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THEORY OF MIND, MORAL JUDGMENTS AND NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL
FUNCTIONING IN PATIENTS WITH BIPOLAR DISORDERS

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Introduction: Several studies revealed that cognitive functioning in BPD are impaired not only in the acute phase but over time (Mur et al., 2008). On Theory of Mind (ToM) recent studies found a impairment of this ability in remitted patients, supporting the theory that ToM deficits are trait-dependent (Bora et al., 2009) in contrast with another study that suggest a partially dependence (Wolf et al. 2010).

Objectives: We explored: a) ToM in BPD investigating two cognitive processes: emotional recognition, second order beliefs attribution; b) Moral judgments in BPD; c) possible effects of neuropsychological functioning on ToM task and moral dilemmas.

Aims: The principal aim is to investigate the domain specificity of ToM and Moral sense, studying selective impairments.

Method: A total of 20 patients with bipolar I disorder were tested and 20 healthy controls. We use a complete neuropsychological assessment, two ToM tasks (Eyes test, Sullivan's stories) and we added two moral dilemmas to asses moral judgment Results: We found ToM deficits in BDP, with a multiple correlation between ToM and neuropsychological functioning. Also we found for the first time a impairment on personal moral dilemma, with a correlation between emotional recognition and moral judgments.

Conclusion: Patients with BPD are impaired in ToM partially independent of other cognitive dysfunctions and in moral reasoning.