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I know what they think about us

Oldenhuis, Hilbrand Klaas Evert

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I know what they think about us

Metaperceptions and intergroup relations

Hilbrand Oldenhuis

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RIJKSUNIVERSITEIT GRONINGEN

**I know what they think about us:
Metaperceptions and intergroup relations**

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Hilbrand Klaas Evert Oldenhuis
geboren op 22 juni 1979
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Promotor: Prof. dr. D. A. Stapel

Co-promotores: Dr. E. H. Gordijn
Dr. S. Otten

Beoordelingscommissie: Prof. dr. K. I. van Oudenhoven
Prof. dr. T. Postmes
Prof. dr. D. H. J. Wigboldus

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Chapter 1

General introduction

Suppose that you are about to meet members of another group than the group where you belong to. For example, as a Dutch tourist you are about to meet Germans during your holiday in Germany, or as a female manager you are about to meet male managers at a meeting, or as a psychologist you are about to meet economists at a conference. In each of these cases, you probably would immediately (and perhaps even unconsciously) think about how the members of the other group think about your group. For example, an important question is: Does the other group like your group? Would you expect them to like your group because you also like their group? Furthermore, you may expect that the members of the other group to hold certain stereotypes about the members of your group. For example, Dutch Moroccans might expect that the indigenous Dutch people think that all Moroccans are fundamentalist Muslims. Obviously, such an expectation about the way the own group (“ingroup”) is seen by the other group (“outgroup”) may very well guide Dutch Moroccans’ behavior towards the indigenous Dutch people they are about to meet. Basically, there are two options: Either Dutch Moroccans could present themselves more as fundamentalist Muslims or they could present themselves less as fundamentalist Muslims. So, how would Dutch Moroccans react? Or more generally speaking, how do people in general expect to be viewed by members of another group and how do they react if they think that members of another group have certain specific stereotypes about their ingroup?

In fact, the above questions are the central questions of the present dissertation. Hence, the central questions in this dissertation are the following: Is how people think they are seen by members of another group related to how they, *themselves*, think about the members of the other group? And, how are people influenced by the way they think members of another group see them? In this dissertation, I will present one factor that appears to be very relevant with respect to answering these questions. This factor is: *reciprocity* (i.e., the tendency to “give” others what they deserve based on how they treated you). Regarding the first question concerning how people expect to be viewed by members of another group, I will show

that, in general, they expect *reciprocated* (dis)liking from another group, except when people feel guilty towards that group (Chapter 2). Regarding the second question concerning how people react to specific stereotypes about their ingroup, reciprocity appears to be an important motive for people when it comes to their reactions to an outgroup's expected stereotype about the ingroup. More specific, people reciprocate an outgroup's perceived negative stereotype with negative behavior ("negative reciprocity"), that is, behavior in line with the negative stereotype (Chapter 3). However, this is especially true for people who feel negative about the outgroup. On the other hand, people who feel positive about the outgroup show *positive reciprocity*, that is, behavior in line with an outgroup's positive stereotype about the ingroup (Chapter 4). Furthermore, people who feel positive about the outgroup show such positive behavior especially when they think the outgroup's perception of their ingroup is invalid (Chapter 5).

Metaperceptions within intergroup relations

Meeting another person for the first time immediately evokes a tendency to think about the characteristics of that other person (e.g., Park & Flink, 1989; Wigboldus, Dijksterhuis, & Van Knippenberg, 2003). Is he or she friendly or unfriendly, arrogant or humble, polite or rude? Hence, it is clear that people think a lot about other people. Accordingly, they may realize that other people think about *them*. Figuring out what others think of them may even be one of people's most dominant social informational goals, because information about the social standing with others is said to be the most important kind of knowledge people can have in social environments (e.g., Baumeister, 1982; Leary & Downs, 1995). Research indeed showed that people think a lot about how they are seen by others (Sheldon & Johnson, 1993), and it is therefore no surprise that social psychological research has a long history of studying on what people think others think of them (see Laing, Phillipson, & Lee, 1966). The term *metaperceptions* has been used to refer to the beliefs regarding how one is viewed by others.

When considering how other people see you, you could also become well aware of the *level of prejudice* and the *stereotypes* that other people could have with respect to the salient social groups that you belong to. After all, if you would take a moment and try to think of social groups that you belong to, chances are that you find it easy to immediately come up with several social groups based on, for example, nationality, social class, profession, ethnicity, or gender. So, for example, when Dutch Moroccans are about to meet indigenous Dutch people, it is very likely that they will consider how indigenous Dutch people would see Dutch Moroccans. That is, they might have ideas about the extent to which indigenous Dutch people like Dutch Moroccans, or in other words, whether indigenous Dutch people are either positively or negatively prejudiced towards Dutch Moroccans. To refer to the beliefs regarding *the level of prejudice* that an outgroup holds about the ingroup, we use the term *metaprejudice*. Furthermore, Dutch Moroccans could believe that indigenous Dutch people consider Dutch Moroccans fundamentalist Muslims, criminal, or family oriented. To refer to the beliefs regarding the specific *stereotypes* that an outgroup holds about the ingroup, we use the term *metastereotypes* (Sigelman & Tuch, 1997; Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998).

Social psychology started to pay attention to metaperceptions within intergroup relations some decades ago, by studying the antecedents and consequences of stigmatization (Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker, 1999; Major & O'Brien, 2005). Stigmatization relates to group members' perception that they feel devalued in the eyes of others by means of the dominant cultural negative stereotypes of their identity. In contrast to research on stigmatization, however, my aim in the present dissertation is to focus on *positive* metastereotypes as well. Furthermore, stigmatization implies a status-hierarchy (low-status groups are being stigmatized by high-status groups), whereas I will focus on metaperceptions and their consequences for all groups, since members of high-status groups hold metastereotypes as well and can subsequently be influenced by metastereotypes (Vorauer et al., 1998; Vorauer, Hunter, Main, & Roy, 2000). Finally, literature on stigmatization speaks of "dominant cultural stereotypes" (e.g., Major & O'Brien, 2005), whereas I will focus on metaperceptions regarding specified outgroups. In the present

dissertation, I will argue that a metastereotype may affect people differently depending on which outgroup they perceive to hold the specific metastereotype. In other words, if people have the same metastereotype towards different groups, their subsequent reaction may be different based on their specific level of prejudice towards the different groups. For example, Dutch people hold the same metastereotype towards Americans and Germans, namely tolerant, but whether they do or do not act in line with this metastereotype may be different depending on which outgroup is salient. This is different than what research on stigmatization typically accounts for.¹ As soon as there is a “threat in the air” (Steele, 1997) imposed by a negative “dominant cultural stereotype” about their group, stigmatized people are influenced by this stereotype, independent of which specific outgroup is perceived to hold the negative stereotype about their group.

Social psychology only recently started to pay attention to metaprejudice and metastereotypes (see for overviews, Frey & Tropp, 2006; Vorauer, 2006). The reason for the lack of attention during a long period is probably that social psychology was primarily concerned with understanding and preventing discrimination (see Plous, 2003), which led to an one-sided focus on stereotypes and prejudice, or in other words, on how groups think about other groups. As a result, there is still much to explore regarding metaperceptions within intergroup relations. An important goal of the present dissertation is therefore to convince the reader that metaperceptions within intergroup relations are extremely important when trying to understand or change intergroup behavior and

¹ Of course, based on self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987), research on stereotype threat does make a difference between different identities of the same (stigmatized) person that could be salient. For example, a Black woman might be threatened concerning her math abilities when her female identity is salient, whereas she may feel threatened concerning her intellectual abilities when her “Black” identity is salient (see Sinclair, Hardin, & Lowery, 2006). However, I argue that, if people have the same metastereotype towards different groups, their subsequent reaction may be different based on their specific level of prejudice towards the different groups. For example, Dutch people hold the same metastereotype towards Americans and Germans, namely tolerant, but whether they do or do not act in line with this metastereotype may be different depending on which outgroup is salient. Moreover, even though their Dutch identity is salient in both cases, they might have the metastereotype that Germans see them as rude, and Americans see them as polite. Thus, different metastereotypes could be attached to the same identity as function of the salient outgroup.

relations, for I believe that they can shape intergroup contacts to an even greater extent than prejudice and stereotypes. Therefore, I will try to shed more light on metaprejudice and metastereotypes by (1) examining the relationship between prejudice and metaprejudice and (2) the influence of specific metastereotypes on subsequent behavior. In my opinion, one principle binds these two foci together: the principle of reciprocity.

Reciprocity and intergroup relations

Reciprocity is said to be one of people's most influential motives when interacting with other people. In fact, reciprocity forms one of the foundations for human cultures. It allows for the division of labor, the exchange of diverse forms of goods and different services, and the creation of interdependencies that bind individuals together into highly efficient units (Ridley, 1997; Tiger & Fox, 1989). For human social evolution, reciprocity meant that one person could give something (for example, food, energy, care) to another with confidence that the gift was not being lost. In the same vein, reciprocity meant that people became more reluctant to treat others negatively, because also negative behavior towards others could be reciprocated. For example, stealing food from other people would be reciprocated with similar behavior or punishments. In short, positive as well as negative reciprocity allowed for the development of modern human cultures. Hence, everyone all over the world is acquainted with the tendency to reciprocate and to expect reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), and therefore is a very influential motive for human behavior.

Also, within intergroup relations, reciprocity has proven to be an influential motive. For example, in a study by Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, and Doosje (2002) group members were inclined to withhold rewards from an outgroup that was believed to devalue the ingroup. In other words, those group members were reciprocating devaluation by an outgroup by showing negative behavior towards that outgroup. Furthermore, in a study by Doosje and Haslam (2005) Australian participants tended to reciprocate Dutch' negative stereotypes about Australians by allocating the Dutch with fewer points for "good

international behavior” than when they believed the Dutch had positive stereotypes about Australians. In the same vein, research by Butz and Plant (2006) demonstrated that Black and White participants reciprocated their interracial interaction partner’s perceived unwillingness to interact with anger and hostility.

I apply the reciprocity rule to metaperceptions within intergroup relations in two ways. Firstly, I will show that reciprocity determines people’s metaprejudice with respect to another group: the more an ingroup member likes another group, the more the ingroup member expects the outgroup to like the ingroup. However, the reciprocity rule is set aside when one feels guilty towards the other group: in this case ingroup members who like an outgroup do not expect that outgroup to like the ingroup (Chapter 2). Secondly, I will show that reciprocity determines how people react to specific metastereotypes. Negative metastereotypes lead to behavior in line with those negative metastereotypes (“negative reciprocity”; Chapter 3), and positive metastereotypes lead to behavior in line with those positive metastereotypes (“positive reciprocity”). However, in addition I will show that people are most likely to show negative reciprocity when they feel negatively about the outgroup (“negatively prejudiced”) and that they are most likely to show positive reciprocity when they feel positively about the outgroup (“positively prejudiced”; Chapter 4).

The relation between prejudice and metaprejudice

Whether you expect to be liked by members of another group is obviously of major importance when you are about to interact with them. How exactly then do people construct their metaprejudice concerning another group? One factor used to base their metaprejudice on, is their level of prejudice against another group. Do they expect to be liked by members of another group, because they *themselves* like the other group? Or in other words, are the level of prejudice and the level of metaprejudice concerning another group positively related? Research within *interpersonal relations* indeed demonstrated that people generally expect to be (dis)liked by others, who they themselves (dis)like (Newcomb, 1963).

Hence, people expect *reciprocated* liking. However, is this prediction equally true within *intergroup relations*? I propose and show that in general people indeed expect to be (dis)liked by another group to the extent that they themselves (dis)like the other group. However, if people feel guilty towards another group, because their ingroup performed badly towards the other group in the past (for example, Dutch people may feel guilty towards Indonesians, because of the colonial past; see Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998; Mackie & Smith, 2002), this relation is less positive and sometimes even negative (Chapter 2). Because positive prejudice and perspective taking are closely connected (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000), I expect people who are positively prejudiced against the outgroup to be inclined to be more open to the outgroup's potential negative perspective on the ingroup instead of expecting reciprocal liking of the outgroup. Thus, the tendency to expect reciprocated (dis)liking by another group should disappear, when group members feel collective guilt towards another group.

The influence of specific metastereotypes

Reciprocity also plays a major role when it comes to people's reactions to specific metastereotypes. People tend to reciprocate another's perceived negative or positive evaluation of themselves (Curtis & Miller, 1986). Therefore, people will feel provoked by a *negative* (meta)stereotype of an outgroup. Accordingly, as members of a devalued group, they will be more inclined to deal with this provocation by showing negative behavior towards the outgroup and thus behavior in line with a negative metastereotype (Chapter 3). For example, if a psychologist expects to be viewed by economists as irrational, will the psychologist try to show that she/he is not irrational at all ("contrast away" from the metastereotype) or that indeed she/he is irrational ("assimilate to" the metastereotype)? It is likely that the psychologist considers "irrational" a negative metastereotype. Based on the present dissertation I will argue that the psychologist will reciprocate this negative metastereotype and will thus be inclined to show more irrationality towards the economists.

However, will people *always* assimilate to a negative metastereotype? I think not. To be specific, I propose that the *level of prejudice* against the outgroup will play a moderating role (Chapter 4). On the one hand, people who feel negative about the outgroup (the negatively prejudiced people) and who are therefore more likely to assume that the respective metastereotype is meant to devalue their group, should be prone to show assimilation (i.e., act negatively) in order to reciprocate this perceived devaluation. People who feel positive about the outgroup (the positively prejudiced people), on the other hand, are less prone to consider the respective metastereotype as a provocation meant to devalue the ingroup. Hence, they will not be inclined to show negative reciprocity and will be less prone to assimilate to the negative metastereotype.

Furthermore, I argue and show that people will reciprocate a positive metastereotype with positive behavior, and thus behavior in line with the positive metastereotype. However, the feeling of being stereotyped, albeit positively, always bears some negativity (Sigelman & Tuch, 1997; Vorauer et al., 2000). This is especially true for negatively prejudiced people, because they easily attribute negative intentions to the outgroup. For that reason, I only expect positively prejudiced people to assimilate to a positive metastereotype, because they feel positive about the outgroup and they are therefore less prone to consider the fact of being stereotyped a provocation. Hence, they should reciprocate the outgroup's positive (meta)stereotype with positive behavior.

Metastereotypes can be perceived either as invalid or as valid (Chapter 5). Whether or not people perceive another to hold an invalid or valid perception of them has been shown to be an important motive for social behavior (Sedikides, 1993; Swann, 2005). Hence, how do people react when they perceive an outgroup to hold an *invalid* metastereotype towards the ingroup? I show that the tendency to reciprocate the outgroup's *positive* (meta)stereotype is especially strong for *positively prejudiced* people if the metastereotype is *invalid*. If the outgroup holds an invalid, positive metastereotype, it is important for positively prejudiced people to show positive reciprocity, because especially then the ingroup's (undeservedly positive) image needs affirmation. As argued before, positively prejudiced people are less inclined than negatively prejudiced people to show negative reciprocity as a reaction to a negative

metastereotype. I argue and show that this is especially true when the negative metastereotype is invalid. Especially then, positively prejudiced people will be inclined to overrule their tendency to reciprocate the outgroup's negative (meta)stereotype and even contrast away from the negative metastereotype in order to grasp the opportunity to show that the ingroup is not as negative as the outgroup is thinking. After all, the positively prejudiced people are strongly motivated to strengthen a positive relation with the outgroup if possible (Boyanowsky & Allen, 1973; Swim, Ferguson, & Hyers, 1999). Hence, I will show that positively prejudiced people tend to assimilate to a *positive, invalid* metastereotype, and they tend to contrast away from a *negative, invalid* metastereotype.

Overview of the chapters

Collective guilt as a moderator of the relationship between prejudice and metaprejudice

In Chapter 2, I examine the relation between prejudice (how do I feel about the outgroup) and metaprejudice (how do I expect the outgroup to feel about my ingroup). Hence, the focus in the second chapter is on global intergroup judgments. I will show that people in general expect the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice to be reciprocal: the more group members like an outgroup, the more they expect that outgroup to like the ingroup. However, when group members feel guilty towards the outgroup, for example because of their ingroup's negative behavior towards the outgroup in the past, especially positively prejudiced people perceive that the outgroup does not have such a positive view of their ingroup. Hence, the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice becomes less positive and might even become negative (see Gordijn, Brix, Wijnants, Koomen, & Finchilescu, 2006; Vorauer et al., 1998). I demonstrate this pattern by measuring (Study 2.1) and manipulating (Study 2.2) feelings of guilt of Dutch people towards Indonesians and Antilleans respectively.

The influence of negative metastereotypes on behavior and attitudes

In Chapter 3, I examine the effects of specific *metastereotypes* for behavioral expressions within intergroup relations. My aim is to show that, once metastereotypes regarding a specific outgroup are activated, people are inclined to reciprocate and thus act in line with negative metastereotypes. To be specific, I show that East Germans react more lazily when their metastereotypes regarding West Germans (including lazy) are activated (Study 3.1). Furthermore, I show that psychology students act more “softly” when their metastereotypes regarding business management students (including soft) are activated (Study 3.2).

Reciprocating others’ perceived stereotypes as a function of prejudice

In Chapter 4, I extend Chapter 3 by showing the moderating role of prejudice for metastereotypical influence on behaviors. I show that negatively prejudiced ingroup members are inclined to reciprocate and thus act in line with a *negative* metastereotype (Study 4.1), whereas positively prejudiced ingroup members are inclined to reciprocate and thus act in line with a *positive* metastereotype (Study 4.2). I will thus show that reciprocating and therefore acting in line with a metastereotype is guided by motivational factors. People who feel negatively about the outgroup are especially motivated to reciprocate an outgroup’s *negative* (meta)stereotype, whereas people who feel positively about the outgroup are especially motivated to reciprocate an outgroup’s *positive* (meta)stereotype.

The importance of prejudice and validity for the effects of positive and negative metastereotyping

Of course, metastereotypes are not always valid. To what extent will validity of the metastereotype influence behavior? In Chapter 5, I

show that the *validity of the metastereotype* matters especially for *positively prejudiced* people. They do not reciprocate, and thus contrast away from a *negative, invalid* metastereotype (Study 5.1), whereas they do reciprocate and thus act in line with a *positive, invalid* metastereotype (Study 5.2). In line with the conclusions of Chapter 4, I propose a motivationally guided explanation for the results: Especially when a metastereotype is perceived as invalid, low prejudiced people demonstrate their urge to show positive behavior towards a positively valued outgroup. To be more specific, if an invalid metastereotype is negative, people have extra motivation to show positive behavior in order to show that the metastereotype is based on fiction, and when an invalid metastereotype is positive, they have extra motivation to show reciprocity and, thus, positive behavior, in order to keep the outgroup's positive view of the ingroup intact.

Together, these empirical chapters reveal the important role of metaprejudice and metastereotypes within intergroup relations. Metaprejudice and metastereotypes can be important causes of negative as well as positive intergroup behavior and should therefore be taken very seriously when studying intergroup processes as well as when improving intergroup relations. Hence, in the final chapter, Chapter 6, I discuss the present dissertation's general conclusions, and its implications for research on intergroup relations.

It should be noted in advance, that all the chapters are written in such a way that they can be read independently. As a consequence, there is some overlap between parts of the chapters. Furthermore, the empirical chapters (Chapters 2-5) are based on the collaborative research of me and several others. For that reason, in those chapters the term "we" (instead of "I") is being used when any reference is being made to the authors.

Chapter 2

Collective guilt as a moderator of the relationship between prejudice and metaprejudice²

A Jewish saying states: “Whoever respects others will be respected.” If this is true, individuals may expect that another person will like them to the extent that they like that person. At an intergroup level this translates into expected reciprocity of feelings between one's own group and an outgroup. However, in the present chapter we demonstrate that this pattern only holds some of the time in intergroup contexts. Specifically, expectations of reciprocity in intergroup evaluations are moderated by collective guilt. When people experience collective guilt, greater liking for an outgroup is not connected to believing that their own group is positively evaluated.

Metaprejudice

Are individuals' feelings toward another person related to how they think that person feels toward them? In line with Heider's balance theory (1958), Newcomb (1961, 1963) showed that people tend to expect reciprocated attraction with others, and “this is true at all levels of expressed attraction” (Newcomb, 1963, p. 379). So, in general we can safely predict that how people feel about others is positively related to how they think those others feel about them. However, in the current chapter we aim to test the validity of this prediction for intergroup contexts. The question to be answered is: Do individuals expect their feelings about another group to be reciprocated?

Only recently has social psychology started to pay attention to *metaperceptions* within intergroup contexts, that is, individuals' beliefs about how their group is seen by other groups (e.g., Gomez, 2002; Hollbach, 2004; Klein & Azzi, 2001; Lammers, Gordijn, & Otten, 2006; Oldenhuis, Gordijn, & Otten, 2007a; Oldenhuis, Gordijn, & Otten, 2007b; Oldenhuis, Gordijn, & Otten, 2007c; Sigelman & Tuch, 1997; Vorauer,

² This chapter is based on Oldenhuis, Gordijn, Lammers, Otten, Sakamoto, & Vorauer (2007).

2006; Vorauer et al., 2000; Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001; Vorauer et al., 1998). We use the terms *metastereotypes* and *metaprejudice* to refer to different types of metaperceptions within intergroup contexts. Metastereotypes are individuals' beliefs about the stereotypes that an outgroup holds about their ingroup. Metaprejudice, which is the focus of the current chapter, is individuals' perception of an outgroup's general evaluation of their ingroup (see Vorauer et al., 1998). Thus, metastereotypes deal with content, whereas metaprejudice deals with valence.³

The relation between prejudice and metaprejudice and the role of collective guilt

On the basis of Newcomb's (1963) research within interpersonal relations it can be predicted that feelings about an outgroup, or *level of prejudice* against that group, should be positively related to how people think that group feels about their ingroup, or their *level of metaprejudice*. Interestingly, this is not what Vorauer and colleagues (1998) found among ethnic groups in Canada. White Canadians who were low in prejudice expected First Nations Canadians to have more negative views of White Canadians than did White Canadians who were high in prejudice. In other words, in this particular context, more positive feelings about outgroups were associated with more negative expected evaluations of the ingroup.

We argue that the explanation for this remarkable pattern most likely can be found in the typically high levels of collective guilt that White Canadians feel with respect to First Nations Canadians. In the past, when White Canadians settled in Canada, they took the land of First Nations Canadians, making it almost impossible for First Nations people to continue their traditional style of living. One consequence of these events

³ This is not to say that metastereotypes are "valence-free". However, the specific content of a metastereotype can have both positive and negative elements. For example, a woman may expect her male colleagues to view women as unorganized, which is negative. However, she may also expect her male colleagues to view females as gifted with social skills, which is positive.

is that First Nations Canadians currently experience much lower socioeconomic status than White Canadians.⁴

Research by Doosje and colleagues (1998) revealed that certain aspects of an ingroup's history may evoke feelings of *collective guilt*. Such an emotional response does not need to stem from personal participation in particular events but can result when the self is categorized in terms of a shared group membership, as can be argued on the basis of a social identity and self-categorization theoretical perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). Collective guilt thus stems from the distress that group members experience when they accept that their ingroup is responsible for immoral actions that harmed another group (Branscombe, Doosje, & McGarty, 2002). Hence, it is perfectly conceivable that White Canadians experience collective guilt with respect to First Nations Canadians as a consequence of White Canadians' exploitation of First Nations Canadians in the past and the enduring consequences of this past mistreatment.

There are many other groups in the world that may be similar to White Canadians in terms of feelings of collective guilt with respect to an outgroup. For example, White South Africans may feel guilty with respect to Black South Africans due to the *apartheid*. Comparable to the case of White and First Nations Canadians, research revealed that White South Africans also show a negative relation between prejudice and metaprejudice with respect to Black South Africans. Importantly, Black South Africans – who after all have no reasons to feel guilty – do not show such a pattern with respect to White South Africans (Gordijn et al., 2006).

Therefore, we argue that the experience of collective guilt prompts individuals to imagine how the ingroup might be negatively evaluated by the outgroup. That is, collective guilt leads individuals to imagine the outgroup's negative reactions to the ingroup's past mistreatment of the outgroup (i.e., "Given how we treated you in the past, you must hate us"). When people take the outgroup's ostensibly negative perspective on the ingroup instead of relying on their own current personal feelings toward

⁴ As a matter of fact, methods of reconciling with the past have been actively pursued and form a focal issue for the Canadian government. One prominent example is the *Nunavut Act* of 1999, which entailed the return of more than a million square miles of Arctic lands to be self-governed by its Native peoples.

the outgroup and assuming reciprocity, the positive relation between prejudice and metaprejudice should be eradicated.

Notably, the shift from relying on personal attitudes to imagined unfavorable reactions to negative past treatment has more dramatic implications for the metaprejudice of those whose attitudes toward the outgroup are positive. In the absence of guilt these individuals' own positive feelings should lead to expectations of favorable evaluations by outgroup members, whereas when guilt is in place expected evaluations will instead be negative. And indeed, by virtue of the fact that individuals who are lower in prejudice should be especially inclined to identify with the outgroup and take the outgroup's perspective (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Vorauer et al., 1998), they may expect particularly negative evaluations as a function of being highly ready to link past mistreatment to the outgroup's perspective on the ingroup. In contrast, for those whose attitudes toward the outgroup are negative, expected evaluations are negative both when collective guilt is experienced and when it is not.

Hypotheses

The above reasoning leads us to two specific hypotheses. When individuals do not experience collective guilt with respect to an outgroup, the relation between their prejudice and metaprejudice should be positive (Hypothesis 1), based on expected reciprocal (dis)liking. However, when individuals do experience collective guilt with respect to an outgroup, the positive relation between prejudice and metaprejudice should be eliminated (Hypothesis 2). To test our hypotheses, we conducted two studies in which we measured (Study 2.1) and manipulated (Study 2.2) feelings of collective guilt within specific intergroup contexts.

Study 2.1

In Study 2.1, we examined the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice and the moderating role of collective guilt by comparing two intergroup relations. One of these is not characterized by guilt, while

the other is. Specifically, we studied the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice, and the moderating role of collective guilt among indigenous Dutch participants toward Dutch Moroccans and Indonesians. We expected that indigenous Dutch people would not experience much collective guilt with respect to Dutch Moroccans. After all, the indigenous Dutch people did not take land from the Moroccans. Rather (or at least this is as many indigenous Dutch people seem to see it), they allowed these Moroccans to work in, and profit from the comparably rich Netherlands instead. Hence, we expected a positive relation between prejudice and metaprejudice for indigenous Dutch people's feelings toward Dutch Moroccans that would not be qualified by feelings of collective guilt. Indonesia is a former Dutch colony and was oppressed for centuries by the Dutch. However, Dutch colonial history in Indonesia is far less salient in the Netherlands than, for example, the apartheid in South Africa or the oppression of First Nations Canadians by White Canadians in the past. As a result, some, but not all, Dutch people should experience collective guilt with respect to Indonesians. For people with lower levels of collective guilt with respect to Indonesians, we expected the same positive relation between prejudice and metaprejudice as we did regarding Dutch Moroccans. We expected this positive relation to vanish among people with higher levels of collective guilt.

Method

Participants and procedure

Eighty-five Dutch students (19 male, 66 female), varying in age between 18 and 49 years old ($M = 21.53$, $SD = 4.56$), participated in the study for which they received credit for partial fulfillment of a course requirement. The participants arrived at the laboratory on an individual basis for a study on “how people from different backgrounds think about each other”. All participants were presented with the same paper-and-pencil questionnaire, measuring prejudice, metaprejudice and feelings of guilt with respect to both Indonesians and Dutch Moroccans. To measure prejudice, we used the “feeling thermometer”, which correlates highly with other measurements of prejudice (see Campbell, 1971; Miller, Smith, &

Mackie, 2004; Swim & Miller, 1999). The feeling thermometer is designed to measure levels of prejudice by asking people how cold versus how warm their feelings are with respect to an outgroup. Hence, participants were asked how cold versus how warm their feelings are with respect to Indonesians or Dutch Moroccans. They could answer by circling a number, varying from 1 (very cold) to 9 (very warm; reverse scored). Subsequently, in order to measure metaprejudice the same question in “metaperspective” was asked: “I expect the feelings that Indonesians/Dutch Moroccans have towards Dutch people to be...”.

We measured feelings of guilt with respect to Indonesians and Dutch Moroccans by presenting the participants with two items: “If I think about the relation between indigenous Dutch people and Indonesians/Dutch Moroccans, I experience guilt” and “If I think about how the Dutch people treated the Indonesians/Dutch Moroccans, I experience guilt”. Participants’ answers to these questions could vary from 1 (absolutely not) to 9 (absolutely; Indonesians: $r = .70$; Dutch Moroccans: $r = .64$). Finally, after completing some demographic questions, the participants were fully debriefed.

Results

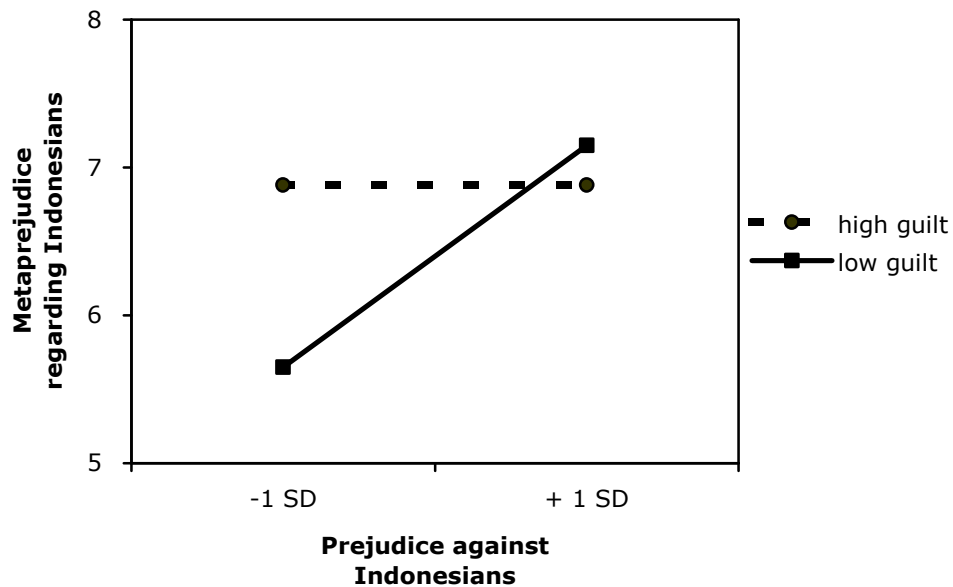
As expected, participants experienced more collective guilt with respect to Indonesians than Dutch Moroccans, $M = 3.78$, $SD = 2.10$ versus $M = 2.92$, $SD = 1.48$. This difference was highly significant, $t(84) = 4.44$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .19$. Moreover, the percentage of participants that experienced feelings of collective guilt with respect to Dutch Moroccans above a moderate level (> 5) was only 4.8, whereas this percentage was 23.5 with respect to Indonesians.

A regression analysis with prejudice towards Dutch Moroccans (centered), feelings of guilt towards Moroccans (centered), and their interaction as predictors of metaprejudice towards Dutch Moroccans revealed as expected a main effect for prejudice, $\beta = .44$, $t(81) = 4.47$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .20$. The more positive (“warm”) participants felt about Dutch Moroccans, the more positive they expected Dutch Moroccans to feel about the indigenous Dutch. No other effects reached significance, all $ts <$

1, *ns*. Prejudice and feelings of guilt with respect to Dutch Moroccans were unrelated, $r = .15$, *ns*.

A regression analysis with prejudice towards Indonesians (centered), feelings of guilt towards Indonesians (centered), and their interaction as predictors of metaprejudice towards Indonesians also revealed a main effect for prejudice, $\beta = .23$, $t(81) = 2.17$, $p < .04$, $\eta^2 = .05$. Importantly, and as expected, this main effect was qualified by a significant Prejudice X Guilt interaction effect, $\beta = -.25$, $t(81) = -2.33$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .06$. We interpreted this interaction effect by considering people with low levels of guilt ($-1 SD$) versus people with high levels of guilt ($+1 SD$) separately. In line with our first hypothesis, prejudice turned out to be a reliable predictor of metaprejudice for people with low levels of guilt, $b = .53$, $t(81) = 3.65$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .14$. The more positively these individuals felt about Indonesians, the more positively they expected Indonesians to be about the Dutch and vice versa. However, in line with our second hypothesis, prejudice was not a reliable predictor of metaprejudice for people with high levels of guilt, $b = -.002$, $t < 1$, *ns*. We also interpreted this interaction by considering people low in prejudice ($-1 SD$) and people high in prejudice ($+1 SD$) separately. The metaprejudice of people low in prejudice varied as function of the level of guilt they experienced. The higher their feelings of guilt, the more negative evaluations they expected, $b = .25$, $t(81) = 2.25$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .06$. For people high in prejudice, metaprejudice did not vary with feelings of guilt, $b = .07$, $t < 1$, *ns*. Again, prejudice and feelings of guilt with respect to Indonesians were unrelated, $r = .20$, *ns*. The overall pattern of results is shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. The relation between prejudice and metaprejudice with respect to Indonesians among participants with higher (+ 1 *SD*) and lower (- 1 *SD*) levels of collective guilt towards Indonesians in Study 2.1.



Discussion

The results of Study 2.1 show that feelings of collective guilt with respect to Moroccans are generally rather absent among the indigenous Dutch: Only a few indigenous Dutch participants felt somewhat guilty with respect to Dutch Moroccans. In connection with this there was a strong positive relation between prejudice and metaprejudice for indigenous Dutch people's feelings about Moroccans. These results suggest that the negative relation between prejudice and metaprejudice found by Vorauer and colleagues (1998) is not generalizable to intergroup contexts where the relation between the groups is not characterized by feelings of collective guilt of one group with respect to the other.

Additionally, the results of Study 2.1 with respect to feelings toward Indonesians show that collective guilt moderates the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice. There are in general more feelings of collective guilt toward Indonesians than Moroccans among the Dutch. For Dutch people with low levels of collective guilt, we observed the same positive correlation between prejudice and metaprejudice regarding Indonesians as we did regarding Moroccans. However, when Dutch people experienced relatively high levels of collective guilt, there was no relation between prejudice and metaprejudice.

It is noteworthy that – different from Vorauer and colleagues (1998) – we did not find any evidence of a negative relation between prejudice and metaprejudice when guilt was relatively high. The reason for this is probably that the level of collective guilt in our context was not high enough to equal the level that is characteristic for many White Canadians. White Canadians' feelings of collective guilt with respect to First Nations Canadians are probably more salient and extreme than Dutch people's feelings of collective guilt with respect to Indonesians, resulting in a more negative relation between prejudice and metaprejudice in the Canadian context than we observed here. Nonetheless, the results of Study 2.1 do show that feelings of guilt moderate the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice.

Study 2.2

To ensure the robustness of our findings and to examine the causal influence of guilt, we chose to manipulate rather than measure feelings of collective guilt in Study 2.2. To manipulate feelings of collective guilt, we followed the procedure of Doosje et al. (1998) who successfully induced feelings of collective guilt in Dutch participants with respect to Indonesians by reminding the Dutch participants of negative versus positive aspects of the Dutch colonial history in Indonesia. Contrary to Doosje et al. (1998), we used this manipulation with respect to *Antilleans* (instead of Indonesians). We did this in order to ensure the generalizability of our findings in comparison with Study 2.1. Therefore we aimed to make another intergroup context salient than the intergroup

contexts in Study 2.1. Hence, we manipulated Dutch people's feelings of collective guilt with respect to Antilleans. Just like Indonesia, the Antilles (six small Caribbean islands) are former Dutch colonies. We expected that Dutch people in general would be quite ignorant regarding the Dutch colonial history with respect to the Antilles. In line with Doosje et al. (1998), we manipulated Dutch participants' feelings of guilt towards Antilleans by presenting them with positive or negative aspects of the Dutch colonial history at the Antilles.

Pilot study: Method

We first checked the validity of Doosje et al.'s manipulation in this particular context in a pilot study among 151 Dutch participants (40 male, 111 female), varying in age between 17 and 49 years old ($M = 19.78$, $SD = 3.90$). First, participants filled out a questionnaire designed to measure prejudice against Antilleans. In comparison to Study 2.1 we used a more extensive measure of level of prejudice. Together with the feeling thermometer, we also presented the participants with four items, such as: "My thoughts about Antilleans are....". The participants could complete these items by circling a number, varying from 1 (very negative) to 9 (very positive; reverse scored). These five items (the feeling thermometer and the other four items) were combined into one scale, with higher scores indicating higher prejudice against Antilleans ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 1.34$, $\alpha = .96$). Subsequently, participants were presented with text that was allegedly copied from an influential American encyclopedia and that dealt with Dutch colonial history concerning the Antilles. Participants in the high guilt condition ($N = 74$) were presented with three negative aspects of the colonial history: The Dutch exploited the natural resources of the Antilles, they forced many Antilleans into slavery and they killed many Antilleans. Participants in the low guilt condition ($N = 77$) were presented with three positive aspects of the Dutch colonial history at the Antilles: The Dutch founded a strong economy, an excellent educational system and fair jurisdiction. Subsequently, the participants answered the following two questions: "If I think about the relation between Antilleans and the Dutch, I experience guilt" and "If I think about the way the Dutch treated

the Antilleans I experience guilt". The participants could answer by circling a number, varying from 1 (absolutely not) to 9 (absolutely), $M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.98$, $r = .80$.

Pilot study: Results

A regression analysis with condition (high guilt = 1, low guilt = -1), prejudice (centered), and their interaction as predictors of level of guilt revealed, as expected, a main effect for condition, $\beta = .19$, $t(147) = 2.41$, $p < .02$, $\eta^2 = .04$. Participants in the high guilt condition indeed experienced higher levels of guilt than did participants in the low guilt condition ($M = 4.44$, $SD = 2.04$ versus $M = 3.79$, $SD = 1.89$). The main effect was neither accompanied nor qualified by any other significant effect, $t_s < 1$, *ns.*, and thus was independent of level of prejudice.

Main study: Method

Participants and design

Sixty-four Dutch students (7 male, 59 female), varying in age from 18 to 28 years old ($M = 20.81$, $SD = 2.42$) participated in the study for which they received 6 euro. The participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: High guilt ($N = 30$) versus low guilt ($N = 34$).

Procedure

Participants arrived on an individual basis at the laboratory for a study on "how people from different backgrounds think about each other." The first step was for participants to fill out a questionnaire designed to measure their level of prejudice against Antilleans. We used the same prejudice measure as in the pilot study ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 1.25$, $\alpha = .95$).

After a filler task, half of the participants received the high guilt evoking information about the Dutch colonial history at the Antilles. The other half received the low guilt evoking information about the Dutch colonial history at the Antilles.

Subsequently, participants were presented with five items designed to measure metaprejudice. The first of these items resembled the feeling thermometer in metaperspective: “I think that the Antilleans’ feelings towards the Dutch are...”. Again, they could answer by circling a number from 1 (very cold) to 9 (very warm). The remainder included items such as “I think that the Antilleans’ general impression of the Dutch is...”, to which the participants could answer by circling a number from 1 (very negative) to 9 (very positive). The five items were combined into one metaprejudice scale that was reverse scored so that higher scores indicate higher, and thus more negative, metaprejudice ($M = 5.45$, $SD = 1.17$, $\alpha = .92$). After answering some demographic questions, the participants were fully debriefed. None of them expressed suspicion regarding the credibility of the manipulation.

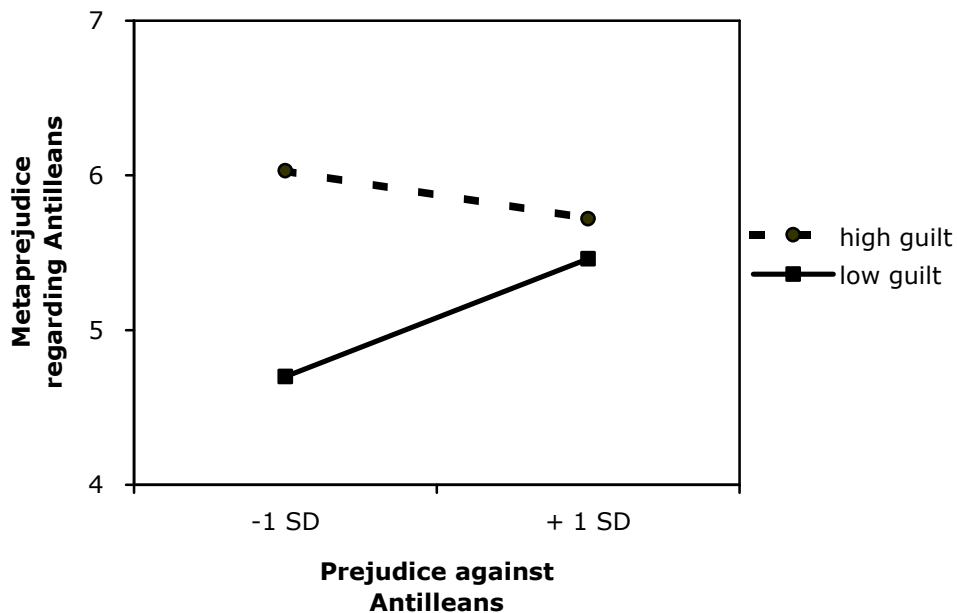
Main study: Results

All the participants read and understood the information about Dutch colonial history concerning the Antilles. Participants in the high guilt condition judged the information to be very negative about the Dutch, $M = 1.43$, $SD = .68$, whereas participants in the low guilt condition judged the information to be very positive about the Dutch, $M = 7.74$, $SD = 1.11$. This effect was highly significant in a regression analysis with guilt condition (high guilt = 1, low guilt = -1), prejudice (centered), and their interaction as predictors of perceived valence of the information, $\beta = -.96$, $t(62) = -27.24$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .92$, and was independent of prejudice or the interaction between condition and prejudice, highest $t(62) = 1.27$, *ns*.

To test our hypothesis that guilt moderates the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice, we entered guilt (high guilt = 1, low guilt = -1), prejudice (centered), and their interaction as predictors of metaprejudice. Guilt turned out to be a reliable predictor of metaprejudice, $\beta = .34$, $t(62) = 2.89$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .12$. Participants in the high guilt condition endorsed a more negative metaprejudice than did participants in the low guilt condition, $M = 5.86$, $SD = .94$ versus $M = 4.98$, $SD = 1.21$. More importantly however, in line with our predictions, this main effect was qualified by a significant Guilt X Prejudice interaction

effect, $\beta = -.23$, $t(62) = -2.01$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .06$. As expected, for participants in the low guilt condition, prejudice correlated positively with metaprejudice, $b = .30$, $t(62) = 2.05$, $\eta^2 = .07$. For participants in the high guilt condition, however, there was no such correlation between prejudice and metaprejudice, $b = -.14$, $t < 1$, *ns*. Comparable to the results of Study 2.1, the metaprejudice of people low in prejudice varied as a function of whether higher or lower levels of guilt were induced. Participants low in prejudice ($-1 SD$) reported higher metaprejudice when higher levels of guilt were induced than when lower levels of guilt were induced, $b = .74$, $t(62) = 3.95$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .21$. The metaprejudice of people high in prejudice ($+1 SD$) did not vary according to whether higher or lower levels of guilt were induced, $b = .07$, $t < 1$, *ns*. The overall pattern of Study 2.2's results is shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2. The relation between prejudice and metaprejudice with respect to Antilleans among participants within the low guilt and within the high guilt condition in Study 2.2.



Discussion

Study 2.2 replicated the results of Study 2.1: Feelings of collective guilt with respect to an outgroup moderated the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice. Moreover, Study 2.2's results are particularly convincing because we manipulated feelings of collective guilt and thus showed experimentally the same pattern as we found in Study 2.1. When we did not induce collective guilt toward Antilleans among Dutch participants, we found a positive and significant relation between prejudice and metaprejudice with respect to Antilleans. When we did induce collective guilt toward Antilleans, we did not find a positive relation between prejudice and metaprejudice with respect to Antilleans. As in Study 2.1, however, we did not find a negative relation between prejudice and metaprejudice in the high guilt condition such as Vorauer and colleagues (1998) found in Canada. This is probably because the Canadian context is characterized by higher feelings of collective guilt toward First Nations Canadians than the level of guilt we were able to induce in our lab among Dutch participants with respect to Antilleans. Even though our data pattern clearly suggests that we did induce feelings of collective guilt, the absolute level of collective guilt was still not very high (see the results of the pilot study).

General Discussion

In two studies we demonstrated that the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice towards another group is moderated by feelings of collective guilt. Prejudice and metaprejudice are positively related at low levels of guilt but not at higher levels of guilt. We showed this pattern by measuring (Study 2.1) as well as manipulating (Study 2.2) participants' feelings of collective guilt with respect to an outgroup. However, contrary to Vorauer et al.'s (1998) and Gordijn et al.'s (2006) results, we did not find a negative relation between prejudice and metaprejudice at high levels of guilt. This may be due to the fact that for Dutch people in the Netherlands there is no outgroup that can activate levels of guilt comparable to those induced by First Nations Canadians for

White Canadians (Vorauer et al., 1998) or Black South Africans for White South Africans (Gordijn et al., 2006).

On the basis of the present results we can confidently conclude that the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice is moderated by feelings of collective guilt. More tentatively, we suggest that the relation ranges from negative under conditions of very high guilt to positive under conditions of low guilt, with no relation at moderate levels of guilt. We believe that the process underlying these effects involves a link between collective guilt and expected negative evaluations that essentially overrides individuals' default tendency to assume that their intergroup evaluations are reciprocated. The implications of this override are particularly strong for lower prejudice individuals, whose positive attitudes toward outgroups lead to expectations of favorable evaluations in the absence of guilt, and whose propensity to take the outgroup's perspective leads to especially negative expected evaluations in the face of higher levels of collective guilt.

Possible mechanisms

For people high in prejudice feeling guilty towards another group does not change their metaprejudice, which is generally quite high. For people low in prejudice their metaprejudice varies as a function of level of guilt. Apparently, when people low in prejudice feel guilty towards another group due to their ingroup's misbehaviors in the past, they do not expect reciprocated liking by the outgroup. Feeling guilty and perspective taking are closely connected (Leith & Baumeister, 1998), hence it is conceivable that the reason why level of metaprejudice among people low in prejudice is dependent on their feelings of guilt towards the outgroup is because they take the perspective of the outgroup. Taking the perspective of the outgroup may lead them to perceive what their ingroup has done to the outgroup and accordingly, to expect the outgroup to dislike the ingroup. Future studies should disentangle these processes and examine the possible differences and similarities between people high in prejudice and low in prejudice, concerning their reaction to feelings of guilt with respect to the outgroup.

Implications of the current research

Previous research suggests that feelings of group-based guilt can lead to apologies (e.g., Iyer, Leach, & Pedersen, 2004; Roseman, Wiest, & Swartz, 1994), material compensation (e.g., Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton, 1994; Doosje et al., 1998), and eventually to intergroup forgiveness (Hewstone et al., 2004). Hence, the conclusion could be that feelings of group-based guilt pave the way for more positive intergroup relations and people should be made aware of their ingroup's misbehaviors towards another group in order to let them feel guilty and, eventually, to improve intergroup relations. However, our studies show that one important consequence of feelings of group-based guilt is, at least among people low in prejudice, more negative expected evaluations by the outgroup. Vorauer et al. (1998) showed that negative metastereotypes lead to negative emotions about intergroup interaction as well as decreases in self-esteem. Therefore, an interesting question for future research would be whether high (or negative) metaprejudice could have negative consequences as well. It is possible that negative consequences of group-based guilt (and hence high metaprejudice) are especially likely for individual-level face-to-face interactions between members of different groups, whereas positive consequences are especially likely for larger-scale group-level interactions that are not necessarily face to face (see for similar reasoning Vorauer, 2006). When people feel guilty about their ingroup's misbehaviors toward another group it may be difficult to deal with those feelings when people interact as individual group members face-to-face with an outgroup member. What difference can an individual make when a complete group misbehaved? In that case feeling guilty may not be helpful to improve intergroup relations and may have negative consequences such as negative emotions about intergroup interactions, decreases in self-esteem (Vorauer et al., 1998), or even avoiding responsibility for the ingroup's misbehaviors (see Batson, 1998). However, during group-level interactions, it is possible to act on behalf of the whole ingroup and to make a statement as a group toward the whole outgroup, for example by offering apologies or material compensations that actually pave the way for improved intergroup relations. Future studies should

take into account the different contexts in which collective guilt and the resultant metaprejudice leads to positive or negative consequences.

Conclusion

People's prejudice is not always associated with their metaprejudice with respect to another group. That is, liking at the intergroup level sometimes fails to breed expected liking. When individuals experience feelings of collective guilt in connection with their relationship with another group, those low in prejudice do not expect their positive attitudes to be reciprocated, as they perceive that the outgroup may well have a negative view of the ingroup.

Chapter 3

The influence of negative metastereotypes on behavior and attitudes⁵

One of the recurring stereotypes about young people is that they are lazy, lazier than their parents were when they were young. As a result, one could argue, young people act lazy. Similarly, Dutch Moroccans in the Netherlands continually read in newspapers that many Dutch Moroccans are Muslim terrorists. As a result, many Dutch Moroccans express support for Muslim terrorism. And Dutch tourists continually hear that Dutch people are stingy. As a result, they actually spend less money during their holidays.

To some, these stereotype-driven self-fulfilling prophecies may appear strange. Do people really deliberately act in line with an outgroup's negative stereotype about their ingroup *as a result* of their perception of an outgroup's negative stereotype? In this chapter we will demonstrate that this is indeed the case. Different from research on *stereotype threat* (Steele & Aronson, 1995), we investigated the influence of an outgroup's negative stereotype about one's own group on behavior *unrelated to performance*. That is, research on stereotype threat typically assumes that people are not able to perform well on a test, despite their motivation to do so, when they experience a threat imposed by a negative stereotype about their ingroup regarding the domain that is to be tested. Unlike research on stereotype threat we aimed to focus on negative stereotypes referring to characteristics which do not have direct relevance for any kind of performance, or even estimating one's own performance (Sinclair et al., 2006). For example, psychology students may perceive business management students to hold the negative stereotype "soft" about psychology students.⁶ Although psychology students may feel threatened by this negative metastereotype, it is unlikely that this threat disrupts the link between their intentions and their behavior when it comes to acting softly. Rather, they can choose how they will present themselves instead, either by emphasizing or by denying their "softness". Hence, we aimed to

⁵ This chapter is based on Oldenhuis, Gordijn, & Otten (2007a).

⁶ "Soft" is our translation of the Dutch word "zweverig", which is a really negative word, meaning soft in the sense of "not being down to earth" and "irrational".

show that people's perception that their ingroup is the target of an outgroup's negative stereotype enhances the probability that they will act in line with that negative stereotype, even though there are no difficult performance standards to live up to. Moreover, we believe that this is especially true when people feel evaluated by the specific outgroup that is perceived to hold the negative stereotype about the ingroup.

Metastereotypes

People often consider how other people see them (Sheldon & Johnson, 1993). In doing so, they could also become aware of the stereotypes that other people have about their social groups. For example, males expect females to see them as relaxed and cold (Lammers et al., 2006). The term *metastereotypes* has been used to refer to beliefs regarding the stereotypes that an outgroup holds about the ingroup (Vorauer et al., 1998). Regarding the activation of metastereotypes Vorauer and colleagues (1998) point to the importance of the expectation of *being evaluated* by an outgroup member, which is inherently present during many intergroup contacts. Accordingly, the *activation* of metastereotypes has been shown to occur rather quickly and effortlessly (Vorauer et al., 1998).

During *interpersonal interactions* people's behavior is shaped by how they think they are seen by others (e.g., Curtis & Miller, 1986). However, how people think they are seen by others has been shown to be an equally influential factor during *interactions between members of different groups* (Vorauer, 2006). It is nonetheless unclear whether metastereotypes influence *behavior*. We examined the influence of the most common form of metastereotyping: *negative* metastereotyping. Could it be possible that when one expects that another group has a negative stereotype about one's own group, one will act in line with that negative stereotype?

The influence of negative metastereotypes

How will people react when they perceive an outgroup to hold a negative stereotype about their ingroup? Since people react negatively to the perception of being negatively stereotyped by an outgroup (Doosje & Haslam, 2005), we propose that, in terms of metastereotypical behavior, they might act in line with a *negative* metastereotype, even if they themselves consider the particular metastereotype to be negative. However, following Vorauer et al. (1998) we expected that a specific negative metastereotype only is activated and influences people when they feel *evaluated* by that *specific outgroup*. Without such anticipated evaluation or with another outgroup (with different metastereotypes) involved, there should be neither activation nor influence of that specific metastereotype. Hence, in Study 3.1 we used “being evaluated by the outgroup” versus “evaluating the outgroup” to induce versus not to induce metastereotype activation. In Study 3.2, we used “being evaluated by the outgroup” versus “being evaluated by another outgroup”, in order to disqualify “being evaluated” *per se* as an alternative explanation for the results.

Study 3.1

Participants were East German students at the Friedrich-Schiller-University in Jena (Germany). East Germans expect to be seen by West Germans as “lazy” (Hollbach, 2005). However, East Germans do not consider “lazy” to be self-stereotypical. In our study we tested to what extent the activation of metastereotypes regarding West Germans leads East Germans to act in line with the metastereotype lazy.

Method

Participants, design, procedure

Fifty-one East German participants (mean age = 22.24, *SD* = 2.14) were randomly assigned to the *control condition* (*N* = 27) or the *being*

evaluated condition ($N = 24$). Participants were recruited at the Friedrich-Schiller-University in Jena (East-Germany). After agreeing to participate they were asked to complete a questionnaire. Participants in the *being evaluated* condition read an introduction of the questionnaire stating that participants would be asked to write an essay about themselves. This essay would later on be evaluated by West Germans at Cologne University (a West German university). The introduction further stated that a questionnaire should be completed before writing the essay. Participants in the *control condition* read almost the same introduction except that they learned that they *themselves* would evaluate an essay written by West Germans at Cologne University who (allegedly) participated earlier in this study. Subsequently, the participants were asked to complete the questionnaire that contained several dependent measures. In fact, the essay task never took place. Participants were debriefed and thanked after filling out the questionnaire.

Dependent measures

First, to test the effect of our manipulation on the *activation of metastereotypes*, we assessed a word-fragment completion task (Gilbert & Hixon, 1991). Participants were requested to complete 36 word-fragments into actual words. Among the word-fragments, there were 12 that could be completed with words associated with metastereotypes of East Germans regarding West Germans (xenophobic, sad, rude, pragmatic, right-wing, lazy, ungrateful, racist, whining). Higher numbers of metastereotypically completed word-fragments indicate more metastereotype activation.

We used both a behavioral and an attitude measurement of laziness ($r = .35, p < .02$). First, participants were asked whether they were willing to complete more pages of word-fragments ("at the end of the study"), ranging from 0 to 6. Hence, "lazy" behavior corresponds to less pages of word-fragments that participants were willing to complete. Secondly, participants were asked to rate on 7-point scales (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) how much they agreed with 19 statements about topics such as "work, study and spare time", nine of which were indicative of laziness ($\alpha = .61$), e.g., "If I can get away with someone else doing my job, I will". Finally, participants were asked how they would feel

(1 = very negative, 7 = very positive) if a West German would describe them as (a) lazy or (b) hardworking (reverse scored; $r = .36, p < .03$).

Results

We conducted ANOVA's to detect possible differences between conditions on our dependent measures (valence attached to being described as "lazy", number of metastereotypically completed word-fragments, lazy behavior, lazy attitude).⁷ As expected, East Germans considered it very negative to be described as "lazy", $M = 1.88, SD = .89$, independent of condition, $F < 1$. Furthermore, participants in the *being evaluated* condition completed more word-fragments metastereotypically ($M = 4.62, SD = 1.84$) than did participants in the *control* condition ($M = 3.48, SD = 1.19$), $F(1, 49) = 7.18, p < .02, \eta^2 = .12$. Furthermore, participants in the *being evaluated* condition were willing to complete fewer pages of word-fragments ($M = 1.20, SD = 1.78$) than were participants in the *control* condition ($M = 2.31, SD = 2.06$), $F(1, 49) = 4.22, p < .05, \eta^2 = .08$. Finally, participants in the *being evaluated* condition reacted more "lazy" to the statements than did participants in the *control* condition ($M = 3.67, SD = .76$ versus $M = 3.21, SD = .57$), $F(1, 49) = 5.79, p < .03, \eta^2 = .11$.

To test the convergent validity of our two measures of laziness, we analyzed the correlation between the number of additional pages of word-fragment that participants were willing to complete and their reactions to the statements. This correlation was significant, $r = -.35, p < .02$. The more pages participants were willing to complete, the less lazy they reacted to the statements, meaning that our both measures of laziness actually tapped on the same construct.

⁷ One participant was excluded from data analysis based on outlier analyses (studentized deleted residual < -3 ; Judd & McClelland, 1989).

Discussion

When East Germans expect to be evaluated by West Germans, their metastereotype that West Germans think East Germans are lazy, is activated and they act accordingly. Anticipated evaluation by the outgroup can thus lead to the *activation of and behavior in line with* a negative metastereotype.

In Study 3.2 we aimed to extend Study 3.1 by showing the tenability of our hypotheses for another intergroup context. Furthermore, by using “being evaluated by another outgroup” as a control condition, we aimed to disqualify “being evaluated” *per se* as an alternative explanation for the results.

Study 3.2

Participants were psychology students at the University of Groningen (The Netherlands). Pilot testing showed that a negative metastereotype of psychology students regarding business management students is “soft”, whereas psychology students do not consider “soft” to be self-stereotypical. However, for another group of students, polytechnical students, psychology students do not hold such a metastereotype. Therefore, we expected psychology students to show more activation of metastereotypes regarding business management students (e.g., boring, social, soft) and to show more soft behavior when they expected to be evaluated by business management students than when they expected to be evaluated by polytechnical students.

Method

Participants, design, procedure

Thirty-three psychology students were randomly assigned to either an experimental condition in which they were said to be evaluated by business management students ($N = 16$; *business management condition*) or to an experimental condition in which they were said to be evaluated by

polytechnical students ($N = 17$; *polytechnical condition*). The procedure was almost similar to the procedure of Study 3.1, except that the introduction of the questionnaire in the *polytechnical condition* stated that the participants would be evaluated by polytechnical students.

Dependent measures

The participants were asked to complete 31 word-fragments, eight of which could be completed metastereotypically. Subsequently, we asked participants how likely it was that they would do a number of courses in the coming years. Six of these 13 courses can be characterized as soft (e.g., a “spiritual growth” course). The participants could indicate the likeliness that they would do a particular course on 7-point scales (1 = not at all likely, 7 = very likely; $\alpha = .86$). Finally, the participants were asked how they would feel if they would be described as soft and as a word related to soft (in Dutch: “zweverig” and “soft”; $r = .34$, $p = .05$), ranging from very negative (1) to very positive (7).

Results

We conducted ANOVA's to detect possible differences between conditions on our dependent variables (valence attached to being described as “soft”, number of metastereotypically completed word-fragments, likeliness to do “soft” courses). The psychology students felt that being described as “soft” is negative, $M = 2.36$, $SD = 1.02$, independent of condition, $F < 1$. Furthermore, participants in the *business management condition* completed more word-fragments metastereotypically than did participants in the *polytechnical condition*, $M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.27$ versus $M = 3.24$, $SD = 1.15$, $F(1, 31) = 3.77$, $p = .06$, $\eta^2 = .11$. Finally, participants in the *business management condition* acted in line with the activated metastereotype “soft” by indicating a higher likelihood that they would do “soft” courses ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.35$) than did participants in the *polytechnical condition* ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.12$), $F(1, 31) = 4.34$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .13$.

Discussion

Study 3.2 replicated Study 3.1 by demonstrating that psychology students show more metastereotype activation and indicate a higher likeliness that they will do soft courses when they expect to be evaluated by business management students rather than when they expect to be evaluated by polytechnical students, although they consider it very negative to be described as soft. Hence, when people expect to be evaluated by a *specific outgroup*, metastereotypes *regarding that specific outgroup* are activated and people act in line with a negative metastereotype. Furthermore, we can conclude that these findings are not due to *being evaluated per se*.

General discussion

Our studies clearly show that anticipated evaluation by a specific outgroup leads people to act in line with that outgroup's anticipated negative (meta)stereotype, even when they consider it very negative to be seen by the outgroup in such a negative, metastereotypical way. Our studies thus reveal a remarkable phenomenon: the *perception* that one's group is the target of an outgroup's negative (meta)stereotype is enough to show behavioral expressions in line with that negative metastereotype, thereby overruling the wish to express a positive group identity. Vorauer et al. (1998) underlined the importance of (negative) metastereotypes for the perceived "negativity" of intergroup contacts by stating: "We locate much of the potential aversiveness of intergroup interaction in individuals' sense of the impressions that are formed of them rather than in the impressions they form of the outgroup member" (p. 917). Indeed, our studies empirically show the negative consequences of metastereotype activation for *metastereotypical behavioral expressions*.

The current findings can be accounted for in two different ways. First, motivational processes could account for the results. People may feel provoked by an outgroup's negative stereotype about their ingroup, and accordingly, act negatively by acting in line with the negative metastereotype. In other words, people may be motivated to reciprocate

an outgroup's negative (meta)stereotype with negative behavior (see Doosje & Haslam, 2005). Secondly, ideomotor processes could account for the results: The activation of constructs leads to behavior in line with those constructs (Dijksterhuis & Bargh, 2001). However, we propose a motivational guided explanation, because the behavior we observed in our studies seems to be affected by conscious choices ("how many pages do I want to fill out", "which courses should I follow"), thereby making ideomotor accounts less likely. However, future studies should further disentangle this phenomenon.

We would like to stress one major conclusion. Our findings could have important consequences for intergroup contact interventions. When it comes to improving intergroup relations, it seems that attempting to persuade people that an outgroup does not have a negative view of the ingroup may be even more important than is trying to reduce the number of negative stereotypes about the outgroup per se. For example, indigenous Dutch people may change their negative stereotypes about Dutch Moroccans (e.g., criminal, fundamentalist Muslims) and Dutch Moroccans may change their negative stereotypes about the indigenous Dutch people (e.g., stingy, cold, arrogant). However, if their *metastereotypes* do not change, Dutch Moroccans as well as indigenous Dutch people may be continually inclined to act in line with those negative metastereotypes, especially if they feel evaluated by the other group. As a result, the negative atmosphere between the two groups continues to exist, because perceiving that one's group is negatively stereotyped can be an important cause of negative behavior.

Chapter 4

Reciprocating others' perceived stereotypes as a function of prejudice⁸

Right after the terrorist attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon, television cameras filmed a group of young Dutch teenagers of Moroccan origin in the Dutch city Ede showing their sympathy with the terrorists by cheering and shouting with joy. This incident received a lot of media attention and many indigenous Dutch people interpreted the incident as a confirmation of what they already thought about Moroccans: They are fundamentalist Muslims who explicitly endorse the Jihad and terrorism. In line with the previous chapter, however, we will argue that the perceptions people have about how other groups see their ingroup might actually lead to behavior in line with such perceptions. Thus, referring back to our example, Moroccans' perception of being stereotyped by the indigenous Dutch as fundamentalist Muslims may well be an important cause rather than the result of the behavior demonstrated by the young Moroccans.

We use the term *metastereotypes* to refer to perceptions regarding the stereotype that another group holds about the own group (derived from Vorauer et al., 1998). In the previous chapter we demonstrated that the activation of negative metastereotypes leads to behavioral assimilation. We will modify these findings in the current chapter by showing that the activation of negative metastereotypes *not always* leads to assimilation in behavioral expressions. That is, especially people who *dislike* the particular outgroup (the "high prejudice people") tend to act in line ("assimilate") with a *negative* metastereotype. Furthermore, we will show that the activation of *positive* metastereotypes also sometimes leads to assimilation in behavioral expressions. That is, people who do *like* the particular outgroup (the "low prejudice people") tend to act in line with a *positive* metastereotype.

⁸ This chapter is based on Oldenhuis, Gordijn, & Otten (2007b).

Metaperceptions and metastereotypes

One of the features of human life is the ability for self-objectification: humans are able to adopt an observer's perspective on themselves (e.g., Fredrickson, Roberts, Noll, Quinn, & Twenge, 1998). In other words, "part of the experience of being human is to wonder what others think of us" (Fredrickson et al., 1998, p. 269). Everyday life experience also points to the importance of such metaperceptions. It is easily imaginable to picture oneself in a situation in which it is important for you to consider what another person or group of people might think of you. The first appearance at your new job, a first meeting in a pub with the man or woman of your dreams, or being a tourist in an abroad country, to name just a few. When considering how other people see you, you could also become well aware of the stereotypes that other people have about the salient social groups that you belong to. For example, many Moroccan immigrants in the Netherlands expect the indigenous Dutch people to see them as fundamentalist Muslims (Kamans, Gordijn, Oldenhuis, & Otten, 2007). As already briefly outlined above, such assumptions about the stereotypes of other social groups with respect to one's own group are called metastereotypes (Vorauer et al., 1998).

Social psychological research has shown that metastereotypes are a psychological reality for people engaging in *intergroup contacts*. They form a coherent structure that can be distinguished from ("regular") so-called *other-stereotypes*: stereotypes about the other group. The *activation* of metastereotypes has been shown to occur rather quickly and effortlessly. Vorauer et al., (2000), for example, showed that White Canadians who were instructed to imagine themselves sitting next to a First Nations Canadian (e.g. at a bus stop or a restaurant) already showed activation of metastereotypes such as unfair, prejudiced and closed-minded. Regarding the activation of metastereotypes, Vorauer and colleagues (1998) as well as Gordijn (2002) point to the importance of the perception that one is *being evaluated* by an outgroup member. The reason why White Canadians activate metastereotypes in the abovementioned context is, possibly, that they are afraid to appear prejudiced towards First Nation Canadians. Therefore the perception that they are being evaluated by First Nation Canadians is inherently present

during interactions with them. However, we think that in order to activate metastereotypes in most other intergroup contexts it may well be necessary to feel explicitly evaluated by the outgroup. Accordingly, in prior studies we successfully induced the activation of metastereotypes by telling participants explicitly that they would be evaluated by the outgroup (see Chapter 3).

It goes without saying then, that metastereotypes contribute greatly to the social reality of interactions between members of different groups, and as such are extremely important in the realm of intergroup contacts, as is shown by a growing number of studies (Gomez, 2002; Gordijn et al., 2006; Hollbach, 2005; Klein & Azzi, 2001; Lammers et al., 2006; Oldenhuis et al., 2007a; Oldenhuis et al., 2007c; Sigelman & Tuch, 1997; Vorauer, 2001; Vorauer, 2003; Vorauer & Claude, 1998; Vorauer et al., 2000; Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001; Vorauer et al., 1998; Vorauer & Ross, 1999; Vorauer & Sakamoto, 2006; Vorauer & Turpie, 2004). However, there is still much to learn and to investigate about this highly relevant domain. The present chapter will contribute to this goal by further investigating the *consequences of metastereotyping*. Especially, we will examine under what circumstances metastereotypes lead to behavioral and attitudinal assimilation.

The influence of metastereotypes and its determinants

When it comes to metastereotyping, one of the most urgent questions is to what extent metastereotypes influence thoughts and behaviors of those who hold them. In the previous chapter we demonstrated that people tend to act in line with an activated negative metastereotype (Oldenhuis et al., 2007a). Specifically, we found that East Germans expecting to be evaluated by West Germans activated metastereotypes regarding West Germans (e.g., lazy, rude, xenophobic) and acted more lazy, and that psychology students expecting to be evaluated by business management students activated metastereotypes regarding business management students (e.g., soft, boring, social) and acted more softly subsequently. However, in the current chapter we will extend these findings by showing the moderating role of level of prejudice

against the outgroup that is perceived to hold the particular (meta)stereotype. Furthermore, whereas in our prior studies we solely focused on *negative* metastereotypes, in the current chapter we will also examine the influence of *positive* metastereotypes.

So, what are people inclined to do if they perceive an outgroup to hold a particular *negative* (meta)stereotype about them? Will they contrast away from or assimilate to this metastereotype? We propose that it is of major importance whether or not those people believe that the outgroup means to devalue their ingroup by means of this metastereotype. Research has shown that people tend to reciprocate another's perceived negative or positive evaluation of themselves (Curtis & Miller, 1986). Therefore, we expect that people will feel provoked by a negative expectation of the outgroup. Accordingly, as members of a devalued group, they will be more inclined to deal with this provocation by showing negative behavior towards the outgroup. Hence, a vicious circle is launched in which the probability increases that the ingroup will act in line with the negative metastereotype (see Oldenhuis et al., 2007a). Our reasoning based on reciprocity is in line with research by Branscombe and colleagues (2002). In their study group members were inclined to withhold rewards from an outgroup that they believed devalued their ingroup. In other words, those group members dealt with a perceived devaluation by an outgroup by showing negative behavior towards that outgroup. Furthermore, in a study by Doosje and Haslam (2005, Study 1) Australian participants tended to reciprocate Dutch negative stereotypes about Australians by allocating fewer points for "good international behavior" to the Dutch than when they believed the Dutch had positive stereotypes about Australians.

However, will people *always* assimilate to a negative metastereotype? We think not. To be specific, we propose that *level of prejudice* against the outgroup will play a moderating role. On the one hand, people who do not like the outgroup (the high prejudice people) and who are therefore more likely to assume that the respective metastereotype is meant to devalue their group, should be prone to show assimilation (i.e., act negatively) in order to reciprocate this perceived devaluation. People who do like the outgroup (the low prejudice people), on the other hand, are less prone to consider the respective

metastereotype as a provocation meant to devalue the ingroup. Hence, they will not be inclined to show assimilation in order to reciprocate this perceived devaluation. This is exactly what was found in a correlative study by Kamans and colleagues (2007): Dutch Moroccan adolescents who strongly expected the indigenous Dutch people to see them as fundamentalist Muslims, *and* who were highly prejudiced against the indigenous Dutch people, were more likely to support Muslim terrorism than the adolescents who did not have such a negative metastereotype with regard to indigenous Dutch people. Therefore, we only expect high prejudice people to assimilate to a negative metastereotype.

But what about the influence of *positive* metastereotypes? For example, Dutch people expect foreigners to see them as tolerant, which to many has a positive connotation. Hence, the question arises to what extent a positive metastereotype leads to assimilation in attitudes and behavior. Again, we expect reciprocity to play a role: Those who assume that they are positively stereotyped will strive to fulfill the positive expectations. However, in line with Vorauer and colleagues (2000), we propose that the feeling of being stereotyped, albeit positively, always bears some negativity (Sigelman & Tuch, 1997). This reasoning should especially apply to high prejudice people. For that reason, we only expect low prejudice people to assimilate to a positive metastereotype, because they like the outgroup and they are therefore less prone to consider the fact of being stereotyped a provocation. Hence, they should reciprocate the outgroup's positive expectations with positive behavior.

Summary

To summarize, we expect a complementary pattern for the interactive effects of level of prejudice and metastereotype valence on reactions to metastereotype activation: high prejudice people but not low prejudice people assimilate to a negative metastereotype, and low prejudice people but not high prejudice people assimilate to a positive metastereotype. Furthermore, those effects should emerge when people expect *to be evaluated by the outgroup*, for the perception that one is being evaluated by a member of an outgroup is a necessary prerequisite in

order to activate metastereotypes (Gordijn, 2002; Oldenhuis et al., 2007a; Vorauer et al., 1998). Hence, we manipulated explicitly such a perception in the *being evaluated by the outgroup* conditions in our studies by telling the participants that they would be evaluated by a member of the outgroup.

To be clear, we expected that metastereotypes, when evaluated by the outgroup, would be activated to the same extent among all people, independent of their level of prejudice against the outgroup. Hence, we did not expect the participants' reactions to be mediated by the extent of metastereotype activation. In the words of Vorauer et al. (1998): "Individuals' prejudice may predict what they do with the metastereotype (...) rather than whether they think of it in the first place" (p. 934). However, we expected high and low prejudice people to differ from each other in terms of their reaction to the metastereotypes, meaning that high prejudice people would show assimilation to a negative metastereotype and low prejudice people would show assimilation to a positive metastereotype. To test our hypotheses we conducted two studies in two different intergroup contexts. In the first study we examined the consequences of a negative metastereotype, whereas in the second study we examined the consequences of a positive metastereotype.

Study 4.1

Participants in Study 4.1 were members of a Christian students organization in Groningen (the Netherlands). The outgroup members were members of another, non-Christian student organization in the same city. A strong metastereotype of the Christian students with respect to this particular outgroup is "conservative". They expect to be seen by the outgroup as conservative, and they consider this a negative metastereotype (see Oldenhuis & Gordijn, 2002).

Method

Participants and design

Forty-one members of the Christian students organization (22 men and 19 women), aged between 18 and 24 years old ($M = 20.54$, $SD = 1.52$), participated in the study for which they received 6 euro. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: The *being evaluated* condition ($N = 20$) and the *control* condition ($N = 21$).

Procedure

Participants individually arrived at the laboratory for a study in which two different groups would participate: "Members of the Christian Students Organization and members of Vindicat" (the non-Christian outgroup in this study). The first step was for participants to complete several questionnaires. One of these questionnaires was designed to measure level of prejudice against the members of the non-Christian students organization. Participants were asked to rate to what extent they agreed (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) with 8 items ($M = 4.16$, $SD = .66$, $\alpha = .71$), such as: "I have a negative image of the members of Vindicat".

After filling out these questionnaires, the participants in the *being evaluated* condition received a written introduction of another questionnaire. They read that they would be asked to write an essay about their life as a student. Afterwards, this essay would be evaluated by some members of the non-Christian students organization. In reality, however, no members of the non-Christian students organization participated in this study and the participants never actually had to write the essay. The introduction further stated that before they were asked to write the essay, some other questionnaires had to be completed. Participants in the *control* condition read that members of the non-Christian students organization participated in the study but did not receive the message regarding the essay. After reading the written introduction participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, that contained several dependent measures.

Dependent measures

In order to test whether our manipulation had the intended effect on *metastereotype activation*, participants completed a word-fragment completion task (Tulving, Schacter, & Stark, 1982; Gilbert & Hixon, 1991). They were asked to complete a number of 34 word-fragments with grammatically correct words. Among the word-fragments, there were 11 that could be completed with words that are associated with the metastereotypes of the Christian students regarding the non-Christian outgroup (e.g., obeying strict rules, not allowed to enjoy life, old-fashioned, narrow-minded, conservative, boring; see Oldenhuis & Gordijn, 2002). For example, the word-fragment "CONS _ R _ _ TIEF" could be completed with "CONSERVATIEF", (the Dutch word for conservative), or with "CONSTRUCTIEF", (the Dutch word for constructive), that is not associated with the metastereotype of the Christian students regarding the non-Christian outgroup. A higher number of metastereotypically completed words indicates more metastereotype activation.

After the word-fragment completion task participants were asked to what extent they agreed (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) with a total of 15 statements about topics such as abortion, sexual lifestyle, and the entitlement of the Holy Bible ($\alpha = .78$) in order to measure the *expression of conservatism*. Examples of these statements are: "There is no wrong in having sexual intercourse before marriage" (reverse scored) and "The prescriptions regarding abortion and euthanasia that can be directly derived from the Holy Bible should be strictly obeyed."

To control whether "conservative" was indeed a salient part of their metastereotype the Christian students were asked to what extent on a 7-point scale they thought the members of the non-Christian students organization would consider five traits ("obeying strict rules", "not allowed to enjoy life", "old-fashioned", "narrow-minded", "conservative"; $\alpha = .84$) that are associated with "conservative", as a more valid description for the members of the Christian students organization (7) in comparison to the members of the non-Christian students organization (1). On this scale, the midpoint indicates participants' perception that outgroup members perceive no difference between the two groups when it comes to the particular trait. Subsequently, the same five questions were asked except now the participants were asked to express their *personal opinion* about

the extent to which these traits were a valid description of the ingroup compared to the outgroup ($\alpha = .63$). By asking this we could check whether "conservative" is indeed not part of the ingroup-stereotype of the Christian students. Finally, the participants were asked how they would feel if a member of the non-Christian outgroup would describe them, being a member of the Christian students organization, in terms of the above traits ($\alpha = .77$), ranging from very negative (1) to very positive (7).

At the end of the questionnaire the participants in the *being evaluated* condition were told that they did not have to write the essay. After completing some demographical questions, the participants were fully debriefed.

Results

Metastereotype and ingroup-stereotype

As expected, "conservative" is a very strong metastereotype of the Christian students regarding the non-Christian outgroup. The participants thought that members of the non-Christian outgroup would consider "conservative" a more valid description for the Christian students than for the members of their own non-Christian students organization: $M = 6.14$, $SD = .58$, which is significantly different from the midpoint, $t(40) = 23.11$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .93$. Participants themselves did also consider "conservative" as a slightly more valid description for members of the Christian students organization than for members of the non-Christian students organization: $M = 4.43$, $SD = .56$, which is significantly different from the midpoint, $t(40) = 4.89$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .37$. However, we can reasonably conclude that "conservative" is a much stronger metastereotype than an ingroup-stereotype of the Christian students: $t(40) = 14.03$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .83$. Moreover, the Christian students considered being described as "conservative" by a member of the non-Christian outgroup to be negative, $M = 2.82$, $SD = .73$, which is significantly different from the (neutral) midpoint of the scale, $t(40) = -10.34$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .73$.

Metastereotype activation

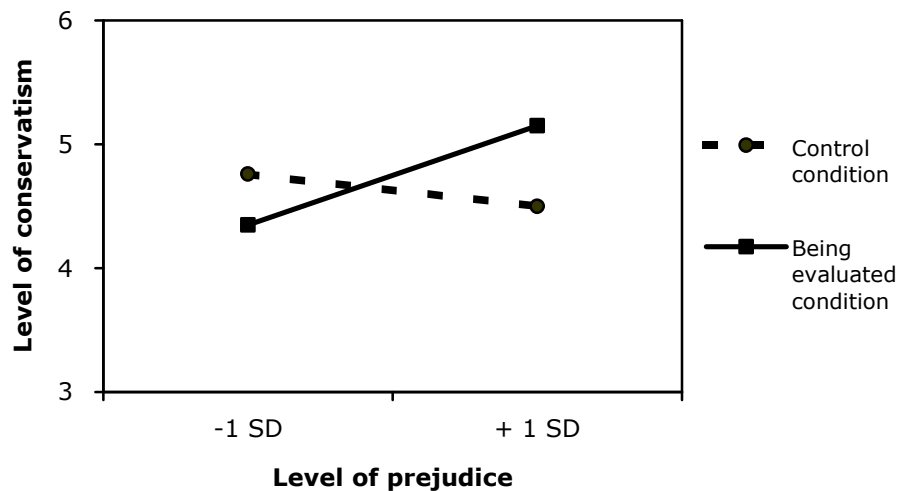
To examine the results of the word-fragment completion task, we entered condition (*control* = -1, *being evaluated* = 1), level of prejudice (centered), and the interaction term for these variables in a regression analysis to predict the number of completed metastereotypical words. Only the main effect of condition was significant: $\beta = .36$, $t(37) = 2.38$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .13$. Participants in the *being evaluated* condition completed more word-fragments metastereotypically ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.56$) than participants in the *control* condition ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.12$). Our manipulation thus had the intended effect independent of level of prejudice, or the interaction between condition and prejudice, $ts < 1$.

Expression of conservatism

A regression analysis with condition (*control* = -1, *being evaluated* = 1), level of prejudice (centered), and their interaction term revealed the expected Condition X Prejudice interaction effect, $\beta = .35$, $t(37) = 2.31$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .13$. No main effects reached significance, highest $t(37) = 1.39$, *ns*.⁹ We conducted simple effects analyses by considering participants in the *being evaluated* condition and *control* condition separately. These analyses revealed, as expected, a significant main effect of prejudice among participants in the *being evaluated* condition, $b = .67$, $t(37) = 3.07$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .20$: The higher their level of prejudice was, the more conservatism participants expressed. On the contrary, there was no effect of prejudice within the *control* condition, $b = .08$, $t < 1$, *ns*. The overall pattern of the results for conservatism of Study 4.1 is shown in Figure 4.1.

⁹ It may appear remarkable that we did not find a main effect of level of prejudice for conservatism. However, we think that our *outgroup-specific* measure of level of prejudice does not need to correlate with conservatism. How people think about a *specific* outgroup does not need to tell us anything about how they think about abortion or euthanasia.

Figure 4.1. The relation between level of prejudice and level of conservatism within each condition in Study 4.1.



Discussion

In Study 4.1, we showed that Christian students expecting to be evaluated by a non-Christian outgroup showed two consequences. First, metastereotypes regarding the non-Christian outgroup were activated. Second, high prejudice participants acted more in line with a negative metastereotype, that is, showed more conservative reactions, than low prejudice participants. No such effects emerged concerning metastereotype activation or reactions in line with a negative metastereotype when participants did not expect to be evaluated by the non-Christian outgroup. Hence, Study 4.1 reveals metastereotypes are activated when people expect to be evaluated by the outgroup, and that high prejudice people but not low prejudice people are inclined to act in line with an activated, negative metastereotype.

Study 4.2

In Study 4.2 we addressed our hypothesis concerning the influence of a *positive* metastereotype. Our hypothesis states that only low prejudice participants should assimilate to such a metastereotype, because they are especially prone to seeing the positivity of the outgroup's positive expectation, whereas high prejudice are prone to seeing the negativity of being stereotyped per se by the outgroup. In Study 4.2 we referred to the categorization "Dutch" versus "American", and focused on a Dutch metastereotype regarding Americans, namely "tolerant" (towards the legalization of prostitution and soft drugs). Dutch people expect to be seen as tolerant by Americans and consider that a positive metastereotype, as pilot testing revealed. We therefore expected that Dutch participants who are low prejudice, but not high prejudice against Americans would assimilate to this metastereotype, when they expect to be evaluated by Americans, and thus act more tolerantly.

We used a somewhat different control condition in Study 4.2 compared with Study 4.1. To make our control condition more similar to our experimental condition except for the crucial manipulation, we told the participants in the control condition that they *themselves* would evaluate an outgroup member, instead of just mentioning that also outgroup members participated in the study, like we did in Study 4.1.

Method

Participants and design

Fifty-three Dutch undergraduate students (35 women and 18 men), varying in age between 18 and 35 years old ($M = 19.75$, $SD = 2.84$), participated in the study for partial course credit. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: The *control* condition ($N = 25$) and the *being evaluated* condition ($N = 28$).

Procedure

Participants arrived at the laboratory on an individual basis for a study in which people with different nationalities would participate. The

first step was for participants to fill out several questionnaires. One of the questionnaires measured level of prejudice against Americans. Participants indicated their agreement (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) with 8 items, such as: "I have a negative image of Americans" ($\alpha = .79$).

After filling out these questionnaires, the participants in the *being evaluated* condition received a written introduction of another questionnaire that resembled closely the introduction that we used in the *being evaluated* condition of Study 4.1. The introduction stated that participants in this study would be asked to write an essay about their life in the Netherlands. During a follow-up session of this study in America, this essay would be evaluated by American participants. In reality however, no Americans participated in this study and the participants never actually had to write the essay. The introduction further stated that before participants should write the essay, some other questionnaires that were also part of this study, had to be completed. Participants in the *control* condition did read almost the same introduction, except that they were told that *they* would evaluate an essay written by an American participant. After reading the written introduction participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, that contained several dependent measures.

Dependent measures

In order to examine whether our manipulation had the intended effect on *metastereotype activation*, participants completed a word-fragment completion task (Tulving et al., 1982; Gilbert & Hixon, 1991). They were asked to complete a number of 34 word-fragments with grammatically correct words. Among the word-fragments, there were 10 that could be completed with words that are associated with the metastereotypes of Dutch people regarding Americans (according to a pretest: tolerant, sociable, down-to-earth, stingy, primitive, small). The remaining word-fragments were considered fillers.

After the word-fragment completion task participants were asked to what extent they agreed (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree) with a total of 10 statements about "political topics", three of which were related to topics such as prostitution and legalization of (soft) drugs ($\alpha = .70$) in order to measure the *expression of tolerance*. The three items were:

"There is nothing wrong with using soft drugs", "The liberal attitude of the Dutch government regarding prostitution should become far more repressive" (reverse scored) and "The legalization of soft drugs should be made undone" (reverse scored). The rest of the statements were considered fillers.

To control whether "tolerant" was indeed a salient part of the metastereotype for this particular sample of Dutch people participants indicated on a 7-point scale to what extent they thought Americans would consider two traits associated with being "tolerant" (tolerant, permissive, $r = .63$) as a more valid description for Dutch people (7) than for American people (1). Subsequently, the same two questions followed except now the participants were asked to express their *personal opinion* to what extent they *themselves* thought these traits were a valid description for the Dutch compared to Americans ($r = .54$). By asking this we could check whether tolerant is part of the ingroup-stereotype of the Dutch participants. Finally, the participants were asked how they would feel if an American would describe them, being a Dutch, in terms of the above traits ($r = .38$), ranging from very negative (1) to very positive (7).

At the end of the questionnaire the participants were either told that they did not have to write the essay (*being evaluated* condition) or that they would not have to evaluate an essay written by an American (*control* condition). After completing some demographic questions, all the participants were fully debriefed.

Results

Metastereotype and ingroup-stereotype

As expected, "tolerant" is a strong metastereotype of Dutch people regarding Americans. In general, the participants thought that Americans consider "tolerant" a more valid description for Dutch people than for Americans: $M = 5.10$, $SD = 1.24$, which is significantly different from the midpoint, $t(52) = 6.37$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .44$. As opposed to the negative trait that we used in Study 1, "tolerant" was also considered an ingroup-stereotype. Participants considered "tolerant" a more valid description for the Dutch people compared to Americans: $M = 5.38$, $SD = .81$, which is

significantly different from the midpoint, $t(52) = 12.32, p < .001, \eta^2 = .74$. Tolerant was thus considered an equally strong metastereotype as it was an ingroup-stereotype: $t(52) = -1.63, ns.$ Furthermore, the Dutch participants considered being described as "tolerant" by an American very positive: $M = 5.85, SD = .89$, which was significantly different from the (neutral) midpoint of the scale, $t(52) = 15.20, p < .001, \eta^2 = .82$.

As a result, we can conclude that "tolerant" is a metastereotype of Dutch people regarding American people. In addition, "tolerant" can also be considered an ingroup-stereotype of the Dutch participants. Furthermore, Dutch people like to be seen as tolerant by Americans.

Metastereotype activation

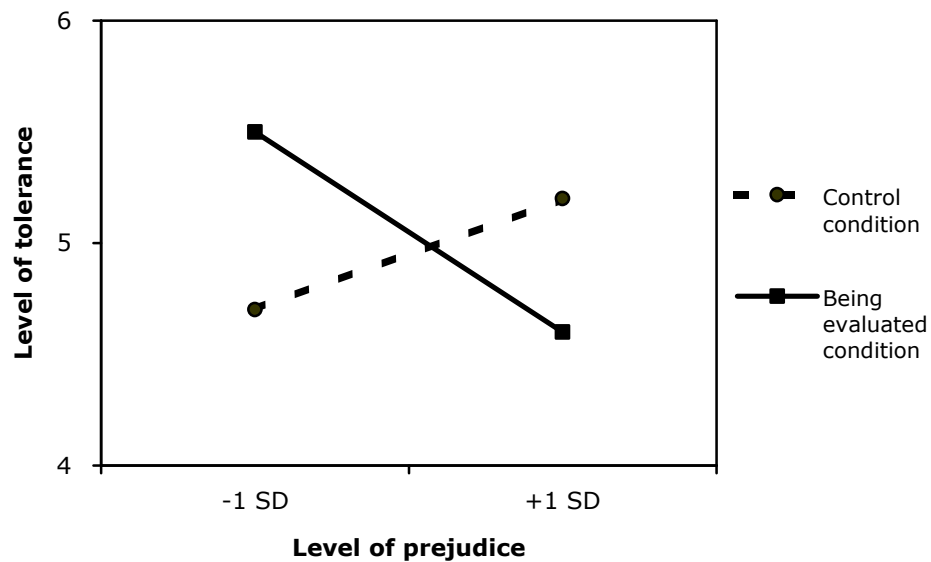
To examine the results of the word-fragment completion task, we entered condition (*control* = -1, *being evaluated* = 1), level of prejudice (centered), and the interaction term for these variables in a regression analysis to predict the number of completed metastereotypical words. The regression analysis yielded no significant effects whatsoever (all t s < 1.42, *ns.*). There seemed to be no reliable evidence for more activation of metastereotypes in the *being evaluated* condition ($M = 2.18, SD = 1.31$) compared to the *control* condition ($M = 2.24, SD = 1.33$).

Tolerance

A regression analysis with condition (*control* = -1, *being evaluated* = 1), level of prejudice (centered), and the interaction term of these variables revealed, as expected, a significant Condition X Prejudice interaction, $\beta = -.38, t(49) = -2.88, p < .01, \eta^2 = .14$. No other main effect reached significance (t s < 1). We conducted simple effects analyses by considering participants in the *being evaluated* condition and *control* condition separately. These analyses revealed a significant main effect of prejudice among participants in the *being evaluated* condition, $b = -.67, t(49) = -2.37, p < .03, \eta^2 = .10$: The lower their level of prejudice was, the more tolerant participants reacted. On the contrary, there was no effect of prejudice among participants in the control condition, $b = .44, t(49) = 1.70, ns.$ Thus, when participants believed to be the targets of evaluation by outgroup members, low prejudice participants reacted more tolerant than high prejudice participants, whereas there is no such difference

between low and high prejudice participants when participants believed to be the judge of an outgroup member. The overall pattern of results for tolerance is shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2. The relation between level of prejudice and level of tolerance within each condition in Study 4.2.



Discussion

In Study 4.2 we showed that when Dutch people expect to be evaluated by Americans, only those who are low in prejudice against Americans act in line with a positive metastereotype, namely tolerant. High prejudice participants do not show such assimilation. Unfortunately, the manipulation check concerning metastereotype activation did not yield significant results. In several other studies as well as in Study 4.1 we did find activation of metastereotypes following this specific manipulation (Oldenhuis et al., 2007a). Therefore we suspect that the word-fragment

completion task we used was probably not sensitive enough. Some words were quite hard to complete (e.g., TOL _ _ _ _ _ with TOLERANT). Furthermore, some metastereotypes in this context, such as tolerant, are also part of the ingroup stereotype of Dutch people. As the outgroup is also mentioned in the *control* condition (creating an intergroup context), it is likely that the ingroup stereotype is automatically activated (Haslam, Oakes, Turner, & McGarty, 1995), which makes it harder to find differences between the *control* condition and the *being evaluated* condition for responses to the word-fragment completion task. However, in line with the predictions, with respect to reactions in line with a positive metastereotype, being evaluated and level of prejudice do matter. As hypothesized, Study 4.2 revealed that only people low in prejudice against the outgroup were inclined to act in line with a positive metastereotype when they expect to be evaluated by the outgroup.

General discussion

We found that expecting to be evaluated by an outgroup led participants to activate metastereotypes, and to reciprocate the outgroup's anticipated negative stereotype with negative behavior. In Study 4.1, we found assimilation to the negative metastereotype, but only when participants were high in prejudice against the outgroup. Furthermore, Study 4.2 revealed that being evaluated by the outgroup led participants to reciprocate the outgroup's anticipated positive stereotype with positive behavior; participants assimilated to the positive metastereotype, but only when they were low in prejudice against the outgroup. Together Study 4.1 and Study 4.2 form a complementary pattern: High prejudice people assimilate to a negative metastereotype and low prejudice people assimilate to a positive metastereotype when expecting to be evaluated by the outgroup.

Our studies extend Chapter 3 by showing the moderating role of level of prejudice for to the consequences of metastereotype activation. In line with widely accepted social psychological knowledge, we found that high prejudice people are more inclined than low prejudice people to act negatively towards an outgroup (e.g., Swim et al., 1999). However and

most importantly, only when they expected to be evaluated by the outgroup, did these high prejudice participants present themselves in a more negative or less positive way than low prejudice participants. Moreover, in addition to our prior research, we do not only show how *negative* metastereotypes can lead to actual negative behavioral expressions in line with the specific negative metastereotype, we also show that *positive* metastereotypes can lead to actual positive behavioral expressions in line with the specific positive metastereotype.

We think that our results add an important new insight to the study of the complex social psychological dynamics that play a role during intergroup contacts. Our studies show that intergroup behavior is an interplay between *what people think the other group feels about them* and *how people feel about the other group*. Focusing solely on one or the other means by definition losing extremely relevant information (see Vorauer, 2006, for similar reasoning).

Awareness of reciprocity responses

We interpret our findings in terms of reciprocity: high prejudice people are inclined to reciprocate the outgroup's negative stereotype about them with negative behavior, whereas low prejudice people are inclined to reciprocate the outgroup's positive stereotype about them with positive behavior. Important to add, however, is that the striving for reciprocity needs not be conscious and does not always need to be observed by the opposing party. Stapel and Van der Zee (2006) demonstrated that complementarity responses during social interactions can be evoked unconsciously. In a similar vein, the perception of being stereotyped, be it negatively or positively, could unconsciously evoke a readiness to reciprocate these stereotypes. Furthermore, research by Perugini, Gallucci, Presaghi, and Ercolani (2003) suggests that the norm of reciprocity can be an internalized norm, such that reciprocating behavior does not necessarily need to be observed by the opposing party. Although it was left somewhat ambiguous to the participants in our studies whether the key dependent variable would be observed by the outgroup (only the to-be-written essay was explicitly told to be evaluated), the readiness to

reciprocate the outgroup's (meta)stereotypes resulted in assimilation to metastereotypes, suggesting that the behavior was not necessarily conscious.

Furthermore, we certainly do not deny that there may be other possibilities to reciprocate an outgroup's negative stereotypes, such as devaluing the outgroup in a more direct way or showing hostility towards the outgroup. However, our studies clearly show that an important way to reciprocate the outgroup's expectations is assimilation to metastereotypes.

Future directions

Our results regarding the effects of negative metastereotypes pave the way for combining different lines of research. Specifically, Shelton, Richeson, and Salvatore (2005), and Vorauer and Turpie (2004) suggests that people who expect another person to have a negative view about their ingroup, or in other words, people who expect another person to hold *negative stereotypes* about their ingroup can show positive behavior, which seems to contradict our results of Study 4.1. However, there is an important difference between their research and ours. Both Shelton et al. (2005), and Vorauer and Turpie (2004) tested their predictions in dyadic interactions, whereas we focused mainly on a person's reactions to the feeling of being evaluated and stereotyped by members of an outgroup with whom they were not interacting as individuals. Feelings of interdependence and likeability that play an important role during dyadic interactions between individuals were less important in our research context, which may account for different results. An important goal for future studies would thus be to combine both lines of research in order to investigate when and how group members are inclined to show positive or negative behavior in reaction to an outgroup that is perceived to endorse a negative view about the ingroup. More specifically, it would be interesting to show that interacting with outgroup members who are perceived to hold negative stereotypes about the ingroup is more likely to result in *positive* behavior when one interacts as an *individual* with the outgroup member (see Shelton et al. 2005; Vorauer & Turpie, 2004), and (as indicated by the current research) in *negative* behavior when one explicitly interacts as a

member of the ingroup with the outgroup member (see also Frey & Tropp, 2006). For example, the group of young Dutch Moroccans we referred to at the beginning of this chapter, probably perceived themselves primarily as members of their ingroup when they showed their sympathy for the fundamentalist Muslim terrorists. If they would have perceived themselves more as individuals instead, they probably would have shown less provocative behavior.

Conclusion

Our studies show that people can actually assimilate to a negative metastereotype. Apparently, the desire to be viewed positively by others (Baumeister, 1982) can be overruled by the desire to “pay back” the outgroup’s anticipated negative expectations (see Reicher, Levine, & Gordijn, 1998, for a related argument). This could have important consequences for intergroup contact interventions. Imagine, for example, the competition that can exist between two departments in a company. To improve intergroup relations, it does not suffice to change negative stereotypes about one another. Our research suggests that it is equally or even more important to change negative *metastereotypes*. Otherwise, improving intergroup relations between the two groups and reducing negative intergroup behavior may be a mission impossible, for at least the high prejudice workers in both groups will be continually inclined to act in line with their negative metastereotypes. The fact that we also demonstrated that especially low prejudice people will be inclined to show positive behavior in reaction to positive metastereotypes underpins the important role metastereotypes can play in the improvement of intergroup relations. Changing negative metastereotypes and focusing on positive metastereotypes may be very fruitful in order to improve intergroup relations.

Likewise, for society as a whole, it may well be possible that the media play a major role in preserving negative metastereotypes about certain groups in society. If members of certain groups are continually confronted with negative stereotypes about their groups in newspapers and on television, our research suggests that those group members will be

prone to actually act in line with these negative stereotypes. Hence, the young Dutch Moroccans who have been cheering in support of the terrorist attacks on the WTC and the Pentagon probably would not have done the same if the Dutch media and the Dutch people in general had not continually expressed their negative stereotypes about Moroccans.

Chapter 5

The importance of prejudice and validity for the effects of positive and negative metastereotyping¹⁰

Suppose you would ask Dutch people what they believe Germans' impressions of the Dutch are. Probably you would get a number of different reactions. A first reaction could be one of joy or anger when you mention the word "Germans", because some Dutch people do like Germans, but some do not. However, if those Dutch people would answer your question in more detail, the responses would probably differ in valence as well as in content, like "Germans think all Dutch people wear wooden shoes" (neutral), "Germans think Dutch people are very tolerant" (positive), or "Germans think Dutch people are stingy" (negative). In fact, you conducted a small social psychological study and showed the existence of prejudice and of so-called metastereotypes, that is *beliefs regarding the stereotypes of another group about your own group* (Sigelman & Tuch, 1997; Vorauer et al., 1998). Furthermore, you found out that metastereotypes can differ in valence. If you would ask Dutch people subsequently whether they themselves consider the metastereotypes to be valid descriptions of Dutch people, you will probably find out that some of the metastereotypes will be considered to be based on nothing more but fiction. For example, probably only a few hundred Dutch people out of sixteen million occasionally wear wooden shoes (and especially if foreign tourists are around). Other metastereotypes however, may be considered more valid descriptions of Dutch people. For example, most Dutch people agree that the Dutch are very tolerant towards soft drug-use and prostitution.

In this chapter we will show that how people react to the activation of metastereotypes is a combined effect of their *level of prejudice* against the other group that is perceived to hold that particular (meta)stereotype about the ingroup, the *valence* of that particular metastereotype, and the *validity* of that metastereotype. With validity, we mean whether the metastereotype is believed to be based on facts or fiction. Specifically, our aim is to demonstrate that *low prejudice* people will act in line with a *positive* metastereotype that is perceived as *invalid*, whereas they will

¹⁰ This chapter is based on Oldenhuis, Gordijn, & Otten (2007c).

contrast away from a *negative* metastereotype that is perceived as *invalid*. However, if a metastereotype is seen as *valid* we do not expect such tendencies (be it assimilation or contrast) for people who are relatively low in prejudice. For *high prejudice* people the validity of positive or negative metastereotypes should not influence their behavior.

Possible determinants of metastereotypical influence

Metastereotypes can be highly influential during intergroup contacts (Vorauer et al., 1998; Hollbach, 2005; Gomez, 2002). Especially if one is a member of a powerless group (Lammers et al., 2006) or feels evaluated by an outgroup (Chapter 3 and Chapter 4; Oldenhuis & Gordijn, 2002; Vorauer et al., 1998), metastereotypes are activated, and subsequently exert an important influence on people's thoughts and behaviors during intergroup contacts. An important endeavor for modern research on metastereotypes is thus to investigate how metastereotypes influence people's thoughts and behaviors, and what the determinants of metastereotypical influence are. In Chapter 4 we have shown that level of prejudice against the outgroup that is perceived to hold a particular stereotype about the ingroup is an important determinant of metastereotypical influence. Low prejudice people will be motivated to react positively towards the outgroup (e.g., Boyanowsky & Allen, 1973; Swim et al., 1999). In the context of metastereotyping, we mean by "react positively" acting in line with and thus *assimilating* to a positive metastereotype or moving away from and thus *contrasting* to a negative metastereotype (see for similar reasoning Spears, Gordijn, Dijksterhuis, & Stapel, 2004). In Chapter 4 we indeed showed that especially low prejudice people tend to assimilate to a positive metastereotype.

In addition to the role of prejudice, some studies suggest other important determinants of metastereotypical influence, such as *validity* and *valence* of the metastereotype. Several studies suggest that *negative* metastereotypes will be perceived by targets as less valid than *positive* metastereotypes (Horenczyk & Bekerman, 1997; Hollbach, 2005). However, research on White and First Nation Canadians, conducted by Vorauer and colleagues (1998) suggests that low prejudice White

Canadians are more open than high prejudice White Canadians to accept that the First Nation Canadians are mistreated and exploited by White Canadians in the past. Knowing this, it is plausible to expect that low prejudice White Canadians consider the negative metastereotypes regarding First Nation Canadians (e.g., prejudiced, unfair) a reasonably valid description of their ingroup. Accordingly, just like positive metastereotypes, negative metastereotypes can also be considered valid, at least if prejudice against the outgroup is low. Likewise, we also propose that positive metastereotypes can be considered to be invalid. For example, the Dutch assume that they are seen by people from other countries as “open to immigrants” which is considered a positive metastereotype. However, since Dutch legislation changed (it has become more strict for potential immigrants), many Dutch people do not agree anymore with this positive image of their ingroup. Hence, they perceive a low validity of the positive metastereotype “open to immigrants”.

Obviously, it is significant for people’s reactions whether or not others perceive them accurately (Sedikides, 1993; Swann, 2005) and positively (Curry & Emerson, 1970; Curtis & Miller, 1986). Therefore, we propose that the validity and valence of metastereotypes are important determinants of metastereotypical influence, just like level of prejudice. In the next paragraph we will discuss how exactly level of prejudice, validity, and valence of metastereotypes contribute to the influence of metastereotypes.

The influence of prejudice, valence, and validity

It is clear that low prejudice people wish to maintain a positive relation with the outgroup (e.g. Maddux, Barden, & Brewer, 2005). We propose that low prejudice people are especially willing to take action in order to strengthen a positive relation with the outgroup. Such action should be especially likely when there is room for improvement, that is, when they perceive the outgroup to hold an *invalid* stereotype about the ingroup. If the outgroup is perceived to hold an *invalid negative* stereotype it is possible to show that the ingroup is not as negative as the outgroup is thinking. Under these circumstances low prejudice people

perceive some room to positively change the outgroup's negative image of the ingroup and hence, will contrast away from the negative metastereotype. However, if the negative metastereotype is perceived as valid, the low prejudice people are more open to accept and hence, less likely to correct their ingroup's negative image by showing contrast, as are the low prejudice people in Vorauer et al.'s studies (1998).

If the outgroup holds an invalid *positive* metastereotype, it is important for low prejudice people to confirm the invalid positive metastereotype in order to strengthen the positive relationship with the outgroup, because especially then the ingroup's (undeserved positive) image needs positive affirmation. However, if the positive metastereotype is perceived as valid, the urge to show positive behavior in order to maintain a positive relation with the outgroup will be less strong. After all, "good wine needs no bush": The positive ingroup's image is clear to the outgroup; it does not necessarily need further affirmation. Hence, we propose that especially when a metastereotype is considered invalid, low prejudice people take action in order to strengthen in a pro-active way the positive relation with the outgroup. Therefore, we hypothesize that low prejudice people will act more positively when the metastereotype is perceived as invalid, meaning that low prejudice people will especially *assimilate* to an invalid *positive* metastereotype and *contrast away* from an invalid *negative* metastereotype.

So far we considered low prejudice people. What about high prejudice people? We expect that high prejudice people will mainly be reacting to the outgroup in a negative (or less positive) way as they do not wish to maintain a positive relation with the outgroup (e.g., Maddux et al., 2005). As such they are not particularly concerned with making a good impression independent of whether the outgroup's expectation is based on facts or fiction. Whether the metastereotype is perceived as invalid or valid is therefore of less importance for their reaction to the metastereotype. Therefore, for high prejudice people we expect that prejudice itself determines their reaction, whereas validity or valence of the metastereotype matters less. We expect them to react relatively neutrally.

We will test our predictions in two intergroup contexts, namely in the *indigenous Dutch – Dutch Moroccan* context and in the *Dutch – German* context. We chose to test our predictions in two different

intergroup contexts to be able to generalize our findings. We propose that our reasoning concerning the influence of metastereotypes can be applied to any intergroup context in which there is (in)valid negative or positive metastereotyping.

Study 5.1

Dutch Moroccans form a salient subgroup in Dutch society. A well established *negative* metastereotype that indigenous Dutch people think that Dutch Moroccans hold about them is “stingy”. So, what are indigenous Dutch people inclined to do if they become aware of this metastereotype? Will they present themselves more or less stingy as a function of their level of prejudice against Dutch Moroccans and the validity of the metastereotype “stingy”? Following our line of reasoning we expect indigenous Dutch people who are low in prejudice against Moroccans to show more contrast to the activated metastereotype “stingy”, when the metastereotype is invalid than when it is valid. However, indigenous Dutch people who are high in prejudice against Moroccans will not show differences in “stingy” responses as a function of the validity of this metastereotype. These hypotheses will be tested in Study 5.1.

Method

Participants and design

Fifty-one indigenous Dutch participants (32 women and 19 men), varying in age between 18 and 33 years old ($M = 21.98$, $SD = 2.77$), participated in the study for which they received 8 euro. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: High validity of the metastereotype ($N = 26$) versus low validity of the metastereotype ($N = 25$).

Procedure

Participants arrived at the laboratory on an individual basis for a study in which “people with different nationalities would participate”. The

first step was for participants to fill out a computerized questionnaire that consisted of 8 items designed to measure level of prejudice towards Dutch Moroccans (e.g. "I have a negative image of Dutch Moroccans"; $\alpha = .85$). They could react to the items by circling a number varying from 1 (absolutely not) to 7 (absolutely), $M = 3.82$, $SD = .90$. A higher score indicates more negative feelings with respect to Dutch Moroccans. After a filler task, the participants received a written introduction of another (paper-and-pencil) questionnaire which started with a description of "The results of psychological research in the Netherlands". It was described that research among different representative samples of the Dutch Moroccan population in the Netherlands revealed over and over again that Dutch Moroccans perceive the indigenous Dutch to be overly stingy. Furthermore, participants in the high validity conditions read that research showed that "Dutch people are indeed more hesitant when it comes to spending money than people from other countries". However, participants in the low validity condition, read that research in the Netherlands showed that "Dutch people are no more hesitant than people from other countries when it comes to spending money". The current research was said to be designed to further investigate this issue.

Dependent measures

After having read the introduction participants filled out the questionnaire, that contained the dependent measures. The participants were presented with seven statements about generosity and spending money in order to measure the extent to which they present themselves as *stingy*. They were asked to rate their degree of agreement with these items on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .63$). An example of the items is: "I hate spending money".¹¹

Further, to control whether "stingy" really was a salient part of the metastereotype for this particular sample of indigenous Dutch people (especially after our explicit manipulation) we asked the participants to

¹¹ We also included a behavioral measure of stinginess by asking the participants how much money of the 8 euro they earned with participating in this study they were willing to donate to one of three charity organizations: World Wildlife Fund, Amnesty International or Médecins sans Frontières. However, results revealed no differences. One reason for this might be that many participants said they already donated money to one or more of the organizations which may have overruled our experimental manipulations.

what extent on a 7-point scale they thought Dutch Moroccans would consider each of 3 different synonyms of stingy (e.g., miserly, thrifty) as a more valid description for indigenous Dutch people (7) in comparison to Dutch Moroccan people (1), $\alpha = .73$. On the 7-point scale the midst of the scale indicates the participants' perception that Dutch Moroccans see no difference between the two groups when it comes to "stingy". Scores significantly higher than 4 indicate that the particular trait is part of the metastereotype, whereas lower scores indicate that the particular trait is not part of the metastereotype.

Subsequently, the same 3 questions followed, except now the participants were asked their *personal opinion* to what extent they *themselves* thought these traits were a valid description for the indigenous Dutch compared to Dutch Moroccans ($\alpha = .77$). By including these questions we could check whether stingy is a part of the ingroup-stereotype of the indigenous Dutch participants. In addition to that, we could also get an impression of the effect of our manipulation regarding the high versus low validity of the metastereotype. Participants in the high validity conditions should consider "stingy" as a more valid description for Dutch people than participants in the low validity conditions. Finally, the participants were asked how they would feel if a Dutch Moroccan would describe them, being indigenous Dutch, in terms of the above traits ($\alpha = .87$), ranging from very negative (1) to very positive (7). Finally, after completing some demographic questions, the participants were fully debriefed.

Results

The tenability, validity, and valence of the metastereotype "stingy"

As expected, "stingy" was clearly a strong metastereotype of the indigenous Dutch participants regarding Dutch Moroccans. In general, the participants thought that Dutch Moroccans consider "stingy" as a more valid description for Dutch people compared to Dutch Moroccans, $M = 5.40$, $SD = .73$, which is significantly higher than the midpoint of the scale (4), $t(50) = 13.59$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .79$.

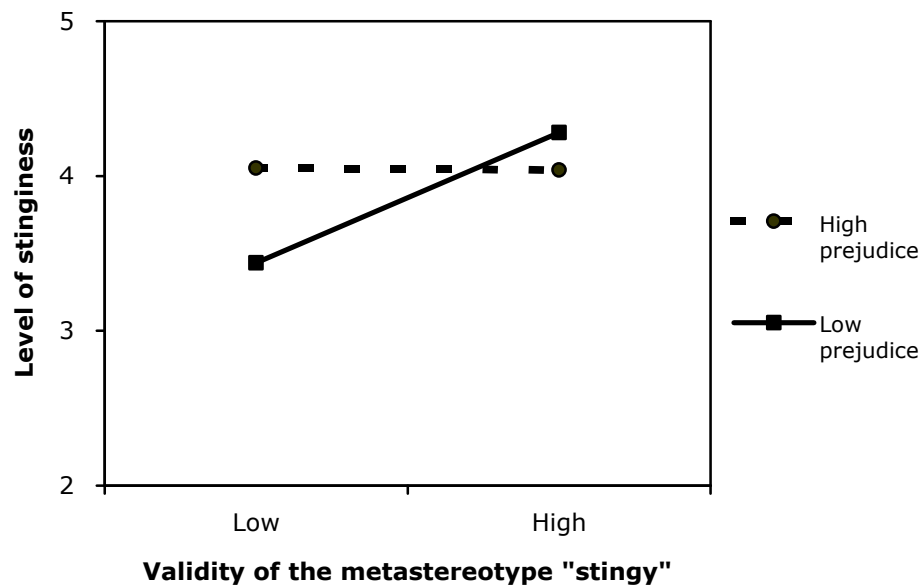
Participants considered "stingy" as a somewhat more valid description for the indigenous Dutch people compared to Dutch Moroccans; $M = 4.84$, $SD = .84$, which is significantly higher than the (neutral) midpoint of the scale (4), $t(50) = 7.10$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .50$. However, a regression analysis with validity of the metastereotype (high = 1, low = -1), level of prejudice (centered) and their interaction term as predictors revealed a main effect of our manipulation of validity of the metastereotype, $\beta = .38$, $t(47) = 2.84$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .15$, showing, as expected, that participants in the high validity condition considered "stingy" more ingroup-stereotypical than participants in the low validity condition ($M = 5.21$, $SD = .81$ vs. $M = 4.54$, $SD = .72$ respectively). The interaction effect did not reach significance, $t(47) = 1.52$, *ns*.

The indigenous Dutch participants felt that being described as "stingy" by a Dutch Moroccan is negative; $M = 2.97$, $SD = .59$, which was significantly different from the (neutral) midpoint of the scale, $t(50) = -8.73$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .60$. A regression analysis with validity of the metastereotype (high = 1, low = -1), level of prejudice (centered) and their interaction term as predictors yielded no significant effects, all t s < 1 .

Stinginess

A regression analysis with validity of the metastereotype (high = 1, low = -1), level of prejudice (centered) and their interaction as predictors of the participants' score on the statements revealed a significant main effect for condition, $\beta = .31$, $t(47) = 2.28$, $p < .03$, $\eta^2 = .10$. When the validity of the metastereotype was high, participants reacted more stingily than when the validity of the metastereotype was low, $M = 4.14$, $SD = .68$ versus $M = 3.67$, $SD = .61$. However, this main effect was qualified by a significant Validity X Prejudice interaction effect, $\beta = -.31$, $t(47) = -2.16$, $p < .04$, $\eta^2 = .09$. Simple effect analyses based on this interaction revealed that, as expected, low prejudice participants ($-1 SD$) in the low validity condition reacted less stingily than low prejudice participants in the high validity condition, $\beta = .42$, $t(47) = 3.35$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .19$. However, there was no such difference between the high prejudice participants ($+1 SD$) in the high validity condition and the high prejudice participants in the low validity condition, $b = -.01$, $t < 1$, *ns*. The overall pattern of results of Study 5.1 for stinginess is shown in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1. Level of stinginess for high (+1 SD) and low prejudice participants (-1 SD) within the low and high validity condition in Study 5.1.



Discussion

The results of Study 5.1 indicate that our hypothesis is plausible: Especially, if a *negative* metastereotype is invalid, *low prejudice* people will *contrast* away from it. We argue that in those circumstances it is important for the low prejudice people to strengthen the positive relationship with the outgroup by showing that the negative metastereotype is based on fiction. However, when the metastereotype is perceived as more truthful in it, the need to contrast away from the negative metastereotype is less strong: The low prejudice people are less likely to “correct” their ingroup’s negative image. As expected, the high

prejudice people did not show differences in stinginess as a function of the perceived validity of this negative metastereotype.

Study 5.2

In Study 5.2 we will address our hypothesis regarding positive metastereotypes: if a positive metastereotype is invalid, low prejudice people will assimilate to it, because especially then the ingroup's (undeserved positive) image needs positive affirmation. We will test our hypothesis in the *Dutch – German* context. A well established *positive* metastereotype that Dutch people think that Germans, as well as the rest of the world, hold about them is “tolerant towards drugs, prostitution, abortion, euthanasia and gay marriage” (see Oldenhuis et al., 2007b). We expect Dutch people who are low in prejudice against Germans will show more tolerant responses when the positive metastereotype “tolerant” is invalid than when it is valid, whereas high prejudice Dutch people will not show such differences whether this positive metastereotype is valid or not. This hypothesis will be tested in Study 5.2.

Method

Participants and design

Forty-two Dutch participants (19 women and 23 men), varying in age between 17 and 27 years old ($M = 21.17$, $SD = 2.17$), participated in the study for which they received 6 euro. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: High validity of the metastereotype ($N = 20$) or low validity of the metastereotype ($N = 22$).

Procedure

Participants arrived at the laboratory on an individual basis for a study in which people with different nationalities would supposedly participate. The first step was for participants to fill out a questionnaire, consisting 8 items similar to those we used in Study 5.1 to measure level of prejudice towards Moroccans. Only now we replaced “Moroccans” by

"Germans" ($M = 3.12$, $SD = .79$, $\alpha = .81$). A higher score indicated more negative feelings with respect to Germans. After a filler, the participants in the metastereotype conditions received a written introduction of another questionnaire which started with a description of "the results of psychological research in Germany". It was described that research among different representative samples of the German population revealed over and over again that Germans think of the Dutch as being very tolerant regarding soft drugs, prostitution, abortion, euthanasia and gay marriage. Furthermore, participants in the high validity conditions read that research in the Netherlands showed that "Dutch people are indeed very tolerant" regarding the topics named above. Participants in the low validity conditions however, read that research in the Netherlands showed that "Dutch people are not at all tolerant" regarding these topics. The current research was said to be designed to further investigate this issue.

Dependent measures

After having read the written introduction participants filled out the questionnaire, that contained the dependent measures. In order to measure *tolerance*, the participants were presented with 11 statements about soft drugs, prostitution, abortion, euthanasia and gay marriage ($\alpha = .82$). They were asked to rate their degree of agreement with these items on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). Examples of these items are: "Gay marriages should be prohibited" (reverse scored) and "If patients do not want to live any longer, doctors should have the opportunity to help those patients ending their life".

To control whether "tolerant" really was a salient part of the metastereotype for this particular sample of Dutch people we asked the participants to what extent on a 7-point scale they thought Germans would consider each of the 5 different (sub-)traits of the tolerant construct (tolerant regarding soft drugs, prostitution, abortion, euthanasia and gay marriage) as a more valid description for Dutch people (7) in comparison to German people (1), $\alpha = .80$. On the 7-point scale the midpoint of the scale indicates the participants' perception that Germans see no difference between the two groups when it comes to the particular trait. Higher scores indicate that the particular trait is a part of the metastereotype,

whereas lower scores indicate that the particular trait is not a part of the metastereotype.

Subsequently, the same 5 questions followed, except now the participants were asked their *personal opinion* to what extent they *themselves* thought these traits were a valid description for the Dutch compared to Germans ($\alpha = .62$). By including these questions we could check whether tolerance is a part of the ingroup-stereotype of the Dutch participants. In addition to that, we could also get an impression of the effect of our manipulation regarding the high versus low validity of the metastereotype. Participants in the high validity conditions should consider "tolerant" as a more valid description for Dutch people than participants in the low validity conditions. Finally, the participants were asked how they would feel if a German would describe them, being a Dutch, in terms of the above traits ($\alpha = .85$), ranging from very negative (1) to very positive (7). All the participants were fully debriefed after completing some demographic questions.

Results

Our analyses were conducted without the data from one participant because outlier analyses revealed that this participant had uncommon studentized deleted residuals (> 4) on relevant measures (Judd & McClelland, 1989; McClelland, 2000). Excluding the outlier did not affect the results.

The tenability, validity, and valence of the metastereotype "tolerant"

As expected, "tolerant" is clearly a metastereotype of Dutch people regarding Germans. In general, the participants thought that Germans consider "tolerant" as a more valid description for Dutch people compared to Germans; $M = 5.39$, $SD = .82$, which is significantly higher than the (neutral) midpoint of the scale (4), $t(40) = 10.83$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .75$. A regression analysis with validity (high = 1, low = -1), level of prejudice (centered), and their interaction term as predictors yielded no significant effects (all t s < 1), thereby showing that "tolerant" is a strong and stable

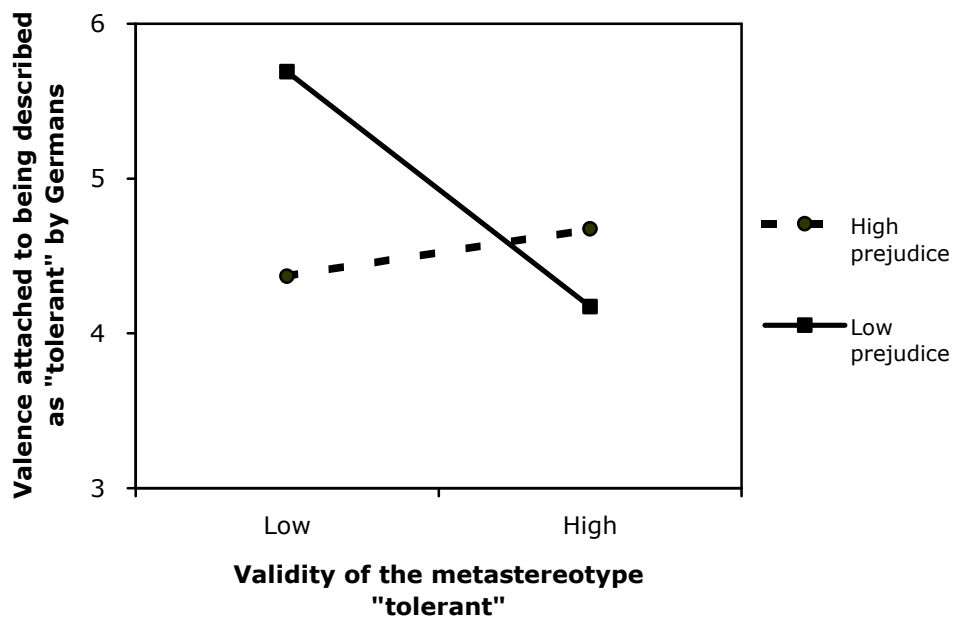
metastereotype of Dutch people regarding Germans, independent of prejudice or our manipulation regarding validity.

Furthermore, participants considered "tolerant" a more valid description for the Dutch people compared to Germans; $M = 5.24$, $SD = .65$, which is significantly higher than the (neutral) midpoint of the scale (4), $t(40) = 13.67$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .82$. "Tolerant" can thus be considered an ingroup-stereotype as well. However, a regression analysis with validity (high = 1, low = -1), level of prejudice (centered), and their interaction term as predictors revealed a main effect of validity, $\beta = .36$, $t(37) = 2.35$, $p < .02$, $\eta^2 = .13$. This shows, as expected and following our manipulation, that participants in the high validity condition considered "tolerant" more ingroup-stereotypical than participants in the low validity condition ($M = 5.40$, $SD = .46$ vs. $M = 5.05$, $SD = .43$ respectively).

The Dutch participants felt that being described as "tolerant" by a German is positive, $M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.15$, which was significantly different from the (neutral) midpoint of the scale, $t(40) = 3.96$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .28$. However, a regression analysis with validity (high = 1, low = -1), level of prejudice (centered), and their interaction term as predictors yielded a significant Validity X Prejudice interaction effect, $\beta = .40$, $t(36) = 2.55$, $p < .02$, $\eta^2 = .15$.¹² We conducted simple effects analyses by considering low prejudice participants (+ 1 *SD*) and high prejudice participants (- 1 *SD*) separately. These analyses revealed a significant main effect of validity among the low prejudice participants, $b = -.76$, $t(36) = -2.98$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .20$: Being described as tolerant by a German was considered more positive by low prejudice participants when the validity of this metastereotype was low than when it was high. On the contrary, there was no effect of validity among the high prejudice participants, $b = .15$, $t < 1$, *ns*. So, in general the participants considered it positive to be described by Germans as tolerant. However, low prejudice participants considered it especially positive to be described by a German as tolerant when the validity of this metastereotype was low (see Figure 5.2).

¹² The degrees of freedom in this and the following regression analyses regarding valence of the metastereotype is one less than expected, because one participant failed to answer on relevant dependent measures.

Figure 5.2. Level of valence attached to being described as "tolerant" by Germans for high (+1 *SD*) and low prejudice participants (-1 *SD*) in Study 5.2.

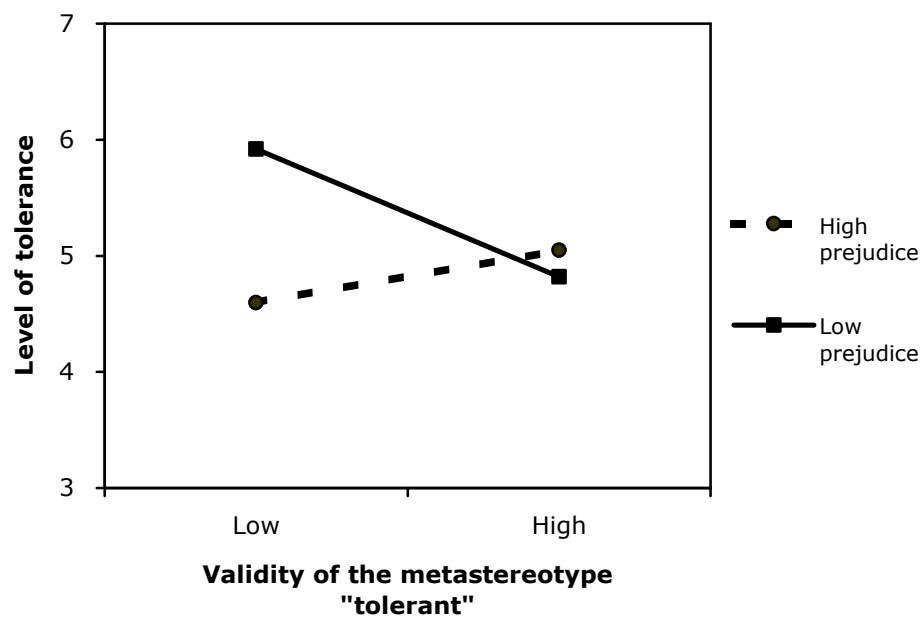


Tolerance

A regression analysis with validity (high = 1, low = -1), level of prejudice (centered), and their interaction terms as predictors of level of tolerance revealed a significant main effect for prejudice, $\beta = -.31$, $t(37) = -2.01$, $p = .05$, $\eta^2 = .10$. High prejudice participants reacted less tolerantly than low prejudice participants. However, as expected, this main effect was qualified by a significant Validity X Prejudice interaction effect, $\beta = .44$, $t(37) = 2.85$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .18$. Simple effect analyses based on this interaction revealed that, as expected, low prejudice participants (-1 *SD*) in the low validity condition reacted more tolerantly than low prejudice participants in the high validity condition, $b = -.55$, $t(37) = -2.84$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .18$. There was no such difference between high prejudice participants (+1 *SD*) in the high validity condition and high prejudice participants in

the low validity condition, $b = .23$, $t(37) = 1.26$, ns . To summarize, following our hypothesis, especially when the metastereotype “tolerant” was invalid, low prejudice participants assimilated to this metastereotype. The overall pattern of results of Study 5.2 for tolerance is shown in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3. Level of tolerance for high (+1 SD) and low prejudice participants (-1 SD) within the low and high validity condition in Study 5.2.

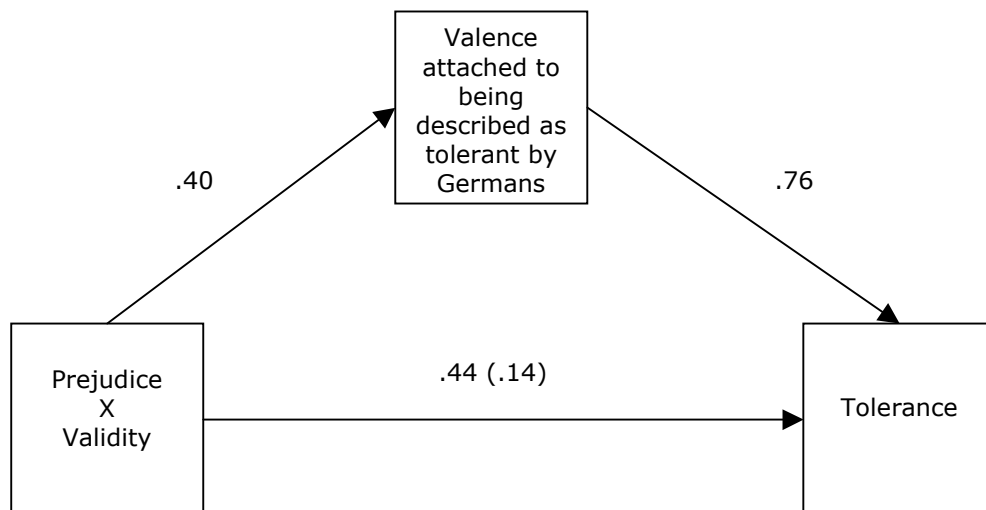


Mediation analysis

In order to examine whether the valence attached to being described by a German as tolerant mediated the interaction effect of condition and prejudice on tolerance, we performed a mediated moderation analysis (Muller, Judd, & Yzerbyt, 2004). The mediator valence attached to being described by a German as tolerant did predict

tolerance, $\beta = .76$, $t(37) = 7.14$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .58$. Adding this mediator to the interaction effect of condition and prejudice on tolerance decreased this interaction effect to $\beta = .14$, $t(37) = 1.28$, *ns*. This mediation was significant, Sobel's $Z = 2.38$, $p < .02$. Apparently, when the metastereotype "tolerant" was perceived as invalid the low prejudice participants perceived being described as such by Germans as very positive and accordingly acted more tolerantly (see Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4. Valence attached to being described by Germans as "tolerant" mediates the relation between the interaction term Prejudice X Validity and Tolerance in Study 5.2.



Discussion

In Study 5.2 we found evidence for our hypothesis regarding the influence of positive metastereotypes: Especially when the positive metastereotype is invalid, the low prejudice people will show attitudes in

line with the positive metastereotype. Interestingly, this pattern was mediated by the valence the low prejudice participants attached to being described by Germans as positive. Particularly if the metastereotype was perceived as less valid, the low prejudice participants found it positive to be described by Germans as tolerant and accordingly showed more tolerant attitudes. This finding is a first indication of the intentions of low prejudice people when it comes to their responses to a positive invalid metastereotype. Their reaction seems to be a functional answer to the specific intergroup context in which Germans are perceived to hold the invalid positive (meta)stereotype “tolerant” regarding their ingroup. Under these circumstances it is highly positive for the low prejudice people to be described as tolerant, which is in fact undeserved. As a result, confirming the outgroup’s positive image becomes highly important. When people receive undeserved compliments from another group, they will probably be especially motivated to confirm this positive image about themselves, but only if they like that other group.

However, if the positive metastereotype is valid, the low prejudice participants find it less (highly) positive to be described by Germans as tolerant and accordingly show fewer attitudes in line with the positive metastereotype. As expected, the high prejudice participants did not show differences in (metastereotypical) “tolerant” attitudes as a function of the validity of this positive metastereotype.

General discussion

How do people react to the activation of metastereotypes? And how do level of prejudice against the outgroup and the valence and validity of such metastereotypes affect their reaction? To our knowledge the present studies are the first attempts at providing some clear answers to these questions. That is, when low prejudice indigenous Dutch people in Study 5.1 were confronted with the *negative* metastereotype “stingy” regarding Dutch Moroccans that was *invalid*, they tended to show attitudinal responses that were more in contrast to the negative metastereotype than when this negative metastereotype was *valid*. Low prejudice Dutch people in Study 5.2 who were confronted with the *positive* metastereotype

“tolerant” regarding Germans that was *invalid* tended to show attitudinal responses that were more in line with the positive metastereotype than when this positive metastereotype was valid. The high prejudice participants did not show such differences in their reactions to negative (Study 5.1) or positive (Study 5.2) metastereotypes as a function of the validity of the metastereotype.

The results of Study 5.2 were mediated by the level of valence attached to being described by the outgroup in metastereotypical ways: Especially if the positive metastereotype is perceived as invalid, the low prejudice participants find it positive to be described as such and, accordingly, show more assimilation to the positive metastereotype. This is an indication of the underlying process driving the assimilation to an invalid positive metastereotype of the low prejudice people. Especially under such circumstances (undeserved positive image) they find it positive to be seen as tolerant and accordingly show more assimilation.

However, we did not find such mediation in Study 5.1. The reason for this is probably because it is not entirely clear what to expect in case of a negative metastereotype. It is possible that being seen as “stingy” is experienced as negative under all circumstances, independent of the validity of this metastereotype (“stingy” is probably more negative than “tolerant” is positive). The important point is however that especially when a negative metastereotype is perceived as invalid the low prejudice people see room for improving the outgroup’s negative image of the ingroup by contrasting in response to it.

Together, these findings show that when a metastereotype is perceived as invalid, the low prejudice people are motivated to strengthen a positive relation with the outgroup by showing positive behavior. Especially in these cases there is the urge to change or affirm the outgroup’s image of the ingroup in a positive direction.

Self-verification motives

There is some resemblance between literature stemming from *self-verification* research and our studies. Self-verification research has demonstrated that people strive to receive evaluations from others that are

consistent with their own self-views, regardless of whether these self-views are favorable or unfavorable (e.g., Swann, Pelham, & Krull, 1989). Moreover, the same pattern has been observed in intergroup settings with respect to *collective* self-views (Chen, Chen, & Shaw, 2004). Hence, according to the self-verification literature and in line with our results regarding low prejudice people in Study 5.1, the urge to show contrastive behavior in response to a negative metastereotype should be weaker if the metastereotype is seen as more valid. However, self-verification motives cannot explain why high and low prejudice people's reactions differ from each other. Furthermore, in case of a positive metastereotype the low prejudice people seem to completely neglect the need to establish a valid view of their ingroup. Under these circumstances they react even more positively when a positive metastereotype is considered less valid. Our reasoning therefore is that level of prejudice first and foremost determines people's reactions towards an outgroup. Simply emphasizing the need to verify one's (collective) self-views within intergroup settings, regardless of which relation you have with the outgroup is not a feasible explanation in our opinion. We believe and show that level of prejudice is a more important factor in intergroup settings than (and thus can overrule) the need to verify one's collective self-view per se.

Low prejudice people and their intentions

We proposed that the low prejudice people are likely to strengthen a positive relation with the outgroup, while the high prejudice people do not have such a wish. However, in our research setting the participants' attitudinal responses are not actually observed by the outgroup. Nevertheless, we do think the reactions of the participants in our studies can be interpreted in terms of functional and meaningful reactions towards the outgroup. The mediational pattern in Study 5.2 supports such reasoning. Apparently, the participants in this study reacted as they did as a result of the valence they attached to being described by Germans as tolerant. Although we did not explicitly tell the participants that their reactions would be observed by the outgroup, they were still influenced by this particular intergroup context. Moreover, in the previous chapters we

found the same functional and motivational reactions if metastereotypes were activated. Apparently, the activation of metastereotypes keeps influencing people in subsequent settings. This is in line with the plethora of knowledge activation effects that is so commonly found in social psychology. The activation of constructs like stereotypes still influences people in subsequent settings (e.g., Bargh, Chen, & Burrows, 1996) and the same applies to the activation of group categories (e.g., Jonas & Sassenberg, 2006), mindsets (e.g., Stapel & Semin, in press), and so on.

Implications and conclusion

Our research contributes further to the understanding of the complex social psychological processes that are involved in intergroup settings. Whereas for some decades research on metaperceptions within *interpersonal settings* comprises a prominent place within social psychology, only recently there has been an extensive growth of literature on metaperceptions within *intergroup contexts*, especially in the domain of stereotype threat (e.g., Steele & Aronson, 1995; Marx, Stapel, & Mullen, 2005) and stigmatization (for an overview: Levin & Van Laar, 2006). Not only what people think of other groups appears to be important; equal importance should be allocated to what they think others think of them (e.g., Vorauer, 2006; Vorauer et al., 1998; Vorauer et al., 2000; Vorauer & Kumhyr, 2001). Especially in today's society, in which opposing groups more and more stress differences between each other it is extremely relevant that social psychology takes this broad perspective. For example, majority members should realize that their own stereotypes can shape or even cause minority members' attitudes or behavior. Attitudes and behavior are heavily shaped by metaperceptions, not only in interpersonal relations, (e.g., Curtis & Miller, 1986), but also in intergroup relations.

It is clear that metastereotypes may function as guiding manuals for attitudes and behaviors. Focusing on metastereotypes may thus help improving intergroup relations (Gomez, 2002). Prior chapters have shown that the activation of negative metastereotypes can lead to a vicious circle which the probability increases that people will act in line with those negative metastereotypes. In addition, one lesson to be learned from the present research could thus be that stressing the invalidity of either

positive or negative metastereotypes encourages at least low prejudice people to react positively once these metastereotypes are activated.

We believe that the present research is an important contribution to the existing literature on metastereotypes. We have shown that level of prejudice, valence, and validity of metastereotypes are important determinants for people's responses to metastereotypes, such that low prejudice people especially do their best to show positive behavior when they think the outgroup is wrong.

Chapter 6

General discussion

How do people expect outgroup members to see them? The present dissertation shows that such metaperceptions within intergroup contexts exert a strong influence on how people act and think. Whereas it is often thought that how people react to people from other groups is mainly a function of how they think about the members of that group, this dissertation presents empirical evidence that this perspective needs to be extended. The stereotype that people think another group holds about *their own group* can be an important guide for their behavior and expression of attitudes as well. Additionally, people appear to activate and apply metaperceptions within intergroup contexts rather quickly and effortlessly, especially when they think they are being evaluated by a member of an outgroup. And when do people *not* expect, either explicitly or implicitly, expect to be evaluated by outgroup members during intergroup contacts (see Vorauer, 2006)?

When it comes to the specific influence metastereotypes exert on people, the previous chapters show that the activation of metastereotypes can occur automatically and unconsciously. However, the behavioral consequences that result from this automatic process is guided by motivational concerns. On the basis of the present findings, I assume that the tendency to expect reciprocated (dis)liking from an outgroup and to reciprocate an outgroup's positive or negative stereotype about the ingroup is a very important motive. Furthermore, people high versus low in prejudice differ from each other when it comes to their reactions to metastereotypes. Finally, whether a metastereotype is believed to be false or true is another important motivational determinant of metastereotypical influence. Taken together, the present dissertation shows that metaperceptions within intergroup contexts form influential guidelines for people's thoughts and behaviors. Before discussing the theoretical and practical implications of my research, I will first briefly present the main findings of this dissertation.

Overview of the main findings*The impact of collective guilt on the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice*

In Chapter 2, I examined the relation between prejudice (how do I feel about the other group) and metaprejudice (how do I expect outgroup members to feel about *my* group). I argued and showed in two studies that the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice is moderated by feelings of collective guilt towards the other group.

In Study 2.1, I examined the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice among Dutch participants regarding Dutch Moroccans and Indonesians. Results show that the relation between Dutch people's prejudice and metaprejudice regarding Moroccans is positive; thus, those who are negative about Moroccans expect Moroccans to feel negative about Dutch people, and those who are positive about Moroccans expect them to be positive about the Dutch. Regarding Indonesians the Dutch participants experienced higher levels of guilt. For Dutch people with low levels of collective guilt, I observed the same positive correlation between prejudice and metaprejudice against Indonesians as I did regarding Moroccans. However, when Dutch people experienced relatively high levels of collective guilt, the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice vanished. Apparently, when people low in prejudice feel guilty towards another group, for example, due to their ingroup's misbehaviors in the past, they do not expect reciprocated liking by the outgroup. In other words, their metaprejudice varies as a function of their feelings of guilt towards the outgroup.

In Study 2.2 this pattern was replicated when level of guilt was manipulated among Dutch participants regarding Antilleans. Level of guilt was manipulated by presenting Dutch participants with negative versus positive aspects of the Dutch colonial history at the Antilles. Again, when feelings of guilt towards Antilleans were low (participants were presented with positive aspects of the Dutch colonial history), the relation between prejudice and metaprejudice was positive, whereas there was no relation when feelings of guilt were high (participants were presented with positive aspects of the Dutch colonial history).

In short, Chapter 2 demonstrates that people in general expect reciprocal (dis)liking from another group, except when they feel guilty towards that group. In such circumstances, people low in prejudice do not expect that the outgroup reciprocates their low prejudice.

The influence of negative metastereotype activation on behavior and attitudes

In Chapter 3, I examined the influence of negative metastereotypes on behavior and attitudes. In general people reciprocate an outgroup's perceived negative metastereotype by showing behavior and attitudes in line with (i.e., "assimilating to") those negative metastereotypes. In Study 3.1, I demonstrated that East German participants acted more lazy and showed more "lazy" attitudes when their metastereotype "lazy" regarding West Germans was activated. In the same vein, Study 3.2 revealed that psychology students acted more "soft" by indicating a higher willingness to follow "soft" courses when their metastereotype "soft" regarding business management students was activated.

In short, Chapter 3 shows that reciprocity, the tendency to "pay back" the outgroup's negative stereotypes about the ingroup with negative behavior, is an important guideline when it comes to the influence of *specific* negative metastereotypes on behavior.

Reciprocating others' perceived stereotypes as a function of prejudice

In Chapter 4, I demonstrate that the motivation to reciprocate an outgroup's either negative or positive stereotype varies as a function of level of prejudice. I argued that people high in prejudice against the outgroup are more likely to assume that a *negative* metastereotype is meant to devalue their group, and therefore should be prone to show assimilation (i.e., act negatively) in order to reciprocate this perceived devaluation. People low in prejudice, on the other hand, are less prone to consider the respective metastereotype as a provocation meant to devalue the ingroup. Hence, they will not be inclined to show assimilation in order to reciprocate this perceived devaluation. Study 4.1 supported this reasoning: Members of a Christian students organization who were high in prejudice against members of a non-Christian student organization reacted more conservatively, when negative metastereotypes (e.g.,

conservative) were activated. Christian students low in prejudice did not show such assimilation.

In Study 4.2, I examined the influence of *positive* metastereotypes. The same reasoning of reciprocity applies. Those who assume that they are positively stereotyped will strive to fulfill the positive expectations. However, the feeling of being stereotyped, albeit positively, always bears some negativity. This should especially apply to people high in prejudice. For that reason, only people low in prejudice should assimilate to a positive metastereotype (i.e., act positively), because they like the outgroup and they are therefore less prone to consider the fact of being stereotyped as a provocation. Hence, they should reciprocate the outgroup's positive expectations with positive behavior. In line with this prediction, it was shown in Study 4.2 that Dutch participants who were low in prejudice against Americans reacted more tolerantly when they expected to be evaluated by Americans, and thus assimilated to the positive metastereotype "tolerant" that Dutch people hold regarding Americans. Dutch participants high in prejudice did not show such assimilation.

In short, Chapter 4 reveals that people who are high in prejudice are inclined to show negative reciprocity, that is, behavior and attitudes in line with an activated negative metastereotype. People low in prejudice, on the other hand, are inclined to show positive reciprocity, that is, behavior and attitudes in line with an activated positive metastereotype.

The importance of prejudice and validity for the effects of negative and positive metastereotyping

In Chapter 5, the role of another determinant of metastereotypical influence was examined, namely, the perceived validity of a metastereotype. Or, in other words, is the metastereotype believed to be true or false? In Study 5.1, Dutch participants were led to believe that the negative metastereotype "stingy" regarding Dutch Moroccans was either false or true. Subsequently, participants low in prejudice against Dutch Moroccans showed less "stingy attitudes", that is, contrasted away from the negative metastereotype, but only when they believed the metastereotype was false. No differences in stingy attitudes as a function of validity of the metastereotype were found among people high in

prejudice against Moroccans. In the same vein, in Study 5.2, Dutch participants were led to believe that the positive metastereotype “tolerant” regarding Germans was either true or false. Subsequently, participants low in prejudice against Germans showed more “tolerant attitudes”, that is, assimilated to the positive metastereotype. Again, no differences in tolerant attitudes as a function of validity of the metastereotype were found among people high in prejudice. In sum, these two studies show how the valence of the metastereotype, its validity, and level of prejudice interact.

I argued that people low in prejudice against the outgroup are motivated to show positive behavior (contrast away from negative or assimilate to positive metastereotypes) when they believe an activated metastereotype is false or *invalid*. In case of a *negative, invalid* metastereotype (Study 5.1), people low in prejudice are inclined to show that the outgroup’s negative expectation is false. In case of a *positive, invalid* metastereotype (Study 5.2), people low in prejudice are inclined to affirm the outgroup’s positive stereotype about the ingroup by showing behavior in line with the positive metastereotype. Apparently, people low in prejudice are inclined to affirm this undeserved, positive ingroup image. People high in prejudice did not show such differences in their reactions to negative or positive metastereotypes as a function of the validity of the metastereotype. People high in prejudice against the outgroup are not particularly concerned with making a good impression independent of whether the outgroup’s expectation is valid or invalid. Whether the metastereotype is perceived as either true or false is therefore of less importance for their reaction to the metastereotype.

In short, Chapter 5 reveals that – when metastereotypes are activated – people low in prejudice are especially willing to show positive behavior (contrast to a negative metastereotype, assimilation to a positive metastereotype) if they perceive the metastereotype to be invalid. People high in prejudice do not show differences in their behavioral reactions to negative or positive metastereotypes as function of the validity of the metastereotype.

Metaprejudice and metastereotypes: What can we learn?

The present dissertation underlines the notion that intergroup behavior is an interplay between how people view the other group and how they think they are viewed by the other group. Especially the studies reported in Chapter 4 and 5 in which the moderating role of level of prejudice concerning metastereotypical influence is revealed, make clear that solely focusing on *either* prejudice and stereotypes *or* metaprejudice and metastereotypes means losing extremely relevant information. Whether or not people are inclined to reciprocate positive or negative stereotypes an outgroup holds about them is dependent on their level of prejudice towards the outgroup. In other words, the interaction between how people think to be viewed by the outgroup and how people view the outgroup determines their attitudes and behavior in specific intergroup contexts. Intergroup researchers thus should focus on both perceptions and metaperceptions when studying intergroup phenomena (see also Vorauer, 2006).

Furthermore, the role of level of prejudice sheds light on an issue raised in Chapter 3: Is the influence of metastereotypes due to ideomotor processes (see Dijksterhuis & Bargh, 2001) or to motivational factors? The fact that level of prejudice moderates metastereotypical influence makes a strong appeal to the latter explanation. Therefore, I do not consider ideomotor processes to be the most relevant framework when it comes to metastereotypical influence. People do not differ when it comes to the activation of metastereotypes. However, people *do* differ when it comes to their *reactions* to the activation of metastereotypes. Apparently, mere activation of metastereotypes does not determine how people react, but rather how people view the outgroup determines how they react to this activation. Higher prejudice will more likely lead to reciprocating negative metastereotypes, whereas lower prejudice will more likely lead to reciprocating positive metastereotypes. Furthermore, level of prejudice determines whether or not people are inclined to reciprocate a positive, invalid metastereotype, and whether or not people are inclined to reciprocate a negative, invalid metastereotype.

It is important to add, however, is that the striving for (positive or negative) reciprocity, although motivational, needs not be conscious and

does not always need to be observed by the opposing party. Research by Perugini and colleagues (2003) suggests that the norm of reciprocity can be an internalized norm, such that reciprocating behavior does not necessarily need to be observed by the opposing party.

The present dissertation offers highly important questions for future research. The combined role of prejudice, valence and validity of metastereotypes is not yet fully understood. Chapter 4 reveals that people low in prejudice reciprocate a positive metastereotype by assimilating to the positive metastereotype (Study 4.2). Furthermore, I argued and showed that people low in prejudice do *not* react (either assimilation or contrast) to negative metastereotypes (Study 4.1). Chapter 5, on the other hand, reveals that people low in prejudice contrast away from a negative, *invalid* metastereotype. It is not clear whether the participants of Study 4.1 perceived the negative metastereotype as either valid or invalid. Hence, it is complicated to compare Study 4.1 and Study 5.1 with one another.

The difference in method between the studies in Chapter 4 and the studies in Chapter 5 may account for the observed inconsistency. Whereas in Chapter 4's studies, the activation of metastereotypes was induced unconsciously by telling the participants that they would be observed, in Chapter 5's studies the participants (consciously) read the content of the metastereotypes. It is conceivable that people low in prejudice feel much more obliged to contrast away from a negative metastereotype that is explicitly communicated to them and, moreover, that is invalid, than to a negative metastereotype that is not explicitly communicated, and therefore might better be ignored. However, future studies should examine when exactly people low in prejudice contrast away from negative metastereotypes. It is highly important that social psychology obtains a clear picture regarding the behavioral tendencies of people low in prejudice, for they might be the people who can act as facilitators in the process of achieving more positive intergroup relations.

Theoretical implications

Positive metastereotypes

The present dissertation conveys a number of important theoretical implications. One highly important example is the current dissertation's focus on *positive* metastereotypes and *positive* consequences of metastereotype activation (Chapter 4 and 5). Whereas Vorauer and her colleagues (1998, 2000, 2006) mainly focused on negative metastereotypes, and, as a result, negative consequences, I show that metastereotypes can also be positive and as such, can exert a positive influence on people's behaviors and attitudes within intergroup relations. Vorauer (2006) points to the risk of evaluative concerns that may go hand in hand with prejudice-reducing interventions such as perspective taking (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000; Stephan & Finlay, 1999). Taking the perspective of the outgroup might lead to the activation of negative metastereotypes (Lammers et al., 2007), which is a potential threat to the quality of intergroup interactions. However, I show that the activation of positive metastereotypes can also lead, at least among people low in prejudice, to positive behavior. I certainly agree with Vorauer (2006) that perspective taking may have negative side effects, because metastereotypes tend to be more often negative than positive. Nevertheless, the potential negative side effects of perspective taking may be countered by trying to focus more on positive metastereotypes.

Motivation to be viewed positively?

The present dissertation shows that people can act negatively when they expect to be evaluated by others. As such, the present dissertation reveals that people do not always wish to present a positive image of themselves. Apparently, the desire to be viewed positively by others (Baumeister, 1982) can be overruled by the desire to reciprocate the outgroup's anticipated negative expectations (see Reicher et al., 1998, for a related argument). It is important that research on intergroup relations acknowledges this perspective. The literature on metaperceptions within intergroup relations (e.g., Vorauer, 2006; Steele, 1997; Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002) suggests that people are always willing to convey a positive image of themselves to others. If people perform worse or behave

negatively as a result of negative metaperceptions, it is argued that they are the victims of the threat imposed on them by means of negative stereotypes about their ingroup. Subsequently, the resulting fear to confirm the negative stereotypes about one's own ingroup interferes unwillingly with the performance or behavior in the stereotyped domain. However, when people feel that the outgroup's judgment does not yield personally important consequences, the present dissertation shows that the assumption that people wish to present themselves positively under all circumstances does not stand firm. People actually can choose, be it consciously or unconsciously to present themselves negatively towards the outgroup. Research as well as interventions aimed to improve intergroup relations should therefore deal with the possibility that some people do not wish to convey a positive image to the outgroup.

Outgroup matters

Another important consequence for research on metaperceptions within intergroup relations can be found in Chapter 3: Outgroup matters. Whereas research on stereotype threat does not explicitly call for a specific outgroup that is perceived to hold a certain stereotype about the ingroup and rather speaks of "dominant cultural stereotypes" (Crocker, 1999; Major & O'Brien, 2005), Study 3.2 demonstrates that it is very important which specific outgroup is involved within the intergroup context. People have different metastereotypes as a function of which outgroup is involved. Self-categorization theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner et al., 1987) states that individuals categorize themselves in terms of group membership, as a function of their comparison with a specific outgroup. For example, a Black woman sees herself solely as a woman when she interacts with men. The same woman, however, sees herself as a Black individual when she interacts with Whites. The behavior of the Black woman may differ markedly as a function of how she categorizes herself (Sinclair et al., 2006). However, in addition to this, I show that, although people might categorize themselves in terms of the same group membership ("psychology students" in Study 3.2), a different outgroup (either "business management students" or "polytechnical students") can lead to different behaviors. The reason for this is that different metastereotypes can be activated as a function of the salience of a specific

outgroup. Hence, knowing how people categorize themselves is not sufficient to understanding and predicting their intergroup behavior. A further requirement is knowing which specific outgroup is involved. A Dutch person may activate the metastereotype “stingy” when Germans are the salient outgroup, whereas the same person may activate the metastereotype “boring” when Dutch Moroccans are the salient outgroup, while across the two situations this person categorizes him-/herself as a Dutch person.

Furthermore, even if the *same metastereotype* is activated in a context with different outgroups, people may react differently depending on which outgroup is involved, because their level of prejudice might differ per outgroup, which is a very influential moderator of metastereotypical influence. The current dissertation thus shows that studying metaperceptions within intergroup relations always calls for the specification of the ingroup as well as the particular outgroup that is involved, for this may be an important marker for people’s thoughts and behavior.

Metastereotypes and stereotype threat

The current dissertation reveals that research on stereotype threat deals with a specific type of metastereotypes: Lower status group members’ negative metastereotypes regarding higher status group members about a performance related domain. The fear to confirm a negative stereotype about one’s own ingroup interferes with the performance, with diminished performance as a result (Steele, 1997; Steele et al., 2002). The contributions to the understanding of intergroup behavior made by research on stereotype threat cannot be overstated. However, metastereotypes within intergroup relations can and do occur within non-performance related settings. Furthermore, they can well be positive. Finally, as Vorauer and colleagues (1998, 2000) showed, members of higher status groups also activate and react to metastereotypes. Research on metaperceptions within intergroup relations should therefore take into consideration the broad implications that these metaperceptions can have. Outside the domain of performance-related settings negative as well as positive metaperceptions can have important

consequences for intergroup behaviors of members of lower *and* higher status groups.

Practical implications

Intergroup contact

The findings reported in the present dissertation have a number of important practical implications. One primary practical implication concerns the potential positive effects of *intergroup contact* for intergroup relations (Allport, 1954). The formulation of this so-called *intergroup contact hypothesis* maintains that contact between groups under optimal conditions (equal status between the groups; common goals; intergroup cooperation; support of authorities) can effectively reduce intergroup prejudice. A recent meta-analysis by Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) indeed revealed that intergroup contact typically reduces intergroup prejudice. Contact under optimal conditions leads to even greater reduction in prejudice.

It is therefore important that factors that could restraint contact's ability to reduce prejudice are detected (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). One of them follows directly from the present dissertation. If contact between groups is characterized by a focus on negative metaperceptions, the potential positive effects of contact can backfire, because group members will be more inclined to act in line with negative stereotypes about their ingroup, at least group members who are high in prejudice against the outgroup. It is quite likely that negative metaperceptions play a significant role during intergroup contacts. For example, when one group feels guilty towards the other group, negative metaperceptions may prevail (Chapter 2) and as such, exert negative effects on intergroup contacts (see also Stephan & Finlay, 1999; Vorauer, 2006). Therefore, interventions designed to reduce prejudice between groups that stand in the tradition of the intergroup contact hypothesis should deal with the possibility of potential negative effects of negative metaperceptions that may especially prevail when the relation between the groups is characterized by feelings of guilt.

Furthermore, motivational approaches to reduce prejudice such as empathy and role-playing have positive implications for responses to self-report measures of prejudice (Aboud & Levy, 2000). However, the implications for actual intergroup interactions may be more negative, because negative metastereotypes may be activated. As a result negative behavior can occur (see also Vorauer, 2006). Such interventions to reduce prejudice could benefit greatly from the research reported in the present dissertation. The present dissertation suggests that these potential negative side effects of prejudice reducing interventions based on perspective taking, might be circumvented by focusing on positive metastereotypes instead. This may result in a higher degree of positive behavior, at least among people low in prejudice, especially if the invalidity of those positive metastereotypes is stressed.

Expressing stereotypes

Another very important practical implication of the present dissertation is the conclusion that expressing negative stereotypes about another group is not for free. That is, by expressing negative stereotypes about another group, people may help to ground the enduring focus on and activation of negative metastereotypes of members of other groups. For example, majority members should realize that expressing their stereotypes can shape or even cause negative attitudes or behavior of minority members. Likewise, it may well be possible that the media play a major role in preserving negative metastereotypes about certain groups in society. If members of certain groups are continually confronted with negative stereotypes about their groups in newspapers and on television, my research suggests that those group members, especially when they are high in prejudice, will be prone to actually act in line with these negative stereotypes.

Members of stereotyped groups

Following from the present dissertation, one could argue that deviant behavior of (some) members of stereotyped groups is a result of their metastereotypes. It is important to try to convince members of stereotyped groups of the possibility that their own metastereotypes may be responsible for their behavior and the preservation of negative

stereotypes about their group in society. Do members of stereotyped groups really want to be a “slave” of the stereotypes about their own group? In this respect it is valuable to mention the findings of Kamans and colleagues (2007) who examined the impact of negative metastereotypes on young Dutch Moroccans’ attitudes and behavioral intentions. Only the young Dutch Moroccans who perceived that they personally were negatively stereotyped by the indigenous Dutch people (criminal, aggressive, fundamentalist Muslims) were also inclined to show support for behavior in line with those negative stereotypes. Hence, although members of negatively stereotyped groups live close together and have access to the same information, not all of them do actually consciously perceive that they personally are stereotyped and, as a result, do not show behavior in line with those negative stereotypes. It is important that members of negatively stereotyped groups are aware of those potential psychological mechanisms in order to prevent them from happening. Under all circumstances should interventions designed to reduce discrimination focus on people who discriminate and on people who are discriminated, for I believe that both groups have a responsibility to prevent discrimination and its consequences.

Concluding remarks

Overall, the present dissertation shows that metaperceptions within intergroup relations have important consequences for intergroup attitudes and behavior and that reciprocity appears to be an important motive for how people expect to be viewed by another group, and for the way they react to specific metastereotypes. Activated metastereotypes can thus be important guidelines for people how to react in an intergroup setting. In short, the present dissertation shows that how people present themselves in intergroup settings is a dynamic interplay between how they expect to be viewed by the outgroup and how they themselves view the outgroup. This perspective should therefore dominate research on intergroup relations.

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Samenvatting

Summary in Dutch

Stel je voor dat je op het punt staat om leden van een andere groep dan die waartoe jij behoort te ontmoeten. Als Nederlander sta je bijvoorbeeld op het punt Duitsers ontmoeten tijdens je vakantie in Duitsland, of als een psycholoog sta je op het punt economen te ontmoeten tijdens een conferentie. Het is zeer waarschijnlijk dat je dan, bewust of onbewust, gaat nadenken over het beeld dat die anderen over jouw groep hebben. Hebben ze over het algemeen een positief beeld van de leden van jouw groep? Als jijzelf een positief beeld van hen hebt, betekent dit dat je dan ook verwacht dat zij een positief beeld van jouw groep hebben? Een dergelijk verwacht globaal (voor)oordeel van een andere groep over de eigen groep wordt ook wel *metavooroordeel* genoemd.

Het kan ook voorkomen dat je verwacht dat leden van een andere groep bepaalde, specifieke stereotypen over de mensen uit jouw groep hanteren. Een Nederlander kan bijvoorbeeld verwachten dat Duitsers denken dat Nederlanders gierig zijn. Het is aannemelijk dat zulke, zogenaamde *metastereotypen* het gedrag ten opzichte van die groep kunnen beïnvloeden. In feite zijn er twee opties: òf het gedrag gaat tegen het bepaalde stereotype in (een Nederlander gaat laten zien dat hij/zij helemaal niet gierig is), òf het gedrag gaat met het bepaalde stereotype mee (een Nederlander gaat zich inderdaad gieriger gedragen).

Bovenstaande vragen vormen de centrale vraagstellingen van dit proefschrift. Oftewel, de centrale vragen in dit proefschrift zijn: is hoe mensen verwachten over het algemeen gezien te worden door leden van een andere groep (*metavooroordeel*) afhankelijk van hoe zij zelf tegen die andere groep aankijken (*vooordeel*)? En hoe worden mensen in hun gedrag beïnvloed door de verwachte stereotypen van leden van een andere groep over de eigen groep, ook wel *metastereotypen* genoemd? Om deze vragen te beantwoorden heb ik verschillende empirische studies uitgevoerd die ik hieronder zal gaan bespreken.

De modererende rol van collectieve schuld voor de relatie tussen vooroordeel en metavooroordeel

In Hoofdstuk 2 heb ik de relatie tussen vooroordeel (hoe voel ik mij over de andere groep) en metavooroordeel (hoe verwacht ik dat de andere groep zich over mijn groep voelt) onderzocht. Ik liet in twee studies zien dat deze relatie beïnvloed wordt door collectieve schuldgevoelens ten opzichte van die andere groep. Collectieve schuldgevoelens zijn schuldgevoelens die mensen ervaren ten opzichte van een andere groep, omdat hun eigen groep die andere groep iets misdaan heeft, terwijl ze persoonlijk geen aanwijsbaar aandeel in die misdadingen hebben gehad. Nederlanders zouden bijvoorbeeld collectieve schuld kunnen ervaren ten opzichte van Indonesiërs tengevolge van het koloniale bewind van Nederland in Indonesië. Tijdens dit bewind hebben de Nederlanders vele misdaden begaan. Nederlanders van nu hebben daar geen persoonlijk aandeel in gehad, maar kunnen zich toch door hun zelfbeeld als Nederlander en hun verbondenheid met deze groep schuldig voelen voor deze misdaden.

In Studie 2.1 onderzocht ik de relatie tussen vooroordeel en metavooroordeel van autochtone Nederlandse proefpersonen ten opzichte van Nederlandse Marokkanen en Indonesiërs. De resultaten toonden aan dat de relatie tussen vooroordeel en metavooroordeel van autochtone Nederlanders ten opzichte van Nederlandse Marokkanen positief is: degenen die negatieve gevoelens hebben over Nederlandse Marokkanen verwachten dat zij ook negatieve gevoelens zullen hebben over autochtone Nederlanders, terwijl degenen die positief denken over Nederlandse Marokkanen verwachten dat zij ook positief zullen denken over autochtone Nederlanders.

Ten opzichte van Indonesiërs ervaarden de Nederlandse proefpersonen meer collectieve schuld dan ten opzichte van Marokkanen. Voor degenen die zich niet of nauwelijks schuldig voelden, vond ik dezelfde positieve relatie tussen vooroordeel en metavooroordeel als die ten opzichte van Marokkanen. Voor degenen die zich in meerdere mate schuldig voelden, vond ik echter geen relatie tussen vooroordeel en metavooroordeel. Blijkbaar nemen de positief bevooroordeelden waar dat Indonesiërs hen niet zo positief waarnemen, aangezien er goede redenen

zijn (het koloniale verleden) om te verwachten dat Indonesiërs Nederlanders niet zo positief zien. Kortom, positief bevooroordeelden verwachten alleen maar dat hun positieve gevoelens ten opzichte van de andere groep “terugbetaald” worden wanneer ze zich niet schuldig voelen ten opzichte van die andere groep.

In Studie 2.2 repliceerde ik dit patroon, maar nu door gevoelens van schuld van Nederlandse proefpersonen ten opzichte van Antillianen te manipuleren. Dit deed ik door Nederlandse proefpersonen een tekst aan te bieden waarin ofwel drie negatieve aspecten ofwel drie positieve aspecten van het Nederlandse koloniale bewind op de Antillen aan bod kwamen. Wederom vond ik weer een positieve relatie tussen vooroordeel en metavooroordeel wanneer schuldgevoelens niet of nauwelijks aanwezig waren (de proefpersonen hadden gelezen over positieve gevolgen van het Nederlandse koloniale bewind op de Antillen), terwijl er geen relatie was tussen vooroordeel en metavooroordeel wanneer schuldgevoelens sterker ervaren werden (de proefpersonen hadden gelezen over negatieve gevolgen van het Nederlandse koloniale bewind op de Antillen).

Resumerend, in Hoofdstuk 2 toonde ik aan dat mensen doorgaans verwachten dat hun gevoelens ten opzichte van een andere groep terugbetaald worden, behalve wanneer ze zich schuldig voelen. In een dergelijk geval verwachten positief bevooroordeelden niet langer ook door de ander groep positief gezien te worden.

De invloed van de activatie van negatieve metastereotypen op gedrag en attitudes

In Hoofdstuk 3 onderzocht ik de invloed van geactiveerde negatieve metastereotypen op gedrag en attitudes. Ik toonde aan dat over het algemeen mensen een negatief metastereotype “terugbetalen” met negatief gedrag en dus gedrag in lijn met (d.i. assimilatie aan) het negatieve metastereotype vertonen. In Studie 3.1 toonde ik dat aan voor Oost-Duitsers met betrekking tot West-Duitsers. Een bekend negatief metastereotype van Oost-Duitsers ten opzichte van West-Duitsers is “lui”. Oost-Duitsers verwachten dus als lui gezien te worden door West-Duitsers. Wanneer dit metastereotype geactiveerd was, dan gingen Oost-

Duitse proefpersonen zich inderdaad luier gedragen en ze betoonden meer instemming met “luie” uitspraken dan wanneer dit metastereotype niet geactiveerd was. In lijn hiermee, toonde ik in Studie 3.2 aan dat psychologiestudenten zich meer “zweverig” gingen presenteren wanneer dit negatieve metastereotype ten opzichte van bedrijfskundestudenten was geactiveerd. Zij deden dit door aan te geven dat het waarschijnlijk was dat ze “zweverige” cursussen (o.a. meditatiegeheimen, intuïtieve ontwikkeling, zelfrealisatie) in de nabije toekomst zouden gaan volgen.

Kortom, in Hoofdstuk 3 toonde ik aan dat “negatieve reciprociteit”, het met gelijke munt terugbetalen van negatieve verwachtingen van een andere groep, een belangrijk motief is als het gaat om de invloed van negatieve metastereotypen. Over het algemeen hebben mensen de neiging om gedrag en attitudes te tonen die in lijn zijn met een geactiveerd negatief metastereotype.

Het vergelden en belonen van de waargenomen stereotypen van anderen als functie van vooroordeel

In Hoofdstuk 4 toonde ik aan dat de motivatie om de stereotypen van een andere groep over de eigen groep met gelijke munt terug te betalen afhankelijk is van vooroordeelniveau. Degenen met een negatief vooroordeel zijn meer dan degenen met een positief vooroordeel geneigd te denken dat een negatief stereotype van de andere groep ook bedoeld is om de eigen groep te devalueren. Daardoor zullen zij sneller dan degenen met een positief vooroordeel geneigd zijn om negatieve metastereotypen met gelijke munt terug te betalen. Studie 4.1. leverde resultaten op in lijn met deze verwachting. Leden van een christelijke studentenvereniging die negatief bevooroordeeld waren ten opzichte van leden van een niet-christelijke studentenvereniging reageerden conservatiever wanneer metastereotypen (o.a. conservatief) ten opzichte van deze groep waren geactiveerd. Positief bevooroordeelde leden van de christelijke studentenvereniging deden dit echter niet en waren dus niet geneigd gedrag in lijn met een negatief metastereotype te tonen wanneer dat geactiveerd was.

In Studie 4.2 onderzocht ik de invloed van *positieve* metastereotypen. Ook hier zou weer dezelfde regel van reciprociteit moeten gelden. Degenen die aannemen dat zij positief gestereotypeerd worden zullen positief gedrag in lijn met het positieve metastereotype vertonen. Echter, het gevoel gestereotypeerd te worden is altijd enigszins negatief (“in een hokje gestopt worden”). Dit geldt vooral voor de negatief bevooroordeelden die geneigd zijn de andere groep sneller negatieve intenties toe te schrijven. Daarom zouden alleen positief bevooroordeelden gedrag in lijn met een positief metastereotype moeten vertonen. Deze hypothese werd bevestigd in Studie 4.2 waarin Nederlandse proefpersonen die positief bevooroordeeld waren ten opzichte van Amerikanen toleranter reageerden wanneer dit positieve metastereotype met betrekking tot Amerikanen was geactiveerd. De negatief bevooroordeelden deden dit niet.

Kortom, in Hoofdstuk 4 liet ik zien dat negatief bevooroordeelden gedrag vertonen in lijn met geactiveerde negatieve metastereotypen, terwijl positief bevooroordeelden gedrag vertonen in lijn met geactiveerde positieve metastereotypen. Negatief bevooroordeelden zijn dus vooral geneigd om negatieve reciprociteit te laten zien en positief bevooroordeelden zijn vooral geneigd positieve reciprociteit te laten zien.

Het belang van vooroordeel en validiteit voor de invloed van negatieve en positieve metastereotypen

In Hoofdstuk 5 onderzocht ik de rol van een andere belangrijke moderator van metastereotypische invloed, namelijk de waargenomen validiteit van een metastereotype, of, in andere woorden, de mate waarin een metastereotype voor waar wordt gehouden. Als Nederlander kun je bijvoorbeeld verwachten dat je als gierig wordt gezien, terwijl je zelf Nederlanders helemaal niet gierig vindt. In Studie 5.1 kregen autochtone Nederlandse proefpersonen te horen dat het metastereotype “gierig” dat zij hanteren ten opzichte van Nederlandse Marokkanen ofwel gebaseerd is op waarheid ofwel gebaseerd is op fictie. Wanneer verteld was dat dit metastereotype niet waar is (“Nederlanders zijn helemaal niet gierig”), reageerden de proefpersonen die positief bevooroordeeld waren ten

opzichte van Nederlandse Marokkanen minder “gierig” op stellingen over hun geldbesteding en houding ten aanzien van geld dan wanneer verteld was dat dit metastereotype waar is (“Nederlanders zijn inderdaad gierig”). Met andere woorden, zij contrasteerden zich aan dit negatieve, onware (“invalide”) metastereotype. Voor de proefpersonen die negatief bevooroordeeld waren ten opzichte van Nederlandse Marokkanen vond ik geen verschillen in “gierigheid”, of zij nou geloofden dat dit metastereotype waar of niet waar was. In lijn hiermee vond ik in Studie 5.2 dat Nederlandse proefpersonen die te horen kregen dat het metastereotype “tolerant” dat zij hanteren ten opzichte van Duitsers onwaar is en die positief bevooroordeeld waren ten opzichte van Duitsers, toleranter reageerden dan wanneer ze geloofden dat het metastereotype waar is. Ook hier reageerden de positief bevooroordeelden dus vooral positief (in dit geval assimilatie aan een positief metastereotype) wanneer ze geloofden dat dit metastereotype onwaar is. En ook nu vond ik geen verschillen voor negatief bevooroordeelden in hun gedrag als functie van de waargenomen validiteit van het positieve metastereotype.

Dit patroon verklaarde ik door te stellen dat positief bevooroordeelden vooral gemotiveerd zijn om positief gedrag te vertonen en daarmee een positieve band met de andere groep te bewerkstelligen wanneer een geactiveerd metastereotype onwaar is. Als dat een negatief metastereotype is, dan willen ze laten zien dat het negatieve beeld dat de andere groep over hen heeft onjuist is. Als dat een positief metastereotype is, dan willen ze dit “onverdiende” positieve imago extra bekrachtigen. Negatief bevooroordeelden daarentegen passen niet hun gedrag aan al naar gelang het metastereotype waar of onwaar is. Zij zijn niet per se gemotiveerd om een goede indruk te maken bij de andere groep, of de andere groep nou een juist of een onjuist beeld over hun eigen groep heeft. Voor negatief bevooroordeelden maakt het dus niet of een metastereotype juist of onjuist is.

Kortom, in Hoofdstuk 5 toonde ik aan dat positief bevooroordeelden vooral geneigd zijn om positief gedrag te vertonen (contrast aan een negatief metastereotype, assimilatie aan een positief metastereotype) wanneer het betreffende metastereotype onjuist is. Negatief bevooroordeelden daarentegen verschillen niet in hun reacties op

negatieve of positieve metastereotypen als functie van de (on)juistheid van het metastereotype.

Conclusie

Hoe verwachten wij gezien te worden door leden van andere groepen? Dit proefschrift toont aan dat zulke zogenaamde metapercepties binnen intergroepscontexten een grote invloed kunnen hebben op hoe mensen handelen en denken. Het is vaak gedacht dat hoe mensen reageren op leden van een andere groep afhankelijk is van hoe zij zelf over die andere groep denken, of, anders gezegd, van hun mate van vooroordeel en hun stereotypen over die groep. Dit is echter maar gedeeltelijk waar. In dit proefschrift heb ik empirisch bewijs gepresenteerd dat aantoont dat hoe mensen denken gezien te worden door een andere groep ook een zeer belangrijke invloed op hun gedrag en denken kan uitoefenen ten opzichte van de leden van die andere groep. Mensen houden zich dan ook vaak en snel bezig met hoe ze gezien worden door leden van een andere groep: als mensen het gevoel hebben geëvalueerd te worden door leden van een andere groep, dan activeren ze metastereotypen. En wie voelt zich, bewust of onbewust, *niet* geëvalueerd tijdens contacten met leden van een andere groep?

Op basis van dit proefschrift stel ik dat mensen over het algemeen verwachten dat hun globale oordeel over de andere groep “met gelijke munt terugbetaald wordt”, tenzij ze zich schuldig voelen ten opzichte van de andere groep. In dat geval zullen degenen met een positief beeld van de andere groep niet verwachten dat hun positieve beeld van de andere groep “terugbetaald” wordt. In plaats daarvan verwachten ze dat de andere groep de eigen groep negatief ziet. Voorts is dat terugbetalen of *reciprociteit* eveneens een belangrijk motief als het gaat om de invloed van specifieke metastereotypen. Over het algemeen hebben mensen de neiging om een negatief metastereotype “terug te betalen” met negatief gedrag en dus gedrag in lijn met het negatieve metastereotype. Dit geldt echter vooral voor de negatief bevooroordeelden ten opzichte van de andere groep. De positief bevooroordeelden daarentegen zijn vooral geneigd om positieve metastereotypen “terug te betalen” met positief gedrag en dus gedrag in

lijn met het positieve metastereotype. Tenslotte maakt het nogal wat uit of mensen een metastereotype voor waar of onwaar houden. Vooral positief bevooroordeelden zijn geneigd om positief gedrag te laten zien (contrast aan een negatief metastereotype, assimilatie met een positief metastereotype) wanneer een metastereotype onwaar is, terwijl het voor negatief bevooroordeelden niet uitmaakt of een metastereotype waar of onwaar is. Tezamen tonen de resultaten van de empirische studies aan dat metapercepties binnen intergroepscontexten een zeer belangrijke leidraad kunnen zijn voor het gedrag en de gedachten van mensen.

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