built an educational system..." "The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long. The burden is properly ours as a government, and as a country" B. Others "Most schools were operated as joint ventures with Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian and United churches"
3. Wrongdoing	"…to forcibly remove children from their homes" "Many were inadequately fed, clothed and housed. All were deprived of the care and nurturing of their parents, grandparents and communities" "…some of these children died while attending residential schools, and others never returned home"
4. Violation of a moral norm	"...this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country" "...it was wrong to separate children from rich and vibrant cultures and traditions, that it created a void in many lives and communities..." "...we undermined the ability of many to adequately parent their own children and sowed the seeds for generations to follow..."
Additional elements	**Quotations**
5. Promise of forbearance	"In moving toward healing, reconciliation and resolution of the sad legacy of Indian residential schools, the implementation of the Indian residential schools settlement agreement began on September 19, 2007. A cornerstone of the settlement agreement is the Indian residential schools truth and reconciliation commission. This commission represents a unique opportunity to educate all Canadians on the Indian residential schools system. It will be a positive step in forging a new relationship between Aboriginal peoples and other Canadians..." "...will contribute to a stronger Canada for all of us..."
6. Material repair	-
7. Hurt of the victims	"...these institutions gave rise to abuse or neglect and were inadequately controlled, and we apologize for failing to protect you" "Not only did you suffer these abuses as children, but as you became parents, you were powerless to protect your own children from suffering the same experience..."
8. Consequence /reason for apology	A. Reason "The government recognizes that the absence of an apology has been an impediment to healing and reconciliation. Therefore (...) I stand before you (...) to apologize" B. Part of a healing process "[towards] a renewed understanding that strong families, strong communities and vibrant cultures and traditions will contribute to a stronger Canada for all of us"
9. Social actors	Colleagues "...let me just take a moment to acknowledge the role of certain colleagues here in the House of Commons in today's

	events" (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development + his predecessor+ Philip Mayfield + leader of the New Democratic Party) Speaker "Mr. Speaker..." God "God bless all of you. God bless our land"
10. Special addressees	"I stand before you today to offer an apology to former students of Indian residential schools" “to the approximately 80,000 living former students…”
11. Moral communities	A Apologizer “All Canadians”, although technically Harper was offering the apology on behalf of all non-Aboriginal Canadians B Victim group "survivors"
12. Moral/formal authority	A. Own responsibility for offering the apology "Although the responsibility for the apology is ultimately mine alone…" B. Formal standing "Therefore, on behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians, I stand before you…”
13. Misc & Omissions	A. Qualifying the wrong "sad chapter in our history" B. Degree to which the wrongdoing contributes to present day problems (as distinguished by Blatz et al, 2009) "...this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language" C. Connection to broader reconciliation process See #8 D. No mentioning of material compensation E. No referral to apologies of other parties (churches) F. English statement included utterances in Indigenous languages

Addendum element 1.
The words “apologize” or “apology” were uttered 11 times.

Add. element 6.
There was no mentioning of any material repair. The settlement agreement had already included a compensation scheme for the residential schools students.

Add. element 8.
Harper embedded the act in a broader healing process and pointed to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Add. element 13.
Harper said that the policy of assimilation, “had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language" (Parliament of Canada, 2008, p. 6850).

Harper’s statement included a qualification of the wrong committed, not just an outline of what the wrong ultimately comprised of. He called it “a sad chapter of our history”, and did not include any anecdotes and vivid details of the wrong committed..

Appendix 10. Interpretations in the public arena (Canada)

From the day of the apology until 6 months after one can find 149 substantial newspaper articles in Canadian domestic press. In these articles 136 social actors expressed their views. Included in this number were 75 victims - that is, members of native tribes, either former students of the residential schools or descendants. Third parties ventilated their opinions as well. In total were 53 of them quoted. 26 were professional commentators (e.g., columnists, boards of editors), 16 of them can be considered "experts" (e.g., historians, social workers in native communities). No significant contribution was made by lawyers, whose voices had been frequently heard during the previous church apologies.

Table 33. Social actors and their interpretations of the Canadian apology in domestic newspapers (June 11, 2008 - December 11, 2008)

PARTY	INTERPRETATIONS/QUOTES	FORUM	SOURCE
APOLOGIZER			
1. Stephen Harper	See main chapter	Present on the floor of the House of Commons	
2. Stéphane Dion	See main chapter	Present on the floor of the House of Commons	
3. Gilles Duceppe	See main chapter	Present on the floor of the House of Commons	
4. Jack Layton	See main chapter	Present on the floor of the House of Commons	
5. Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs	Response to request to sign UN treaty (by B. Simon): instead of signing "flowering words" the government would rather work on practical matters	Quoted Present on the floor of the House of Commons	(O'Neill, 2008, June 14)
6. Pierre Poilievre, Conservative MP	Offered apologies in parliament for remarks in radio show few hours before the apology, referring to a compensation claim, “we need to engender the values of hard work and independence and self-reliance”. Liked to see value for money taxpayers pour into the Aboriginal communities.	Statement in parliament Interview in CFRA New Talk Radio (an Ottawa Radio Show) hours before the official apology	(O'Neill, 2008, June 12)
7. Gerry St. Germain Conservative Senator, a Métis from B.C., who had been lobbying for the apology	“For his part, Mr. St. Germain yesterday played down his own role, saying government was always convinced an apology was needed; it was simply a matter of timing.” "There was never anything but the intent of doing what was right, and this was the right thing to do," he said. Mr. St. Germain praised the Prime Minister for the way he handled the apology. "This brought out the compassionate side of the man which has always been there."	Quoted	(Curry & Laghi, 2008)
VICTIMS (physically present at the apology venue)			
8. Phil Fontaine	"time to get out of a time warp" ...lot of work to be done"... "we want what you expect in your own lives"...apology showed that “anything is possible" See main chapter	Quoted Present on the floor of the House of Commons	(O'Neill, 2008, June 14)
9. Patrick Brazeau	See main chapter	Present on the floor of the House of Commons	

10. Mary Simon	"Real forgiveness must be earned. it will be forthcoming only when it is clear that government is willing to act" – remark in relation to a request to reconsider the exclusion of Inuit and Métis from the Indian School settlement" See main chapter	Quoted Present on the floor of the House of Commons	(O'Neill, 2008, June 14)
11. Clem Chartier	Spoke of need to include Métis in settlement See main chapter	Quoted Present on the floor of the House of Commons	(O'Neill, 2008, June 14)
12. Beverley Jacobs	Emphasized the need to sign the UN declaration See main chapter	Quoted Present on the floor of the House of Commons	(O'Neill, 2008, June 14)
13. Marguerite Wanaboo, special guest of the PM	"I'm very happy impressed with everything. It brings me hope and comfort."	Quoted Present on the floor of the House of Commons	(Smith 2008, June 12)
14. Willie Blackwater, special guest of the PM	Prior to the apology: "It's got to come from his heart. That's where we as Aboriginals talk from, it's from our heart." After the apology: "We didn't know what the wording was going to be but I think they covered everything. They talked about the pain, the assimilation, the destruction of family and how it's still affecting our communities." "If I'm able to forgive my perpetrator I can forgive Canada. And I've forgiven my perpetrator. It took a long time. I would have forgiven them a long time ago if they did this." The words were "deeply felt"	Quoted Present on the floor of the House of Commons	(Bailey 2008, June 11) (Bailey, 2008, June 12) (Kines, O'Neill & Dalrymple, 2008)
15. Lance Migwans, Manitoulin Island on Lake Huron	"Everything that has happened still trickles down to our children, and will trickle down to his children and maybe his grandchildren," he said brushing the top of his 4 year old grandson's head.	Quoted Present in the House	(Curry & Galloway, 2008)
16. Michael Cachagee, president of the National Residential School Survivors' Society	"I feel really good. I was a bit troubled and concerned, but what really made my day was looking up from the floor and seeing all those brown faces up there. It was a good day for Canada."	Quoted Present in the House	(Gillies, 2008)
17. Stan Beardy, Grand Chief of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Ontario	"This acknowledgement of injustice means that the healing process for First Nations people across the country can finally begin" "important occasion"	Press release	(Canada NewsWire, 2008, June 11)
18. Jack Anawak, former MP and former student	he admired the non-partisan nature of the event. Anawak accepts the apology and forgives the government. "Now is the time to get rid of the anger," he said. But at the same time, Anawak said he was transported back to his days as a scared nine-year old at Joseph Bernier school "looking at the government admitting that 'we're going to make white people out of you.' It was very moving."	Quoted & At Parliament Hill, exact location unknown	(Windeyer, 2008)
19. Nancy Karetak-Lindell, Nunavut MP	"Today was a historic day," she said in a release. "It has been an emotional time for me as I felt the heavy responsibility of representing the many Inuit survivors who could not be here in [the House of Commons]."	Excerpt quoted in newspaper article & Present in the House of Commons	(Windeyer, 2008)
VICTIMS (at remote viewings)			
20. Julie Marion, relative of former students	"It has been a very long time that the elders have been waiting for this," she said quietly. "I am surprised that they are actually telling the truth about some of the things that have happened."	Quoted Present at lawn outside parliament	(Curry & Galloway, 2008)

21. Mr Delorne, former student	"a step forward"	Quoted At viewing in additional room in parliament	(Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008)
22. Winston Wuttunee, host of the watch party	"so down to earth and beautiful"	Quoted At viewing in additional room in parliament	(Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008)
23. Unknown female Aboriginal spectator	"I think it is the first time a First Nations [person] has been on the floor of the House"	Quoted At viewing in additional room in parliament	(Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008)
24. Roy Johnson, former student, Whitehorse	Mr. Johnson said it was positive and exciting. "But for me," he said, "I want to see how Canada digests it."	Quoted At viewing additional room in parliament	(Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008)
25. Lillian Pooyak, former student at St. Michael's Residential School in Duck Lake, Saskatchewan	The apology brought on strong emotions for Ms. Pooyak, who broke into tears while the prime minister spoke. "Just hearing what happened to us in the past ... and someone saying I'm sorry," she said. "No one has ever said, 'I'm sorry'."	Quoted At viewing additional room in parliament	(Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008)
26. Gordon Williams, former student at the Birtle Indian Residential School in western Manitoba	He said he wished more attention had been brought to the students who actually died at the schools. "It's almost as if it was a passing thing," he said in reference to the way the deaths were addressed in the apol-ogy.	Quoted At viewing additional room in parliament	(Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008)
27. Ted Quewezance, former student	It has left him feeling optimistic, but he stresses that there is still work to be done. "The words are nice, but the next step is we've got to add action to those words."	Quoted At viewing additional room in parliament	(Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008)
28. Mike Cachagee, former student	While admitting that he originally felt indifferent about the idea of an apology, he said he felt it was a moving experience. He said it will not be enough to please everyone, but those survivors waiting for an apology "will rest a little better tonight."	Quoted At viewing additional room in parliament	(Godbout & Dalrymple, 2008)
29. Glen Anaquod, former student	"Maybe it is a point in time where it is up to each person, each band to move on and make changes"	Quoted At viewing in Treaty 4 Governance Centre in Fort Qu'apelle	(Kyle, 2008)
30. Lawrence Joseph, Chief of the federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations	Has not the mandate to accept the apology, left to individuals	Quoted At viewing in Treaty 4 Governance Centre in Fort Qu'apelle	(Kyle, 2008)
31. Ellen Keewatin, Aboriginal female	"I'm sorry, forgive me, but all I feel in mu heart is anger. This does not pacify me... I wish it did"	Quoted At viewing in Treaty 4 Governance Centre in Fort Qu'apelle	(Kyle, 2008)
32. Cecilia Adams, former student	"it just made me really sad"	Quoted At viewing in the Tsow-Tun Le Lum healing center. B.C.	(Spalding, 2008)
33. Kathy Brown, relative of former students	"I'm hoping this can lead us to reconciliation..."	Quoted At viewing in the Tsow-Tun Le Lum healing center. B.C.	(Spalding, 2008)
34. Shawn Atleo, regional chief Assembly of First Nations	“high political recognition” “Lead to a better tomorrow” “permanent record”	Quoted At the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver	(First Nations Leadership Council, 2008) (Fitzpatrick & Nuygden, 2008)
35. Edward John,	"long overdue."	Quoted	(Atkinson, 2008)

Chief of the First Nations Summit, former student	"The impact on our people was real and multigenerational. We have a destiny in Canada…" “The responses to the apology are both individual and collective. It is extremely important that we respect the many survivors who, in their own discretion and time, will consider the Prime Minister's apology and determine how, in their own interest, each of them will deal with it. Collectively, we celebrate and stand on the dignity of who we are and celebrate our survival.”	At the Chief Joe Mathias centre in North Vancouver	
36. Stewart Phillip , Grand Chief and President of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs	"a memory I will always cherish" Felt proud of the other speakers, particularly the national native leaders who responded to the apologies. "I am a little disappointed he [Mr. Harper] called it a 'sad chapter' because it doesn't really show the depth of the tragedy for so many of our people." Phillip said he hoped the apology means that “no such disgusting genocidal programs'' ever happen here again.”	Quoted At the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver	(Atkinson, 2008) (Fournier, 2008, June 11)
37. Jan Sherman, a Guelph Aboriginal storyteller	“I want to know what action will the government take” Sherman believes it's one small correction in a legacy of mistakes. "It's time that government policies that impact Aboriginal people negatively should now be revisited."	Quoted At the ceremony in Victoria Park, Ottawa	(Aulakh, 2008)
38. Gilbert Johnson, one among the 18 claimants who went public with accounts of rape and beatings at the Port Alberni residential school on Vancouver Island	“Still, Wednesday's statement won't be enough…” "If the government had any care, it would have given an apology to us years ago," he said. "As far as I'm concerned, he's a little late."	Quoted At parliament Hill, exact location unknown	(Bailey, 2008, June 12)
39. Terry Paul, Chief Membertou band, former student	"hopeful the apology will help me and other survivors move forward"	Quoted At viewing in community centre in Indian Brook, Shubenacadie, N.S.	(Strojek, 2008)
40. Gloria Malhoney, former student	"I'm not very impressed. You can't undo the harm that we went through..."	Quoted At viewing in community centre in Indian Brook, Shubenacadie, N.S.	(Strojek, 2008)
41. Stephen Kakfwi, former student	Recognition - "I need that"	Quoted At viewing in community centre in Indian Brook, Shubenacadie, N.S.	(Strojek, 2008)
42. Roxanne Alec, member of the Lake Babine First Nation	"They were sincere" "It showed that they kind of understand, but they won't fully understand."	Quoted At viewing in Fort Qu'apelle, Sask.	(Strojek, 2008)
43. Name unknown, representative of the Nisga'a Nation's Legislative Assembly	"It is an understatement to say that this apology is long overdue," stated Kevin McKay, "Of particular importance to the Nisga'a Nation was the statement by Liberal Party Leader, the Honourable Stéphane Dion, that this was a shared responsibility of the various governments of Canada over 100 years… We feel that the acceptability of the apology is very much a personal decision of residential school survivors. The Nisga'a Nation will consider the sincerity of the Prime Minister's apology on the basis of the policies and actions of	Press release	(Nisga'a Nation, 2008)

	the government in the days and years to come. Only history will determine the degree of its sincerity.”		
44. Gibby Jacobs, Nation Chief of the Squamish	First step toward healing "the transformation and healing must occur outside this building" “If we don’t quit victimizing ourselves, we don’t release ourselves from the prison we put ourselves in… the effect that we felt multi-generationally will continue”	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver	(Linsday, 2008) (Ward, 2008, June 12)
45. Penny Irons, female, Vancouver	Harper “wasn't heartfelt”. “But when politicians say `never again,' I say look at today: 53 per cent of all children in B.C. government care are Aboriginal, and with this government's policy, when moms lose their kids into care, they are cut off welfare and housing and then they can't get their kids back - it's a vicious circle.” “Even today, the same old government policies are still taking our children away and denying our culture.”	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver	(Fournier, 2008, June 11)
46. Milly Smith, member of the Ehattesaht Nation	"I was really full of pain, painful memories, for those who cannot be here," she said. "I know in my heart I accept it. It's done now."	Quoted At viewing in Port Alberni	(Caranci, 2008, June 12)
47. Judith Sayers, Hupacasath chief councillor	"It was a very significant event," she said, adding the fact that all four federal leaders spoke to the same theme made the apology "complete" "It's important that we don't continue to be victims,"	Quoted At viewing in Port Alberni	(Caranci, 2008, June 13)
48. Dolly McRae, former student	"I feel a lot stronger now…"	Quoted At viewing in Port Alberni	(Caranci, 2008, June 13)
49. Sam Simon, former student	"I'm not going to accept the apology right away. I have to think about it and what was said, and all that, and what I feel in my heart," "Maybe later on I'll talk with my other friends and talk about the apology, and the way it was said in Parliament. And then I'll decide for myself." But Simon said he was particularly pleased by NDP Leader Jack Layton's use of the word "racism" as a motivation for the residential schools, as he had never heard a white politician say it in relation to how Aboriginal children were treat-ed.	Quoted At viewing of the Tsuu T'ina band	(Cryderman, 2008)
50. Charles Weaselhead, Treaty 7 Grand Chief	Said he is apprehensive about the apology, in some respects, because he is worried the government will now believe it's absolved of financial and moral responsibilities to those who lived through the residential school experience.	Quoted At viewing of the Tsuu T'ina band	(Cryderman, 2008)
51. William Walker, Kwakwaka'wakw elder, former student	“I felt nothing when Harper spoke because actions have to match words, and after all I suffered, they're clawing back the compensation and cut me off of four years of benefits because the school lost the records.”	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver	(Fournier, 2008, June 11)
52. Gladys Radek, Vancouver activist and former student	“The prime minister wasn't genuine”	Quoted At viewing in Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver	(Fournier, 2008, June 11)
53. Lillian Howard, Nuu-chah-nulth leader	Said she found Harper's words “dry” but applauded Dion's sincerity and “his courage in admitting the Liberals were in power for 70 years of the residential school and didn't apologize earlier.”	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver	(Fournier, 2008, June 11)
54. Percy Kasper, member of the	Long overdue	Quoted At Parliament Hill, exact location unknown	(O'Neill, Dalrymple, Fitzpatrick, Nguyen,

Shuswap Nation, Kamloop, B.C.			2008)
55. Jeanette Baker, Squamish-Haida female, relative of former students	"very happy that the prime minister was courageous enough"	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Matthias Centre, North Vancouver	(Rolfsen & Tomlinson, 2008)
56. Alberta Billy, member of the Wewaikai band	"He was really pressured doing this"	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Matthias Centre, North Vancouver	(Rolfsen & Tomlinson, 2008)
57. Doris Louis, former student	"very mixed emotions"	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Matthias Centre, North Vancouver	(Rolfsen & Tomlinson, 2008)
58. Matthew Louie (young Aboriginal)	"we got welcomed more into Canadian society"	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Matthias Centre, North Vancouver	(Rolfsen, 2008)
59. Karen Bruno, relative of former students	"They're not all at the point of healing. These are people who have been numbed for years."	Quoted At viewing at Boyle Street Community Services, Edmonton	(Stolte, 2008)
60. Nacy Rattlesnake, former student	"[apology] was allright. It was a beginning."	Quoted At viewing at Boyle Street Community Services, Edmonton	(Stolte, 2008)
61. Mary Jane Mitchell	"Because I am a Christian, I have to accept that apology, I have to forgive. I would say it was sincere and with all that clapping, I know it was accepted."	Quoted At viewing at Boyle Street Community Services, Edmonton	(Stolte, 2008)
62. Frank Tomkins, former student	"This is pretty hollow"	Quoted At viewing in the Saskatoon's White Buffalo Youth Lodge	(Warick, 2008)
63. Lyle Whitefish, Vice-chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations	"I am really disappointed in the apology", because it failed to outline how he's going to make amends	Quoted At viewing in the Saskatoon's White Buffalo Youth Lodge	(Warick, 2008)
64. Tammy Cook-Searson, Chief Lac La Ronge Indian band	A beginning of a "brother to brother" relationship between the federal government and First Nations "single yet significant step" "the start of a difficult but potentially transformational journey based on healing and renewal"	Quoted At viewing in the Saskatoon's White Buffalo Youth Lodge	(Warick, 2008)
65. William Carlick, former student	"For me, there is no compensation" Accepts apology "No one's going to make the decision to heal for you, you have to do that on your own"	Quoted At viewing in the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon	(Warren, 2008)
66. William Carlick, former student	"hopefully… we can move on" "[But] they still have policies in place that continue to take our children away and put them into the system we call welfare"	Quoted At viewing in the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon	(Warren, 2008)
67. Ed Schultz, former CYFN Grand chief, relative to former students	"It's a confusing moment because I didn't go, but anyone who knows me knows I was messed up for a long time" The government created a legacy of First Nations parents unable to raise a family. "They are still taking away our children. The spiral continues today."	Quoted At viewing in the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon	(Warren, 2008)
68. Christine Tromson, former student, Kamloops Indian	"I never even thought they'd acknowledge it."	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Louis Centre, Kamloops	(Youds, 2008)

	Band			
69.	Shane Gottfriedson, Chief Kamloops Indian Band	Said his emotions were mixed. "Though I did appreciate the apology of the prime minister and all the leaders of the opposition, I think what really made me proud is to see our national chief stand up there talking about reconciliation and the injustices we all face."	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Louis Centre, Kamloops	(Youds, 2008)
70.	Michael Auger, former student, Bigstone Cree Nation	"I do believe in reconciliation. I believe that mainstream Canadians don't have a clue. It excites me to know that it's finally out there for everybody to know." "It's a start that we all seem to be united. I do feel forgiveness. I do feel (there was) genuineness and sincerity,"	Quoted At viewing in the River Cree Resort, Edmonton	(Zabjek, 2008)
71.	Quintine Kootenay, Alexis First Nation member	"I don't know where this plays in relation to the priorities of Canadians."	Quoted At viewing in the River Cree Resort, Edmonton	(Zabjek, 2008)
72.	Tony Happynook, Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council President, B.C.	Overdue "Huge part was missing, and that is a commitment to undertake the work necessary to address the many issues our people are facing"	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Matthias Centre, North Vancouver	(Morrow, 2008)
73.	Les Sam, Chief councillor	"wonderful day" "we'd like to see sustainable funding"	Quoted At viewing in the Chief Joe Matthias Centre, North Vancouver	(Morrow, 2008)
	VICTIMS (elsewhere)			
74.	Michelle Hugli, journalist and talkshow host	"a good apology" "sincere" "specific" "forgive us for not getting over it as quickly as you may like"	Commentary	(Hugli, 2008)
75.	Stephen Kakfwi, former premier of the NWT and former student	"I accept the Prime Minister's apology" "I don't know exactly what motivated him" "It is the end of national denial"	Commentary	(Kakfwi, 2008)
76.	Sandra Ahenakew, Regina	"it was a complete [apology]" "hoping we can move forward now" "I am very emotional. I feel like it was a complete (apology). Mostly, right now, I am just overwhelmed with those that died and suffered the abuses, and hoping we can move forward now, that this is what my people needed. I can on pray that it will help. I understand they have to read their speeches, but sometimes that's what it feels like. Like they are reading words -- but they chose good words."	Quoted	(O'Neill & Dalrymple, 2008, June 12)
77.	Nora Martin, former student school	"important day", "acknowledge the pain and suffering"	Quoted	(O'Neill & Dalrymple, 2008, June 12)
78.	Michael Auger, former student, River Cree Resort, Alberta	"It gave me hope that it's a start and that we all seem to be united. I do feel forgiveness. I do feel (there was) genuineness and sincerity."	Quoted	(Editors The Leader Post, 2008)
79.	Nora Martin, former student, Tofino B.C.,	"It is an important day one that I have been waiting for, for many years to acknowledge the pain and suffering that I have gone through, that my family has gone through.	Quoted	(Editors The Leader Post, 2008)
80.	Name unknown, Nisga'a Nation's	"It is an understatement to say that this apology is long overdue," stated Kevin McKay, "Of particular	Press release	(Canada NewsWire, 2008, June 12)

	Legislative Assembly representative	importance to the Nisga'a Nation was the statement by Liberal Party Leader, the Honourable Stéphane Dion, that this was a shared responsibility of the various governments of Canada over 100 years… We feel that the acceptability of the apology is very much a personal decision of residential school survivors. The Nisga'a Nation will consider the sincerity of the Prime Minister's apology on the basis of the policies and actions of the government in the days and years to come. Only history will determine the degree of its sincerity.”		(Nisga'a Nation, 2008)
81.	Thohahoken Michael Doxtater, director of the Indigenous Education Project, McGill University	“Harper's apology appears to continue the tradition of word games in Canadian-Indian politics” “Canada constantly flaunts the $2 billion it has spent on residential-school payouts. The apology leads Canadians to continue to believe they are actually paying the bill.” “the statement did make remarkable concessions” but “other issues remain”, e.g., “There's the uninformed sterilization of native girls up into the 1980s”	Commentary	(Doxtater, 2008)
	OTHERS (physically present at the scene)			
82.	Lorna Dueck, Christian broadcaster	"all senses were engaged for the process of apology" "first step towards the future"	Present in the House Quoted in newspaper, as part of an expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
83.	Cindy Deschenes, whereabouts unknown	Most impressed by the words of Dion and Layton. "They dug down deeper into the history of what happened. It seemed more sincere," she said, watching the proceedings on the big screen. "I don't feel that Harper did that."	Present in the House	(Diebel, 2008)
	OTHERS (absent from the scene)			
84.	Gordon Campbell, B.C. Premier	Told the crowd he "hoped that healing will evolve ... and that it will be a significant step toward closing a tragic chapter in Canada's history."	Statement after official apology in the Chief Joe Mathias Centre in North Vancouver	(Atkinson, 2008) (Fournier, 2008, June 11)
85.	Hassan Arif, MA in Political Science at Carleton University, Fredericton	“a positive first step on the road to reconciliation” “multipartisan consensus” “must be followed up by concrete actions” “Hopefully, this apology represents a first step towards a new Aboriginal- Canadian policy by the Conservative government.” “ What's especially disturbing is that Canada's first Prime Minister, John A. MacDonald - honoured as our country's founder - was instrumental in the establishment of federal funding for these schools, whose aims he fully supported. Successive Canadian governments continued this policy.”	Commentary	(Arif, 2008)
86.	Sue Bailey, journalist	“Harper made no attempt to deny what the government sought to do when it established the residential schools in the 1870s.”	Report – besides this sentence otherwise neutral report of the event	(Bailey, 2008, June 12)
87.	Jessica Ball, professor, University of Victoria's School of Child and Youth Care	“What actions will be taken to ensure we build on this momentum to support the healing process and restore equity and dignity for First Nation, Inuit and Métis children and families in Canada?”	Commentary	(Ball, 2008)
88.	Board of editors,	“Harper's apology was specific, direct, thorough	Editorial	(Editors The Calgary

The Calgary/Herald (newspaper)	and heartfelt.” “A new dawn of healing and forgiveness was a long time coming, and it is what's needed before there can be a time of unity and understanding among all of Canada's peoples. The process of reconciliation began in earnest Wednesday with one sincere word: Sorry.”		Herald, 2008)
89. Board of editors StarPhoenix (newspaper)	“an unstinting apology” “a historic step to heal the wounds” “Liberal Leader Stphane Dion's overlong and workmanlike response to Mr. Harper's statement paled in comparison, it was refreshing to have Mr. Dion face the issue head on and admit his own party's culpability in the abysmal treatment of Canada's First People.”	Editorial	(Editors Star Phoenix, 2008)
90. Gary Doer, Manitoba Premier	"In Manitoba, we recognize and acknowledge the importance of this apology and what it means to many residential school survivors and their families. There are no words that can ever clean the slate or make things right, but it is important for Canada to acknowledge past wrongs and this is a step in the right direction."	Quoted	(Editors The Leader Post, 2008a, June 12)
91. Dalton McGuinty, premier Ontario	"This is part of our history and this is an important way for us make some of that right."	Quoted	(Editors The Leader Post, 2008a, June 12)
92. Les Leyne, columnist of Times Colonist (newspaper)	Calls into memory: "the Conservatives killed the Kelowna Accord, a 10-year push to improve native social relations" "Just So You Know: The most touching moment of the event was when Inuit leader mary Simon responded: "I have to face you to say this," she told Harper. "because the words come from the bottom of my heart... "the one sentiment that's probably unanimous - that hopefully the apology will help us move past the black time in our history"	Commentary	(Leyne, 2008)
93. Board of editors, The Toronto Star (newspaper)	“a heartfelt apology” “what next?” “He has, for example, scratched the Kelowna Accord” (would have put CAN$ 5 billion toward an assault on native poverty, including improvements in schools, healthcare, housing and economic development" "If Harper does not turn attention to helping natives, “his fine rethoric will rightly be dismissed as hollow”	Editorial	(Editors The Toronto Star, 2008, June 12)
94. Board of editors, The Toronto Star (newspaper)	“rare moment of goodwill” “but it has also heightened expectations.”	Editorial	(Editors Toronto Star, 2008, July 18)
95. Abubakar, N. Kasim, individual reader, The Windsor Star	“doubt whether this is sufficient to heal the wounds” Request for “actions”	Letter to the editor	(Readers Letters Toronto Star, 2008)
96. Doug Ward, journalist	“One of the main benefits of apologizing is its potential for educating Canadians about their country’s past”	Newspaper article	(Ward, 2008, June 12)
97. Lawrence Berg, professor in geography at the University of B.C.	“make amendments” “[the apology] raises the level of expectations about how the public should react to the commission”	Quoted	(Ward, 2008, June 11)
98. Commentator Doug Cuthand	“Instead of nitpicking his delivery we need to look at its historical significance” “The politicians rose to the occasion, putting aside partisan politics.”	Commentary	(Cuthand, 2008)

	"While we are not responsible for the boarding school experience, it was thrust upon us and now we own it." "The apology won't solve all our problems, but it is a start."		
99. Board of editors, The Gazette (newspaper)	"generous and heartfelt" "was an opportunity for the entire country to learn about this dark chapter in our history." "should serve as a starting point for all Canadians to discover the truth"	Editorial	(Editors The Gazette, 2008)
100. Board of Editors, The Globe and Mail (newspaper)	"a historic moment for Canada" "it served to impose an obligation on Canadians for the future" "a duty to set matter right" " it has now persuasively done so" "it has raised expectations"	Editorial	(Editors The Globe and Mail, 2008)
101. Russell Nahdee, director of the Aboriginal Education Centre, University of Windsor	"It's taken over a hundred years for this apology…" "a beginning" he's also aware of sentiments from some sectors of the Canadian public that Aboriginal people should "get over" the past. "That's an easy way to sort of brush it off," Nahdee said. "In other words, what they're saying is, 'I had nothing to do with it.' Which, on a general level, is true. I was not in a residential school either. But I've been affected by it. I know about it." "A comment like that is part of the general denial, and really undervalues who we are as a people."	Quoted	(Chen, 2008)
102. John Ivison, columnist	"appeared to be speaking from the heart" "We'd prefer to think that when Harper's voice cracked and wavered, it was because of genuine emotion" "It is much hoped that native Canadians accept the apology in the spirit in which it was offered and now move on, lest a grievance culture becomes so deep rooted they are unable to transcend it and self-identify with victim status for ever more." "it seems that the prime minister has decided to take a leaf from Jean Chretien's playbook, which lists the essence of leadership as making people feel good" BUT also:" "he showed leadership - not in making people feel good, but in his willingness to confront a trauma that was never treated properly" "Harper might have no difficulty apologizing for events in which he personally had no culpability" "polls are starting to turn against Conservatives" in relation to the gesture	Commentary	(Ivison, 2008)
103. Barry Cooper, professor of political science, University of Calgary	"The government has apologized; it has taken an initiative. Now it is asking the ones harmed by the actions of previous governments to act in response."	Commentary In response to Ivison	(Cooper, 2008)
104. Jeff Ansell, of Jeff Ansell and Associates Inc. Communications Consultants, a former journalist and an associate	"I genuinely think it was heartfelt. He was not hesitant in the least to invoke negative language, which a lot of politicians are." "The key elements of a good apology include acknowledging a mistake or a failure. He did that."	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Coutts, 2008)

of the MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program			
105. Michael Dorland, professor of journalism and communications Carleton University	"The guy is really not a great speaker, which is part of it. It's entirely unprecedented and so forth, but there was a certain kind of rhythmic thing, a kind of repetition ... That, from a speech point of view, had a structured musicality to it. But as a speech it was pretty flat. The man may just not be very good at making speeches."	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Coutts, 2008)
106. Don Martin, journalist	"unconditional and unequivocal" "current realities are as painful as ever" "delivered with emotion" "didn't bother reciting any heart-wretching stories" ("Canadians have five years of truth and reconciliation meetings ahead") "rare show of magnanimity	Article	(Martin, 2008a, June 12) (Martin, 2008b, June 12)
107. Linda MacGibbon, writer	Apology was "so gracefully accepted"	Commentary	(MacGibbon, 2008)
108. John Ralston, author of "A Fair Country: Telling Truths about Canada"	Their view was: "Okay, they've had their apology, now it's time to just get on with it." Either the apology in itself was sufficient or, if there were to be testimony, wrap it up quickly."	Quoted	(Diebel, 2008)
109. Margaret McMillan, historian, St. Anthony's College, Oxford	"What is Canada going to do today..?" (necessary to deal with the present)	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
110. Michael Adams, pollster & author	"apologies are the first step. empathy is the second. Understanding is the third.. After that, good thing, very good things."	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
111. Jim Stanford, economist & author	"invoked in me a sense of awe and gratitude for the human will to survive, more than pity for the victims" "they're still here, and that is something to celebrate" "contradiction with Conservative policy"	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
112. Brian Flemming, lawyer and former adviser of PM Trudeau	"Unease" Also apologies for other historical wrongs?	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
113. Joseph Facal, former PQ cabinet minister	"sincere and profound" "how to deal with future claims"	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
114. Michael Higgins, president of St Thomas University in Fredericton	"full recognition" " a conversion of the heart - Stephen Harper did not disappoint"	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
115. Norman Spector, former ambassador	"opportunity to learn about the history" "truth and reconciliation" has become a quasi metaphor for the South African experience, and no two policies to inter-communal relations were further apart than apartheid and assimilation."	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
116. William Johnson, past president of Alliance Quebec	"Apology is owed" "it will little avail the 'survivors'" if it strengthens their inner sense of being victims, an abdication of personal responsibility. That paralysis, the most pernicious legacy of their colonial experience, remains to be exorcised." "solemnity"	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
117. John Polanyi, Nobel laureate	"step on a way to agreeing" "steps are needed"	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)

and science advocate			
118. Marcus Gee, commentator, The Globe	"it may only lead [natives] to dwell on the grievances of the past" "not all native troubles stem from white misdeeds" "to move forward, natives need to focus on (...) what they can do for themselves in the present."	Quoted Part of expert panel	(Globe Salon, 2008)
119. Brad Morse, professor, University of Ottawa	"the historic apology confirms that their parents were not at fault for the psychological scars they carried that led to deficiencies in their parenting abilities" "they are not to bale if they have lost their language" "the basis to reconsider both negative stereotypes - the classic 'drunken Indian' for example"	Commentary	(Morse, 2008)
120. Board of editors, Nanaimo Daily News (newspaper)	"For an apology to mean something, it needs to be followed by meaningful action" "first step"	Editorial	(Editors Nanaimo Daily News, 2008)
121. Al Pope, commentator Yukon News (newspaper)	"the right thing", also when they "agreed at the very last minute to allow Aboriginal leaders to be in Parliament" "Without them, the occasion would have been much less meaningful." "When Harper failed to fire Poilievere, some of that greatness slipped away."	Commentary	(Pope, 2008)
122. Ted Nolan, New York Islander coach	"I was more impressed with [the school survivors] power to overcome than feeling sorry"	Quoted in commentary	(Salutin, 2008)
123. Rick Salutin, columnist, The Globe and Mail (newspaper)	"the best part of the apology was the fight of the natives' right to be on the floor" "as for individual healing, it does not come from an apology"	Commentary	(Salutin, 2008)
124. Jeffrey Simpson, columnist, The Globe and Mail (newspaper)	Harper... "whose government killed the multibillion-dollar Kelowna Accord that would have helped natives cope with real problem, will make the apology" "the Conservative party never spilled their guts for Aboriginals" "we will see the newfound touch-feely side of the Harper government"	Commentary	(Simpson, 2008)
125. Individual reader, The Globe and Mail	"I was disappointed to learn that the Conservatives apologized for something they didn't do"	Quoted	(Kuhlmann, 2008)
126. Frank Malone, individual reader, The Globe and Mail	"The apology industry will now be rolling..." ".. we will once again re-examining the past..." "By not facing up to the abysmal reality of the current situation... the government will undoubtedly have an opportunity to apologize to the next generation of Aboriginal Canadians as well."	Letter to the editor	Malone, 2008
127. Board of editors, The Leader-Post (newspaper)	"it was no half-hearted apology" "'Sorry' is just the start"	Editorial	(Editors The Leader-Post, 2008b, June 12)
128. Board of editors, Waterloo Region Record (newspaper)	“With those words, there is more hope that governments at various levels and Aboriginal leaders will be able to reach mutually acceptable agreements in the years ahead.” “Attention to individual cases is important, but it is also important to look at the overall experience of the students in the residential schools. This is what Harper tried to address yesterday.” “hopeful sign”	Editorial	(Editors The Record, 2008)
129. Board of editors,	“What made the historic event even more	Editorial	(Editors Windsor Star,

Windsor Star (newspaper)	remarkable was not only the presence of native leaders in the House, but their gracious response" "first and meaningful step toward reconciliation, enabling all Canadians to confront their past with honesty and chart their future with confidence. It isn't an end but a new beginning"		2008)
130. Barbara Yaffe, journalist, Vancouver Sun (newspaper)	"robust, and sincerely delivered" "The 90-minute event was solemn, tasteful and emotional" "In Canada, the Harper government will similarly stand to benefit politically by appearing compassionate. Its posture toward Aboriginal Canadians has been decidedly dispassionate, though, since it came to power in 2006." "It's doubtful, though, that Harper is undertaking his gesture as a direct means of increasing his party's Commons seat count; Aboriginals constitute a majority of electors in only three of 308 ridings. They account for sizable minorities -- 20 per cent or more of voters -- in seven ridings, all in the north. That said, Aboriginals make up the fastest growing segment of Canada's population."	Commentary	(Yaffe, 2008, June 11 & June 12)
131. Roger Gibbins, president of the Alberta-based Canada West Foundation	Believes the apology is more sincere than politically motivated. But, it "helps defang efforts to portray the Conservatives as heartless neo-cons at odds with every minority group in the country," he said. "It allows Harper to say, again, that while others talked, I acted."	Quoted in commentary	(Yaffe, 2008, June 12)
132. Mike Youds, journalist, Kamloops Daily News	"Harper set aside the partisanship of Parliament to frame the apology in terms of respect"	Newspaper article	(Youds, 2008)

N.b.1. All Aboriginals are categorized as "victims"; there is no distinction made between former students and those who did not attend residential schools.
N.b. 2. Many of the Aboriginals listed are relatives of former residential school students; however, the list only includes this relationship if this was made explicit.

Appendix 11. Elements of the apology statement (Belgium)

Table 34. Elements of the apology statement of Belgian Prime Minister Di Rupo in Mechelen, September 9, 2012

Basic elements	**Quotations**
1. Word "apology", "sorry"	"…I offer apologies (on behalf) of Belgium…"
2. Acknowledge-ment of responsibility	"The collaboration of some governing bodies and civil servants from 1940 to 1945 is a reality that has been proven by various studies" "Multiple Belgian authorities have, to various degrees, were responsible for this terrible crime – the deportation of Jews of Belgian territory" "They became accomplices to the most abominable crime"
3. Wrongdoing	"Beginning in July 1942, more than 25,000 Jews and 351 gypsies were brought here and interned. Most of them would be deported to Auschwitz. Just 1,240 survived. That is less than 5%."
4. Violation of a moral norm	The conduct of authorities was "unworthy of a democracy, unworthy of our core values" "…tolerance…"; "…respect for others…"
Additional elements	**Quotations**
5. Promise of forbearance	He referenced multiple efforts of the government and Jewish community to educate youngsters about the past and protect them from extremism. "The federal government is and will remain determined to keep alive the recollection of our past – the recollection of the positive sides as well as the negative sides." Belgium is an active member and current chair of the "Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education" The country has drawn "lessons from the past" "This terrible period of deportations in Belgium's history has to remain an exception."
6. Material repair	-
7. Hurt of the victims	"This collaboration has had dramatic consequences for the Jewish community"
8. Consequence/ reason for apology	Forgetting the wrong would be a betrayal of the victims and their descendants. "It would lay the groundwork for the rise of new forms of extremism." The past holds "important lessons" for the future; without knowledge of the past, "too many persons are capable of reproducing past mistakes"

"At a time of globalization and widespread miscegenation, promoting respect tolerance and diversity is more important than ever"

"We know that the more a person's dignity is acknowledged, the more he is capable of tolerance and respect for others. We must not only transmit values and memory. We also must protect our social model and build devices that people need."

9. Social actors

A. Addressees of the statement, present at the scene: "Monseigneur, Ladies and gentlemen".
B. All youngsters, to educate them about the past.
C. Everyone who has helped built a free society based on solidarity.
D. Especially those at the scene to whom the torch was passed: "These people are worthy of the torch that has been passed onto them. They are up to the new challenges of civilization."

10. Special addressees

A. "Jewish community"

B. "Monseigneur"
Bishop of Mechelen

C. Ladies and gentlemen"
General public

11. Moral communities

A. Perpetrator community
"Belgium"
Including reference of Belgians who helped Jews against all odds
B. Victims
- "Jewish community", just one reference to gypsy community, and no connection to specific values, norms made

12. Moral/formal authority

A. Own activities
"I will do everything that I can to make sure that it [the past wrong, S.C.] never falls into oblivion."
B. Formal standing
"As Prime Minister of the Belgian government, I offer apologies (on behalf) of Belgium…"

13. Misc & Omissions

A. Connection with Jewish celebration Rosh Hashanah
B. Connection to his own socialist agenda
"The second direction [or: action that government takes to combat extremism S.C.] is the battle against poverty and social exclusion"; "we have to protect our social model";
"The battle against fascism and all other forms of extremism is complex. It demands a considerable investment in education and culture, but also in employment, housing and social integration."
C. Connection made with contemporary societal challenges: globalization, economic crisis that "favors (…) the search for scapegoats", the rise of openly xenophobic parties across Europe, extremism, including fascism and racism
D. Characterization of the wrong
"darkest page in our history"; "horror", "inexcusable" and "most abominable" "crime", "… a criminal fault"; an "indelible stain"
E. Landmark study's conclusions
"study has contributed to dismantling a myth (...) [about] the Belgian authorities" + invitation to Senate to debate the conclusion of the report and produce a resolution; promise that the government will be attentive to this resolution
F. Referral to the site
G. From "exactly at this place" Jews had been deported; appreciation for the memorial and the way in which it engages the youth of society

Addendum elements 2.
Especially the responsibility of government authorities was clearly spelled out. The 2007 landmark report was referenced 3 times to validate its conclusions about the active role that the authorities had played in the deportation of Jews. Moreover, Di Rupo made it an explicit goal to remove any ambiguity concerning the responsibility of authorities.

Add. element 5.
Di Rupo repeatedly said that the government would commit to transmitting values to the Belgian youth and remembering the past.

Add. element 6.
Di Rupo did not mention any form of material repair for the victims.

Add. element 13.
There were abundant references of the wrong that had been committed. For example, the PM spoke of the “darkest page in our history”, “horror”, an “inexcusable” and “most abominable” “crime”, and of an “indelible stain”. Di Rupo also made an explicit connection with contemporary problems that helped foster extremism, in his view, such as the economic recession and the rising social and economic tensions resulting from globalization. He also introduced his own socialist political agenda, as a means to combat racism.

Appendix 12. Interpretations in the public arena (Belgium)

The investigation of Belgian newspaper articles written months prior to and 6 months after the apology resulted in just 17 articles. Five of them were identical; one was an op-ed, one was a brief note by a columnist, and the other articles did not include any notable interpretations of the apology, only factual information about the performance (e.g., location, time, number of visitors, quotes of Di Rupo's statement and some historical facts, e.g. number of deportees during WWII).[267]

In the other three case studies the investigation of domestic newspapers was sufficient for a multi-actor analysis. In this case it was not. Initially just two third parties were included in these 17 articles. That is why I have expanded the search for third parties by adding two additional sources: 1) Television (news) coverage of the apology, and 2) online reactions of any kind of collective, such as associations, advocacy groups and local governments. These were found through a search with Google using the keywords: "Di Rupo" "excuses" "2012". I have confined the search to the first 15 pages with results. In the list below the additional sources are highlighted in grey.

Table 35: Social actors and their interpretations of the Belgian apology in domestic media (September 9, 2012-March 9, 2013).

PARTY	INTERPRETATIONS/QUOTES	FORUM	SOURCE
APOLOGIZER			
133. Emilio di Rupo, Prime Minister of Belgium (federation)	See main chapter	On stage	(CCJLB, 2012)
134. Bart Somers, Mayor of Mechelen	See main chapter	On stage	(Somers, 2012)
VICTIMS (physically present at the apology venue)			
135. Judith Kronfeld, secretary	See main chapter	On stage	(Het Journaal, 2012)
136. Chail Almberg, former deportee	See main chapter	On stage	(Het Journaal, 2012)
137. Young female student, Beth Aviv school	-	On stage	-
138. Maurice Sonosofsky, chair	"Elio di Rupo has used very strong words." "Apologies never come too late."	Quoted on website	(Centre Communitaire Laic Juif David Susskind,

[267] Articles that were left out of the initial set discussed the reception of the Cegesoma report in the Senate in January 2013; the opening of the museum in the Dossin Barracks by King Albert in November 2012; and the apology by Mayor Thielemans of Brussels in the summer of 2012.

of the Committee for the Coordination of Jewish Organizations of Belgium (CCLJ)	"The Jewish community ... feels extremely relieved." The senate has to respond to the report now.		2012)
139. Micha Eisenstorg, Chair of the Union of Deported	"The PM has had the courage to listen to the voice of reason beyond political considerations." We are particularly recognized. "May the Church of Belgium one day take up this work of repentance [and address] its silence and official non-assistance to people in distress."	Quoted on website	(Centre Communitaire Laic Juif David Susskind, 2012)
140. Serge Klarsfeld, Jewish activist and founder of the Association of the Sons and Daughters of Jews Deported from France	"It is never too late" "He used very strong words" "The Belgian PM had the courage and the clear-sightedness to align his country with France..."	Quoted on website	(Centre Communitaire Laic Juif David Susskind, 2012)
141. Editors Joods Actueel, online magazine for the Flemish Jewish community	The apology was attended by a "rare number of secretaries, ambassadors, consuls, representatives of political parties, members of parliament and Jewish representatives and Jewish dignitaries and chairs of Jewish associations."	Article	(Joods actueel, 2012b)
THIRD PARTIES			
142. Herman van Goethem, curator of museum located in the Dossin Barracks	“It is a long, dignified and well-considered text.” “The debates that have taken place in Antwerp and Brussels have been closed worthily by the statement of Prime Minister Di Rupo about the Belgian authorities as such.”	Op-ed, De Morgen & Joods Actueel (copy/paste)	(Van Goethem, 2012)
143. Johan Sanctorum, philosopher and consultant	Many politicians say sorry nowadays: there is an "[u]nbearable lightness of apologies" "Di Rupo does not have to speak on my behalf" "Memorial focuses solely on persecution of Jews..." "Historians such as Gie Van den Berghe pointed to the large involvement of Jewish advocacy groups in the construction of the Memorial..." That's why [the Memorial] cannot be connected to contemporary themes such as "the Palestinian question", despite the fact that this is "absolutely necessary". The reference in the mission statement of the museum to the "extreme right in Flanders" smells like party politics, and it turns the Memorial "into a weapon against an existing political party, the Flemish Interest (former Flemish Bloc)".	Op-ed at website VRT News (Deredactie.be)	(Sanctorum, 2012)
144. Hugo Camps, columnist in De Morgen, Flemish newspaper	Very late. Di Rupo becomes more visible as PM. "I wait impatiently for prime minister Netanyahu’s an unequivocal apology to the Palestinians."	Op-ed	(Camps, 2012)
145. Mohamed Achaibi, Chair of the	Di Rupo must reject the anti-Islam movie [made in the US in September 2012] [because] "Di Rupo has	Quoted in Joods Actueel	(Joods Actueel, 2012b)

Muslim Broadcasting Network in Belgium	shown his disapproval of what has happened during the Second World War."		
146. Eli Ringer, Vice chair of the Forum of Jewish Organizations (FJO)	"Last month Bart de Wever assured me personally that he univocally supported the apologies [of PM Di Rupo]..."	Referenced in Joods Actueel	(Joods Actueel, 2012b)
147. Rudi van Doorslaer, director CEGESOMA	In response to a motion in the Senate about the CEGESOMA report: "There are many more topics to discover and study", such as the resistance during the war.	Quoted	(RTBF, 2012)
148. Chantal Kesteloot, historian, researcher at CEGESOMA	It is the first time that the PM references the CEGESOMA report. More research is needed. ...not all aspects are known: "there are not just a few gray areas, but also [unknown] strategies for rescue activities, including in local government."	Quoted on website	(Centre Communitaire Laic Juif David Susskind, 2012)
149. Eric Rutayisire, Chair of IBUKA Belgium, Association for Genocide Survivors of Rwanda	"Better late than never" Saying 'never again' in itself is insufficient; more actions are needed against intolerance, extremism, racism... "...what do we do today against the denials of genocide against the Tutsis or the Armenians? What is being done against anti-Semitic actions...?"	Quoted on website	(Centre Communitaire Laic Juif David Susskind, 2012)

Appendix 13. Elements of the apology statement (UK)

Table 36. Elements of the apology statement of UK Prime Minister Brown in parliament, February 24, 2010

Basic elements	Quotations
1. Expression of regret	"And we are sorry that it has taken so long for this important day to come and for the full and unconditional apology that is justly deserved" "…full and unconditional apology…"
2. Acknowledge-ment of responsibility	"Until the late 1960s, successive UK Governments had over a long period of time supported child migration schemes. (…) The hope was that those children (…) would have the chance to forge a better life overseas, but the schemes proved to be misguided." "They were let down. We are sorry that they were allowed to be sent away at the time they were most vulnerable. We are sorry that instead of caring for them, this country turned its back, and we are sorry that the voices of these children were not always heard and their cries for help not always heeded."
3. Wrongdoing	"…the schemes proved to be misguided. In too many cases, vulnerable children suffered unrelenting hardship and their families left behind were devastated."
4. Violation of a moral norm	"They were cruelly lied to and told that they were orphans and that their parents were dead, when in fact they were still alive." "Their wounds will never fully heal, and for too long the survivors have been all but ignored."
Additional elements	**Quotations**
5. Promise of forbearance	"Although we cannot undo the events of the past, we can take action now to support people to regain their true identities and reunite with their families and loved ones, and to go some way to repair the damage that has been inflicted."
6. Material repair	"I can announce today support for former child migrants that includes the establishment of a new £6 million family restoration fund."
7. Hurt of the victims	"As people know, the pain of a lost childhood can last a lifetime. Some still bear the marks of abuse; all still live with the consequences of rejection. Their wounds will never fully heal, and for too long the survivors have been all but ignored."
8. Consequence/ reason	"It is right that today we recognise the human cost associated with this shameful episode of history and this failure in the first duty of a nation, which is to protect its children"
9. Social actors	I would like to recognise the work of my right hon. Friend the Member for Rother Valley (Mr. Barron) as Chairman of the Select Committee on Health, and of his predecessor the former Member for Wakefield, David Hinchcliffe. For their commitment to this cause, I would also like to praise all past and present members of the Commons Health Committee and the all-party group on child migrants. I would also like to pay tribute to the work of the Child Migrants Trust and the International Association of Former Child Migrants and their Families, which have campaigned for justice over many years. I know that the House will join me in paying special tribute to Margaret Humphreys, who founded the Child Migrants Trust and has been a constant champion and fighter for child migrants and their families.
10. Special addressees	"To all those former child migrants and their families, to those here with us today and those across the world-to each and every one-I say today that we are truly sorry."

11. Moral communities	"the first duty of a nation, which is to protect its children" "this country turned its back"
12. Moral/formal authority	A. Own role in the lead up "When I was first made aware of this wholly unacceptable practice, I wrote to the Prime Minister of Australia to urge that together, we do more to acknowledge the experiences of former child migrants and see what we could achieve." B. Formal standing "as prime Minister" "apologizing on behalf of our nation:
13. Misc & Omissions	A No precise description of roles and responsibilities of other institutions involved in the wrongdoing "they were lead down…", "they were allowed to…" "the voices (…) were not always heard…" B No referral to Australian apology by PM Rudd

Table 37. Elements of the apology statement of UK prime-minister Brown in Westminster, February 24, 2010

Basic elements	**Quotations second (extensive) speech Westminster**
1. Word "apology", "sorry"	"I do stand here as Prime Minister on behalf of everyone in our nation to apologise to you and to your families" "On behalf of this nation, to all former child migrants and to all families, we are truly sorry you were let down"
2. Acknowledge-ment of responsibility	"But no one can fail to be touched by the terrible human suffering that sprang from the misguided child-migrant schemes and the mistakes that were made by successive United Kingdom governments." "Child migration didn't happen in the dark ages, so long ago that we weren't expected to know any better. No, this was happening in the United Kingdom until the late 1960s."
3. Wrongdoing	"Many of your stories tragically speak of cruelty and of neglect, of the physical, sexual and emotional abuse in uncaring and brutal institutions, of the unrelenting hardship suffered by you and your families, of the utter devastation wrought on so many lives and of the ghosts that haunt us to this day."
4. Violation of a moral norm	"terrible human suffering" "cruel and unnatural practice" "number of childhoods that were destroyed"
Additional elements	
5. Promise of forbearance	"Winston Churchill once said, 'All people make mistakes, but only the wise learn from their mistakes'. And from this disgraceful set of events that we've had to acknowledge, we learn that it is the responsibility of all of us to safeguard and promote the welfare of our children."
6. Material repair	"Now, I am pleased to tell you today that the government will continue to fund the Child Migrants Trust" "We are also setting up a new £6 million family restoration…"
7. Hurt of the victims	"…your suffering is understood" "And we are sorry that, as children, your voices were not always heard, your cries for help not always heeded. Today we hear you."
8. Consequence /reason	"And as nations, we need to know these uncomfortable truths… And it is why we are here today and why I can echo the words I said in the House of Commons just a short time ago." "And it's my genuine hope that today's apology, which is an apology from your nation, will go some way towards easing even a small amount of the pain that you've endured for many decades." "I trust that today can be a turning point…"

9. Social actors	"So let me pay tribute on behalf of our country and all of you to the Child Migrants Trust." "The Trust, I know, has received extensive support from Nottinghamshire County Council, especially for Dennis Pettitt and Joan Taylor. It has worked with the International Association of Former Child Migrants and their families, ably led by Norman Johnston, Desmond McDaid and Harold Haig, and I thank all of them on your behalf and our country's behalf for what they have done." "And I want to praise Margaret Humphreys, founder of the Child Migrants Trust, the relentless campaigner she is for justice." "And I would like to acknowledge, as I did in the House of Commons earlier, the work of the Health Select Committee, particularly its former and current chairs, David Hinchliffe and Kevin Barron, who first brought this unfairness to my attention and to so many others, and let me thank both of you for what you have done."
10. Special addressees	"To all those former child migrants and their families, to those here with us today and those across the world-to each and every one-I say today that we are truly sorry."
11. Moral communities	Qualification of the victim group "You are heroes" "… you do not see yourselves as victims; you refuse to be victims. You show a spirit that is unbowed and unbroken; you are survivors who have built good, decent lives despite the trauma inflicted upon you in these most previous early years."
12. Moral/formal authority	A. His own role "That is why I determined early on when I became Prime Minister to do everything in my power to recognise this shameful episode for what it was in our history." B. Mentioning related activities "I've met children who were sent away at the age of three today.." "The people I have met this afternoon,…" "She has just presented me with a leather-bound inscribed copy of that powerful book, Empty Cradles." C. Formal standing "…the apology that I make on behalf of our whole country…"
13. Misc & Omissions	A. Qualification of the meaning of the apology "…it is an important and momentous day, both for you and for our country because today your pain is recognised, your suffering is understood, your betrayal is acknowledged..." B. "His own emotions and attitude "It is with humility that I address you here this afternoon" "I stand here humbled…" "And I am inspired also by the strength of your spirit…" "I listened in pain…" "I am saddened now…" C. Anecdotes of happy endings "Patrick, who is here today, experienced firsthand just how crucial the work of the Child Migrants Trust can be. Patrick was reunited with his family last year." "The Child Migrants Trust have told me too of letters from 1956, written by a couple who discovered that their son had been sent to Australia without their knowledge or consent. (…) It was only 35 years later that the Child Migrants Trust was able to reunite mother and son." "An interview with the mother of a former child migrant paints an even more tragic picture… Again, I am pleased to say that the Child Migrants Trust was able to reunite mother and son, but it was 40 years later."

Both statements include basic elements # 1-4 and additional elements #5-8.

Addendum element 13.

The apologizer did not specify what exactly successive governments had been responsible for. It remained unclear how many children had been sent off under their auspices (de jure). Nor did the PM make clear if he was only apologizing for the program that started in the 1920's, or for the entire practice over the course of several centuries. That the government had been involved in all stages of the practice as an active regulator, or as a passive authority that allowed the sending agencies to do their work, goes a long way towards explaining why this fact was left open for interpretation.

Appendix 14. Interpretations in the public arena (UK & Australia)

The total number of UK newspaper articles found was 78; in Australian newspapers and new wires 18 articles were found. There were 10 victims quoted in UK newspapers, and 16 in Australian sources. It is important to note that there were many more victims quoted in UK newspapers (about 30), but only 10 utterances are considered relevant: many gave accounts of their childhood experiences in informative articles that focused on the historical wrongdoing. These articles often did not mention the apology at all. Other third parties were commentators (8), such as columnists or reporters now writing op-eds. There were also politicians quoted, either MP's seated in coalition or opposition benches, such as Tory leader David Cameron, local government representatives of Australia, and representative from a municipality in the UK (7 in total). There were no "experts" among the third parties, such as social scientists with particular knowledge of the wrong. Humphreys and the victims were treated as experts who could clarify what had happened.

Table 38. Social actors and their interpretations of the UK apology in domestic newspapers (February 24, 2010-August 10, 2010)

	PARTY	QUOTES	FORUM/FORM	SOURCE
	Venue 1: Parliament			
	APOLOGIZER			
1.	Gordon Brown, PM	See main text	Parliament	-
	VICTIMS, physically present			
2.	Norman Johnston, president of Intl. Assoc. of Former Child Migrants	"It is a start, but nowhere near enough. An apology without restitution is not justice."	Quoted, present for Brown's formal statement	(Perry, 2010)
	OTHERS, physically present			
3.	David Cameron, Tory Leader	"welcomed the statement"	Quoted	(Woodhouse and Ashton, 2010)
4.	Bob Walter, Tory (N Dorset), member of the health select committee	Said that the apology was "long overdue" but "very welcome"	Quoted	(Woodhouse and Ashton, 2010)
5.	Frank Dobson, former health secretary	"welcomed" the PM's apology	Quoted	(Woodhouse and Ashton, 2010)
6.	Baroness Royall of Blaisdon, Lords Leader	Said that ministers had not spoken about compensation but had set up the fund to reunite families. "That, we believe, is the best way of healing the very deep wounds of the past…''	Quoted	(Woodhouse and Ashton, 2010)
7.	Bishop of Leicester	Spoke in his role as chairman of the Children's Society in ``acknowledging the regret of some 30 charities and private bodies that agreed to migrate children abroad, acting out of what seemed like the	Quoted	(Woodhouse and Ashton, 2010)

	best intentions at the time''. Stated that “the Children's Society and other charities wanted to offer a service to help former child migrants get access to records and counselling.”		

	PARTY	QUOTES	FORUM/FORM	SOURCE
	Venue 2: Westminster			
	APOLOGIZER			
8.	Gordon Brown, PM	"You will see when you meet people who have been affected by this, it has ruined many of their lives." "It has certainly changed their lives in a way they should never have expected." 'It was awful - a lot of abuse went on"	Westminster, quoted	(Carson, 2010)
9.	Andy Burnham, State Secretary for Health	See main text	Westminster	-
	VICTIMS, physically present			
10.	Harold Haig, secretary Intl. Assoc. of Former Child Migrants	"We have all been waiting for this day for a lifetime ... for us the apology is a moment in history where there can be reconciliation between the government, the nation and the child migrants," he said. “This is a momentous day for child migrants. A day when the pain and lost we have suffered for a life time has been recognised and acknowledged. A day when we have been welcomed back to our country of birth. “While it has been a long time coming, the apology has the potential to enhance the healing process for child migrants, to heal them of the wounds of the past that we have lived with for too long.”	Quoted	(Porter, 2010) (Gelineau, 2010)
11.	Honoria Goldberg	“The apology is recognition that they realise things didn't turn out the way they expected. They just wanted to send these children out there - good British stock to populate Australia."	Quoted	(Carson, 2010)
12.	David Lorente, Children Canada head of Home	"Some people are still hurting. This apology will help."	Quoted	(Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2010)
13.	George Walden	Stated that the apology had come "50 or 60 years too late," adding, "As children, we were a commodity."	Quoted	(Gelineau, 2010)
14.	John Hennessy	“…an apology is overdue for "one of the most shocking parts of British history".	Quoted	(Gloucestershire Echo, 2010)
15.	Patrick McGowan	Believed the apology was important because it addressed some of the issues experienced, such as sexual abuse	Quoted	(Roberts, 2010)

	VICTIMS, not physically present			
16.	Rex Wade	Was disappointed to not be invited to the official London apology. "What he said was quite moving but my initial reaction was that it was a political ploy, being an election year. Even so, I can still accept what he said."	Quoted	(Cornish Guardian, 2010)
17.	Marie Harrison	"…the national apology in the UK by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown on Wednesday vindicated the stories they had told friends and family over the years. "When I told people what happened they didn't believe me and this is an acknowledgement that what we were saying all along did happen."	Quoted, also present at Melbourne apology	(Turnbull, 2010)
18.	Carol Walisoliso	"They knew about it a long time, so they should have done it a long time ago, instead of waiting for the Australian Government to say sorry, and then: 'Oh, we better say sorry too because the Australians have done it'," she said. "It shouldn't have been the Australian Government first, it should have been the British government because they were the ones that sent us here."	Quoted	(Collins and Smail, 2010)
19.	Alfred Jones	"From the British Government it means quite a lot," Mr Jones said. "It's a start, we're getting there, but whether we'll ever see the end of it, I don't know." "I don't think it brings you any closer to closure properly. "I would like to see the child migrants being able to go back to England without having to spend all their own money."	Quoted	(Collins and Smail, 2010)
	OTHERS, (physically present)			
20.	Margaret Humphreys	"The child migrants feel it was truthful and sincere. They feel that justice has started to be done." "It was hugely significant. It is positive. It has been a long time coming. "Child migrants asked for the truth to be told. It was received very well indeed." "But the crucial message for today is that child migrants and their families will now be able to embrace this defining statement - and the measures announced with it - and move forward after a lifetime of waiting." "Every child migrant will thank him for his statement today. Much continues to be written about this appalling episode in this country's history - and rightly so."	Statement at the scene, on website CMTrust & quoted	(Porter, 2010) (Child Migrants Trust, 2012)
21.	Frances Swaene, head of the human rights team at Leigh Day & frmr. representative of Int. Association of Former Child Migrants	"This apology is long over-due and is only a first step for some former migrants in coming to terms with what happened to them. Whilst I am pleased that Gordon Brown has apologised on behalf of the Government it cannot detract from the terrible decisions that were taken that continue to affect the lives of thousands of people."	Quoted	(Leigh Day, 2010)

	OTHERS (not physically present)		
22. Melanie Phillips, journalist, the Daily Mail	Feels that there are many other things of importance that PM Brown should apologized for first. Does not understand why this apology is his responsibility…." Instead, he chooses to issue an apology for a policy in which he had no involvement whatsoever. As a result, such a declaration is both meaningless and offensive. By expressing contrition for other people's behaviour, it makes a mockery of the very notion of apology . Indeed, such apologies - at a distance act as a kind of decoy, trying to deflect public anger away from the actions for which such leaders really should be asking forgiveness. Moreover, apologising for the actions of others is a device to gain a metaphorical halo by denouncing the dubious actions of the past. It is a trick pulled by leaders who are trying to gain popularity by distancing themselves from institutions or ideas that have become unpopular or unfashionable -- regardless of whether or not such unpopularity is justified. So they will cynically throw their own institution, culture or country…The result has been a veritable epidemic of political apologies"	Op ed, prior to apology	(Phillips, 2009)
23. Jenny Macklin, Australian Families Minister	"…it was a turning point for many people. "This was clearly a moment of great emotion and significance with the potential to heal past hurt."	Quoted, from parliamentary session	(Tasker, 2010)
24. Joan Taylor, chairman of trustees for Child Migrants Trust	"Both Governments knew what was happening and did nothing to stop it and I think an apology should have happened many, many years ago…" "I would have preferred the British Government to have been the first one but they have announced that they are going to make the apology and that's important."	Quoted, prior to apology	(Walker & Carter (2009)
25. Notts County Council	Cited as playing a "very significant role" in bringing about justice for the child migrants	Quoted	(Walker & Carter, 2010)
26. Steve Irons, MP, member of CLAN	"The abuse suffered will never be forgotten by the individuals concerned; however it is an important part of the healing process for victims to finally hear that Government and society believes them and is sorry". "This will not close an era but open the opportunity for the healing process to commence and the battle for services and counseling for all Forgotten Australians and UK Migrants will continue"	Quoted	(Irons, 2010)
27. Karyn Walsh, Micah Projects	"Acknowledging past wrong doings and actions of the British government through the apology from UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown is an important part of redressing past experiences."	Quoted	(Micah Projects, 2010)
28. Owen Bowcott, journalist	Gordon Brown's apology, coming several months after, is intended to help the process of healing for	Article	(Bowcott, 2010)

	survivors.		
29. Sister Theresa, now staff at Nazareth House, from a Catholic order, UK	Said an apology to the children sent to colonies should have come earlier. "Now of course we know that they did suffer abuse and that's why there has to be an apology."	Quoted	(Gloucestershire Echo, 2009)
30. Bob Roberts, journalist, The Mirror, Ulster edition	"heartfelt"	Article	(Roberts, 2010)
31. Denise Robertson, journalist, The Western Mail	Makes link to current state care "I've met some of those migrant children, still traumatised by what was done to them, and I'm glad they got their apology. It would be nice if the various agencies involved apologised too. Better still if they reviewed their present behaviour." "... child protection in this country is not working"	Op-ed	(Robertson, 2010)
32. Brian Reade, commentator, The Mirror	"This week alone, Gordon Brown has said sorry for a soldier's death, for his staff being exposed to bullying allegations and for Britain sending child migrants to Australia in the 1930s" "Maybe it's time for a Nat i o n a l A p o l o g y Helpline"	Op-ed, The Mirror	(Reade, 2010)
33. Paddy McGuffin, commentator, The Morning Star	"Politicians and morals, about as likely as English footballers and fidelity - surely it's easy brownie points. Mind you, the government's only just got round to apologising for the slave trade." By condemning the shameful practice it was in effect saying that nothing like this could happen again. Oh, really? Tell that to the hundreds of children herded into festering camps..." "Children, again, some as young as two or three torn from their mothers, terrified, bewildered and alone and thrown into prison-like "detention centres." "The policy of "child migration" remains a stain on this country's so-called honour just as the draconian, nonsensical and vicious policy of child detention is and will continue to be a stain on us all."	Op-ed	(McGuffin, 2010)
34. Ian Thwaites, representative of the Child Migrants Trust	Said it was "still very difficult to accept the full extent of what happened". "People say to me all the time: 'It's never too late.' People in their 80s will say to me 'It's never too late to do the right thing.'"	Quoted, prior to apology	(The Guardian, 2010)

Venues in Australia: Sydney			
PARTY	**QUOTES**	**FORUM/FORM**	**SOURCE**
APOLOGIZER			
35. Baroness Amos, High Commissioner	"Opportunity to move on" "Emotional day"	Quoted	(Reuters, 2010) (Powell, 2010)
VICTIMS, physically present			
36. Carol Walisoliso	"It is far too late. It should have been (made) a long, long time ago"	Quoted	(Godfrey, 2010, February 25)
37. Robert McCaughan	"It will help, but it's a bit late. "See, we don't really need help now. When we were leaving school and going out in the world, that's when we needed help."	Quoted	(Godfrey, 2010, February 25)
38. Lynda Craig	"It means a lot to me. I don't know whether the apology will be enough, because I really want to see more given to those people who are left behind, than just an apology."	Quoted	(Reuters, 2010)
39. Michael Snell	"For some, it's come too late" "But it might also help to bring happiness to those who have spent a lifetime feeling as though they had no beginning."	Quoted	(Shears, 2010)
40. George Walden	"It's about 50 or 60 years too late."	Quoted	(AAP Newswire, 2010)
41. Mary Molloy	Said that it was an emotional day. "It is a good step in the right direction and a long time coming, but it'll never be closure…"	Quoted	(Powell, 2010)
42. Richard Atkins	"The journey for me has never ended some 50 years later. I was abused by authorities here, shunned by the establishment and forgotten by all," Atkins said. "Today I feel a little bit of weight has been taken from my shoulders."	Quoted	(AFP, 2010)
43. Laurence Reid	"There's no way we can ever get any of that back…We grew up too fast and got no thanks for it."	Quoted in video	(Reuters, 2010)
44. David Hill	"The acknowledgement and the apology is some comfort that wasn't there before."	Quoted	(Reuters, 2010)
45. William Nelson	"…a bit late"	Quoted in news item, Au venue unknown	(ABC News, 2010)
OTHERS, physically not present			
46. Board of editors, Kalgoorlie Miner	"And although the apology has been welcomed, many victims still want cold, hard cash to ease the	Editorial	(Editors Kalgoorlie Miner, 2010)

	problems caused by their reportedly cold, hard childhoods…” “The real insight I've gained from this is the ongoing societal influence. If you harm a child you create a harmed adult…Many of the troubles in society today are the consequence of harming children. It's very important to learn that lesson.”		

Venue: Perth			
PARTY	**QUOTES**	**FORUM/FORM**	**SOURCE**
APOLOGIZER			
47. Jolyon Welsh, Deputy High Commissioner; Phil Orchard, Head of Post in Perth	See main text	On stage	-
VICTIMS, physically present			
48. Unidentified victim	"…disappointed by the reception": "We weren't even allowed to ask questions."	Quoted	(Strutt, 2010),
49. Unidentified victim	"...We've got no feeling out of what Mr. Welsh just said."	Quoted	(Strutt, 2010)
OTHERS, physically present			
50. Reporter, Canberra TV	"Too little too late, but for most it was better than nothing"	Quoted in news item	(Canberra TV, 2010)

Venue: Brisbane			
PARTY	**QUOTES**	**FORUM/FORM**	**SOURCE**
APOLOGIZER			
51. Bob Zacharin, Head of Post in Queensland	"I hope it's a turning point for these people... From the turnout you can see so many of them were waiting for something like this to happen"	On stage & Quoted	(Collins & Smail, 2010)
VICTIMS, physically present			
52. Theresa Whitfeld	Stated it was good to hear the apology after a hard childhood and was sad so many did not live to hear it. Cannot forgive the nuns she says…"It's nice to hear an apology, because that's something we've wanted to hear for many, many years"	Quoted Quoted	(Collins & Smail, 2010) (Gray, 2010)

Venue: Melbourne			
PARTY	**QUOTES**	**FORUM/FORM**	**SOURCE**
APOLOGIZER			
53. Stuart Gill, British consul-general	"On behalf of my country, I apologise that it has taken so long for child migrants to receive the recognition and contrition that they so justly deserve, and remember those who are no longer with us, those for whom these events come too late, those who died for Australia, for freedom, in the wars of the past century." "While we cannot change the past, we can help former child migrants reunite with their families now and in the future, and the British government will continue to fund the Child Migrants Trust so it can carry on its work in seeking resolution for former child migrants and their families." "I hope my words today, along with those of my colleagues at other events being held in Sydney, Perth and Brisbane, and those of the British Prime Minister yesterday, can become a turning point in the lives of former child migrants, that they can go some way towards easing some of the pain endured by so many over many decades." "…they had endured "truly shocking and brutal" conditions growing up in Australia"	Op-ed Quoted	(Gill, 2010) (Turnbull, 2010)
VICTIMS			
54. Marie Harrison	"For me to have an apology is a recognition of what we went through" "When I told people what happened they didn't believe me and this is an acknowledgement that what we were saying all along did happen."	Quoted	(Turnbull, 2010)
55. Jim Napper	"It was quite emotional,"…A bit late, but I think but it will help a lot of people.'' He stated that many victims felt mixed emotions, but overall wanted official recognition for what they had experienced to know that someone did care after all."	Quoted	(Lannen, 2010)
56. Pam Wright	Experienced tears, quiet anger, and sorrow. "There's a whole lot of emotions going round and round. I had to agree with 99 per cent of it. "I can see what they're trying to do [by pledging Â£6 million]. I think if we can reunite anybody with their family it's worth it, but I know a lot of people are cynical and saying 'it's a little too late'."	Quoted	(Webb, 2010)

Appendix 15. Elements of the apology statement (the Netherlands)

Table 39. Elements of the apology statement of the Dutch ambassador to Indonesia, December 9, 2011

Basic elements	**Quotations**
1. Expression of regret	"In this context, and on behalf of the Dutch government, I apologise for the tragedy that took place in Rawagedeh on 9 December 1947."
2. Acknowledge-ment of responsibility	"…an action of the Dutch military in your village."
3. Wrongdoing	"…an extreme example of how relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands could go so wrong in that time." "…an action of the Dutch military in your village." "tragedy" "... In this context... I apologise"
4. Violation of a moral norm	Debatable use of the word "wrong": "…how relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands could go so wrong…"
Additional elements	**Quotations**
5. Promise of forbearance	-
6. Material repair	"The Dutch government recently reached a settlement with the next of kin, in the hope that this will help them to close this exceedingly difficult chapter of their lives."
7. Hurt of the victims	December 9th: "A tragic day for you all"
8. Consequence /reason for apology	"I hope that, by reflecting together on what happened that day, we will also be able to turn – together – to the future, with all its opportunities for close, productive cooperation between our two countries."
9. Social actors	-
10. Special addressees	A Target audience Only vaguely defined, "families" and "fellow villagers" B Additional stakeholder Indonesia, as a country, with which cooperative relationships were to be maintained
11. Moral communities	-
12. Moral/formal authority	Formal authority "I am honoured, as the Dutch government's representative, to share this day of remembrance with you. I thank you for your kind and cordial invitation, which I was most pleased to accept." "I think I may say that I am not here today on behalf of the Dutch government alone: my presence here is also endorsed by parliament and has the broad support of the Dutch people."
13. Misc & Omissions	A. Pinpointing the wrong: "In this context..." B. Points to individual healing "Every one of you must come to terms with the memory of December in your own way."

Addendum element 1 -4.
De Zwaan unmistakably apologized on behalf of the government, and he also made clear for what. He called the wrong “an action of the Dutch military”. He chose formulations void of moral judgment, saying that this action was, "an extreme example of how relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands could go so wrong in that time" (Netherlands Embassy in Jakarta, 2011).

Additional elements were either concisely formulated, or absent. For example, the hurt of the victims was referenced in terms of "a tragic day for you all".

Appendix 16. Interpretations in the public arena (the Netherlands)

From the day of the apology until 6 months after one can find 56 articles about the act in Dutch domestic newspapers. Because the court ruling in drew much attention many experts, commentators and other potential meaning makers had already commented on the Rawagede case in September 2011 ruling. Many these parties did not resurface in the debate following the apology. (Perhaps not all social actors were not inclined to comment again on the same issue, or perhaps boards of editors decided not to interview the same persons twice in such short period of time.) In the source set comments directly on the upcoming apology are included, offered after the ruling and prior to the official event.

Table 40: Social actors and their interpretations of the Dutch apology in domestic newspapers (December 9, 2011-June 9 2012).

PARTY	INTERPRETATIONS/QUOTES	FORUM	SOURCE
APOLOGIZER			
150. Tjeerd de Zwaan, Dutch ambassador to Indonesia	See appendix 15	-	-
151. Uri Rosenthal, Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs	"Apologies give credence to the seriousness of the events that occurred"	Press release Monday Dec 3, quoted 5 times in newspaper articles right after apology	(De Telegraaf, 2011, December 6) (Mooibroek, 2011) (Nicolasen, 2011)
VICTIMS (physically present at the apology venue)			
152. Anti Rukiyah, widow (93 years)	Feels relieved: "On the other hand, it happened so long ago, it does not matter much anymore. As long as I have enough to eat and my children are happy, I am happy."	Quoted	(Reformatorisch Dagblad, 2011) (Van der Mee, 2011)
153. Wanti Binti Sariman, widow	"I still have nightmares." "But I have come here to accept [the apology]. It was our fate. And of course we need to forgive the soldiers who have killed our people as well."	Quoted	(Van der Mee, 2011)
154. Lasmi Binti Kasilan	"We never meant to take revenge. We wanted apologies and compensation. And that is what we have now received." "I already have forgiven everyone. I am grateful to the Netherlands." (Lepeltak)	Quoted	(Van der Mee, 2011) (Lepeltak, 2011)
155. Wanti Bin Bidowo	"I am old and I do not have feelings of revenge anymore."	Quoted	(Lepeltak, 2011)
156. Cawi	"I accept the apologies of the Netherlands."	Quoted	(Lepeltak, 2011)
VILLAGERS (present at the apology venue)			
157. Kartini, fellow female villager, lost family member, not receiving any financial	"I am sad, this is not fair. When I was six, my brother and uncle were shot. My uncle was like a father to me."	Quoted	(Maas, 2011, December 10)

compensation			
158. Budi Setiawan (30 years)	Apologies are "logical" Money should be divided among all villagers	Quoted	(Maas, 2011, December 10)
159. Sukarman, chairman of the foundation Rawagede & organizer of the annual commemoration ceremonies.	"Happy with the apology" “Direct relatives are now receiving money. However, for the children of parents who have already passed away, or for grandchildren, the apology itself will have to suffice.” "The money should be divided among all families involved"	Quoted	(Hupkes, 2011)
OTHERS (physically present at the venue)			
160. Liesbeth Zegveld	"Historic" apologies (Next) Disclosed in tv program that widows of victims of 'cleansing actions' in the south of the former island Celebes (now called Sulawesi) have approached her to investigate if they are entitled to settlement with the state as well. (ANP) "I think that the government actually was content with the court ruling. They wanted to apologize for a long time, but did not dare to do so. They only needed a little push. And with regard to the compensation: this small group of widows is, of course, very manageable?." (Maas)	Quoted	(NRC Next, 2011) (Ingwersen & Mooibroek, 2011) (Maas, 2011, December 10)
161. Jeffrey Pondaag, Chairman Comité Nederlandse Ereschulden	"[Rawagede is] the tip of the iceberg." (S&T)		(Schrijver & Tomesen, 2011)
162. Michel Maas, reporter	"Apologizing appears to be difficult for the Dutch, but for the surviving relatives is a piece of cake." Apologies are "exceptional" "The widows have done the impossible; they have beaten the Netherlands."	Article	(Maas, 2011, December 10)
163. Edwin Mooibroek, reporter	"The Netherlands hopes that the apology enables the victims to close a difficult chapter in their lives."		(Mooibroek, 2011)
164. Erik Willems, documentary maker	Introduced the war crimes of the infamous captain Westerling at Sulawesi. This included the random executions of innocent villagers. "It was not just in Rawagede that Dutch soldiers committed crimes, they also did in Galunk Lombok."	Op-ed	(Willems, 2011)
165. Hanne de Klerck, journalist	Financial issues have hindered the Dutch government from apologizing Feared financial claims	Op-ed	(De Klerck, 2011)
OTHERS (absent from the venue)			
166. P.C. Rosier, individual reader, former inhabitant of Indonesia	Accepts the apology. "However, as a native of Surabaya, and keeping the [equilibrium principle] in mind, other memories come to the surface as well. Memories of the Bersiap-period, in which many thousands of Dutch people, Indo-Europeans and Chinese were murdered by pemoedes [armed youngsters]" "Too bad that in wartime so many dirty hands are	Reader's letter, Leidsch Dagblad	(Rosier, 2011)

	made"		
167. Hans de Best, individual reader	"Zegveld has found a new professional field that generates lots of money and publicity" "Now she turns to Celebes...[where] captain Westerling tried to restore order using firm methods. Bringing these issues to the surface only serves to build this woman's reputation and glory. It is going to cost [the Dutch state] lots of money." Both sides suffered losses; TNI destroyed villages; 6,000 NL military personnel died	Reader's letter, De Gooi- en Eemlander	(De Best, 2011)
168. Walter Catz, individual reader, war veteran second 'police action'	Curious if other widows of men executed in Sulawesi between 1946 and 1947 have the same entitlement. Could have a positive effect	Reader's letter, De Gooi- and Eemlander	(Catz, 2011)
169. Joks van Veen, individual reader, former inhabitant of Indonesia	Finally justice War is a dirty business "However, Liesbet van Zegsveld should also go and talk to the Dutch who survived the Japanese incarnation camps ("Jappenkampen"). When the war was over and young women happily walked out of the camp... they were cut to pieces by Indonesians. And what happened to all those boys who were sent [...] to the Dutch Indies? If you disclose atrocities, show both sides."	Reader's letter, De Gooi- and Eemlander	(Gooi en Eemlander, 2011)
170. Graa Boomsma, author of a novel set in the Dutch East Indies	"Opportunistic apologies, 64 years later..." "Apologies have a strange after taste" Finally, apologies Netherlands committed war crimes systematically Past has been covered up	Op-ed, NRC Next	(Boomsma, 2011)
171. Jan Somers, former inhabitant of Indonesia	"Perhaps Indonesia can now apologize as well" Agrees with the apologies offered for Rawagede. "Wouldn't it be a great if Indonesia offered apologies to Bersiap-victims? "Actually, I do not care about an apology, it is all about recognition, knowing the victims. For the coming generation."	Reader's letter, NRC Handelsblad	(Somers, 2011)
172. Unknown historian (response to Somers), relative of Dutch inhabitants of Indonesia	My family suffered from the Bersiap (Indonesian violence in post war years). However, apologies for the Bersiap are not necessary. Because, "the Indonesian government cannot be held responsible for [the actions]." "The perpetrators comprised of gangs of untamed boys. They had either received or captured Japanese weapons." "I hope that Rawagede is the start of recognition and awareness of all cruelties that our country has committed..." "Emphasizing the Bersiap-period hinders this, because survivors especially recognize their own suffering."	Reader's letter, NRC Handelsblad	(Bennema & Marks, 2011)
173. Unknown reader, relative to Dutchman incarnated by the Japanese (response to Somers)	"My husband survived the Japanese incarceration camps, the boy in front of him did not. His skull was cut by a klewang - just like that." "Now that we are offering apologies, I would like to get apologies for the victims of the Bersiap as well"	Reader's letter, NRC Handelsblad	(Bennema & Marks, 2011)
174. Emilie van Outeren, journalist	The apologies are "special, historic and even unique"	Article, NRC Next	(Van Outeren, 2011)
175. Huub de Cort, individual reader, war veteran	Apologies are appropriate, but... As veteran I have witnesses the cruel killing of seven fellow soldiers after they had given themselves up to Indonesians. I wish Minister Rosenthal of Foreign Affairs would pursue justice	Reader's letter, Brabants Dagblad	(Brabants Dagblad, 2011)

	for the remaining family of those seven soldiers…”		
176. J. Kuijer, individual reader	"You wait 63 years until almost every surviving relative of the 431 murdered men has died and then you give the remaining survivors 20,000 Euros each? That saves [the Dutch state] a whole boatload of cash.”	Reader's letter, De Telegraaf	(Kuijer, 2011)
177. P.J.G.A. Ego, individual reader	If you really want to close a chapter, let Indonesia apologize for the Bersiap period, when thousands of Dutchmen were killed and robbed.	Reader's letter, De Telegraaf	(Ego, 2011)
178. Hans Akveld, individual reader	"A gesture, but a very very modest one..." "Finally justice is done" It took an "embarrassing' amount of time. Rosenthal, the Minister, instead, he did not offer apologies personally, he let the ambassador do it	Reader's letter, NRC Next	(NRC Next, 2011)
179. Harry van Bommel, member of parliament for the Socialist Party	"It has taken too long, but finally it will happen..." Apologies will do "justice" to surviving relatives Hopes that development fund, promised in 2009 will be transferred soon	Quoted	(De Ruyter, 2011)
180. Mariko Peters, member of parliament for GroenLinks (GreenLeft)	Is happy. "These apologies are not just important for the surviving relatives and their community, but also for when the Dutch look back at how they came to terms with their colonial past.”	Quoted	(De Ruyter, 2011)
181. Frans Timmermans, member of parliament, Labour Party (PvdA)	"I hope that this official apology of the Dutch government can offer the surviving relatives the compensation that they were seeking and that this burdensome period can be closed." "Very well that the Netherlands finally apologizes Rosenthal deserves a compliment for the quick follow up after the ruling of the court	Quoted	(De Ruyter, 2011)
182. Han ten Broeke, member of parliament of the People's for Freedom and Democracy (VVD)	"A suitable gesture"	Quoted, prior to apology	(De Ruyter, 2011)
183. Marijn Schrijver & Remco Tomesen, journalists	"…bloody actions of the Dutch". Period in Dutch history that is not closed yet. Authors make connection to apologies for deportation of over 100,000 Jews during WW II.	Op-ed, De Pers	(Schrijver & Thomesen, 2011)
184. Unspecified war veteran	Described as reacting passively [to apology]. Action in village was caused by frustration among the Dutch when they did not find a freedom fighter who was responsible for numerous ambushes that killed Dutch soldiers Fans of Sukarno are guilty of conducting a "dirty war" and no one ever talked about this.	Quoted	(De Telegraaf, 2011, December 6)
185. Ronald Frieshart, individual reader	Has cynical comments on the government’s point of view and questions its moral convictions, because two MP's asked a month before to start a profound investigation into Dutch war crimes in the second half of the 20th century. Government refused. The government only apologized because of it was pressured by a judge.	Letter to newspaper	(Frisart, 2011)

	Do not expect anything in the future from this cabinet.		
186. Unknown individual reader	People ask for apologies and financial compensation. "That's all fine, but where are the protests against the Indonesia that is guilty of murdering hundreds of thousands of Papoea's [since 1963]?" "Let's collect 40,000 signatures" to force parliament to take notice of this.	Reader's letter, Nederlands Dagblad	(Nederlands Dagblad, 2011)
187. Koetsier, indiv reader	Regret that the judge did not classify the massacre as a war crime No development funding has reached the village yet	Op-ed, prior to apology	(Koetsier, Burger & Somers, 2011)
188. Unknown individual reader, relative of former inhabitant of Indonesia	"You can only receive apologies, you cannot demand them." "Apology-guilty-money" "I do not need apologies" for the suffering of my grandmother, who was killed during the Bersiap]. It suffices that these victims will be commemorated at the National Indie Commemoration"	Letter to newspaper, prior to apology	(Koetsier, Burger & Somers, 2011)
189. Koos van Dam, former Dutch ambassador to Indonesia	"I'm afraid that the Dutch often maintain a double standard. When we look at the Japanese or the Germans, then we demand an apology and compensation. However, many Dutch people want to ignore our colonial past and the negative side of it. "For a long time it was impossible to criticize what happened in Indonesia. Everyone felt invested, including those who were not personally responsible for the war crimes that were committed. They were afraid that they would be held responsible for those events, while they felt they had tried to do so much good." "But we are talking about war crimes and excesses. We label the Dutch military actions as 'policing actions', which make them an internal affair. Indonesia at that time was seen as Dutch territory. That terminology masks what it really was, that we were at war. The Dutch for a long time had difficulty letting go of Indonesia." "At the 2008 annual commemoration of the massacre at Rawagede I read out loud a text in Indonesian that mentioned the word 'apology'. In the Dutch text that word was 'regret'. That text had been approved by The Hague; the translation had not. To put it diplomatically: they were not happy about that in The Hague. And yes, I suspect that is because they were afraid of reparation claims."	Interview, De Volkskrant	(Nicolasen, 2011)
190. Van Dijck, C.N.H. (individual reader)	Apology is slap in the face of the war veterans; the attorney of the victims does not know that Dutchmen in Indonesia suffered from murder, robberies, rape, kidnapping... "We are still waiting"	Reader's letter, prior to apology	(De Telegraaf, 2011, September 16)
191. Mans Spoor-Dijksma, widow of general Spoor, Dutch supreme	Is described as furious. "Offering apologies and paying damages is ridiculous and insane. These things happened throughout the entire East Indies, on both sides.	Quoted	(Van der Mee, 2011)

commander in Indonesia 1947-1949	However, no one ever talks of what Indonesians have done. Is Indonesia going to apologize to the Dutch boys ["Hollandse jongens'] that they murdered?"		

N.b. I have used the term victims here to reference the widows/plaintiffs, and the word villagers for those who felt part of the victim community.

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