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How Do They See Us?
The Vicissitudes of Metaperception
in Intergroup Relations

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Belgium is famous for its exquisite chocolate, its exceptional beers, its unique tradition of cartoonists, and other marvels, of which one may be a most complex political system in the world. For ages, the two main ethnic and cultural groups in the country, the Dutch-speaking on the one hand (roughly 60% of the Belgian population) and the French-speaking on the other, have been AQ1 engaged in heated negotiations over how one should organize the country. For any outsider, these debates often lead to what can be described as surrealistic political engineering. This seems to be the price to pay for peaceful relationships between the two groups.

On December 13, 2006, the French-speaking public TV channel interrupted its normal program with breaking news: After decades of slow deterioration in the relations between the two groups, the Dutch-speaking parliament had unilaterally decided to declare its independence! For the rest of the evening, journalists and politicians produced (prerecorded) comments on the causes, meaning, and consequences of this secession. It was only half an hour after the start of this show, à la Orson Welles, and after witnessing the level of indignation if not panic that the program triggered among viewers, that the screen revealed a banner warning that this was a fiction. In the following days and weeks, the country was in a state of shock. The Dutch-speaking Belgians were appalled by the way they were depicted in this program. As for the French-speaking Belgians, they were surprised to see how they had perhaps radicalized their views about their Northern compatriots and generalized the opinions of what continued to be a minority. This recent real-life episode offers a nice albeit dramatic illustration of the way possible misunderstandings may intrude in the relations between two groups. Such misunderstandings are the topic at the heart of this chapter.

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

In intergroup contexts, two sets of beliefs recurrently affect the way people approach members of another group. The first is what people think about the "others": Are they nice? Are they competent? Within social psychology, these beliefs are known as stereotypes and have been the subject of thousands of studies. Research suggests that warmth and competence are likely to constitute the major themes underlying the working hypotheses that people entertain when approaching members of another group (Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashima, 2005; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007). Stereotypes are particularly important because they trigger affective reactions and shape behavior toward the members of other groups, thus orienting not only the initial moments of an interaction but also long-term relationships (Dovidio, Glick, & Rudman, 2005; Fiske, 1998; Leyens, Yzerbyt, & Schadron, 1994; Macrae, Stangor, & Hewstone, 1996).

Another set of beliefs plays a hugely important role in determining relations between groups although perhaps less obviously so. These so-called metastereotypes concern the way people think that the "others" see them and have only recently been taken into consideration by scholars interested in intergroup affairs (Vorauer, 1998; Yzerbyt, Provost, & Corneille, 2005). In our view, however, these beliefs undoubtedly affect the early moments of an encounter and probably much of the ensuing interactions.

The present chapter deals with these metastereotypic beliefs. We propose that metastereotypes play a key role in the dynamics of intergroup relations and in the emergence of mistaken beliefs between groups. Specifically, we explore two possible places where we think a good deal of misunderstanding may reside. First, we suggest that people may in general be too pessimistic in how they think that they are seen by others. This pessimism would clearly set the ground for unnecessary distrust at the very early stages of the interaction (Shelton & Richeson, 2005). To

examine this issue, one needs to collect information on the views that people attribute to the members of another group and to compare them to the actual views of these members. Knowing the power of self-fulfilling prophecies (Snyder, 1981), any initial assumption of negativity in the way one thinks one is seen by others likely pushes both parties into some sort of vicious circle.

A second message emerging from our research on these issues concerns the level at which people are thinking about the way others see them. Do people think that others are attending mostly to global impressions, such as their overall evaluation of their group and the degree to which they see all group members as very similar to each other in general, or do they think others are thinking about the group in terms of specific characteristics, focusing on attributes that the group may or may not have, rather than more global appraisals? In addition to standard judgment ratings, we will also rely on social projection data to suggest that the general appraisals one attributes to others about one's own group are likely to be more derogatory compared to appraisals that focus on specific trait dimensions.

BACKGROUND: FROM STEREOTYPES TO METASTEREOTYPES

Progress in science is typically associated with so-called Copernican revolutions and the study of stereotyping is no exception (Schneider, 2004). Historically, the focus of researchers has been on how people see other groups. These efforts generated a massive body of research (Katz & Braly, 1933). In this context, a subsidiary question concerned the way people's stereotypic views about others may or may not change across time (Allport, 1954; Devine & Elliot, 1995). The initial fascination with the content issue very much receded around the mid-1970s. With the advent of social cognition (e.g., Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Hamilton, 1981), researchers devoted their energy to understanding the cognitive and motivational processes that may lead people to rely on stereotypic views of others (Leyens, Yzerbyt, & Schadron, 1994; Macrae, Stangor, & Hewstone, 1996). In this context, stereotype change sparked a huge amount of interest. Whether stereotypes could be altered, in particular as a result of being confronted with counter-stereotypical information attached to deviant members of the stereotyped group, constituted a most urgent question (Hewstone, 1994; Johnston & Hewstone, 1992; Kunda & Oleson, 1995, 1997; Weber & Crocker, 1983; Yzerbyt, Coull, & Rocher, 1999). In recent years, a more systematic examination of the structural properties of stereotypes again started to populate social psychology journals (Cuddy et al., in press; Fiske, Glick et al., 2002; Fiske, Harris, Russell, & Shelton, this volume; Judd et al., 2005; Phalet & Poppe, 1997).

Whereas the early work focused almost exclusively on those views that prevail among members of dominant, well-established, or mainstream groups about members of subordinate, more recent, or marginal groups, contemporary researchers seem to adopt a more balanced view in that they are equally interested in the beliefs that both types of groups hold about other groups in the social environment. This interest in the viewpoint of the dominant as well as of the subordinate

groups similarly sets apart the most recent work in social cognition and intergroup relations. Rather than examining the various processes leading people in the advantaged social positions to rely on categorical knowledge at the expense of individuating information (Fiske, 1993; Goodwin, Gubin, Fiske, & Yzerbyt, 2000), the latest research also turns its attention to subjective phenomena that take place in the head of targets of unflattering stereotypes and discrimination (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999; Heatherton, Kleck, Hebl, & Hull, 2000; Major & O'Brien, 2005).

One clear illustration of this growing concern for the victim rather than the perpetrator is the blossoming literature on stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Members of minority or otherwise stereotyped groups are found to underperform because of the expectations that others have of them (Croizet & Claire, 1998; Leyens, Désert, Croizet, & Darcis, 2000; Maass & Cadinu, 2003; Schmader & Johns, 2003; Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999; Stone, Lynch, Sjomeling, & Darley, 1999). That is, because the members of such groups suspect that others hold unflattering views about them, their performance suffers. Also stressing the uniquely important role of the beliefs one attributes to other people, the work on the consequences of perceived discrimination has emphasized the impact of attributions of prejudice and bigotry on physical and mental health (Major & Crocker, 1993). Another line of investigation in which the beliefs entertained by members of another group seem paramount is the work on intergroup anxiety (Stephan & Stephan, 1985).

In light of the mounting interest in the views that members of another group may have about one's group, the literature that specifically focuses on metastereotypes is surprisingly limited. Researchers seem to assume that people have expectations about the beliefs held by a specific other or, more often, know about the uncomplimentary yet culturally shared stereotype targeting their group. The first effort that explicitly addressed the role of metastereotypes in intergroup relations is a series of studies by Vorauer, Main, and O'Connell (1998) in which the authors examined some implications of the metastereotypes held by members of dominant groups about how they were viewed by members of a lower status group. A straightforward yet important ambition of Vorauer and colleagues consisted in showing that there is a substantial degree of consensus among people in their views about how their group is seen by an outgroup.

In their first study, Vorauer and colleagues (1998) presented White Canadians with a series of traits and asked them to indicate what they thought were Native Indians' stereotypes of Whites and of Native Indians. There was clear agreement among participants about the traits that were thought to characterize Whites in the eyes of Native Indians, and these were mostly negative in valence. This metastereotype was also quite a bit different and more negative than the view Whites held about themselves. Finally, low-prejudice White Canadians tended to have more negative metastereotypes than their high-prejudice counterparts, that is, they thought they were even more negatively than did high-prejudice White Canadians. In their second study, Vorauer and colleagues (1998) found that Whites expected individual members of the outgroup to subscribe to these views. Moreover, the more participants expected to be stereotyped, the less they

anticipated that encountering an outgroup member would be enjoyable and the more they expected that such an interaction would generate negative emotions. A third study revealed that feeling stereotyped by outgroup members was associated with negative emotions and lowered self-esteem. In sum, at least in the case of members of a dominant group such as the one studied by Vorauer and colleagues (1998), metastereotypes are socially shared and seem to have a number of undesirable consequences.

Although not directly concerned with the issue of stereotypic or metastereotypic beliefs, Shelton and Richeson (2005) presented a series of findings that prove relevant for our concern. These authors examined the possibility that pluralistic ignorance (Prentice & Miller, 1996) may lead European Americans and African Americans to minimize intergroup contact. Their data reveal that members of both groups wrongly believe that the members of the other group simply do not want to have contact when the opposite is true. As it happens, the main reason invoked by people for not interacting with the members of the other racial group is fear of being rejected. At the same time, all assume that the other group's inaction is explained by lack of interest. In follow-up studies, these authors studied the behavioral consequences of such pluralistic ignorance and how this self–other bias could be reduced. As a set, these efforts provide a very nice illustration of the consequences of initial misunderstandings when it comes to intergroup relations.

Curiously enough, for all the theoretical and empirical interest that might exist regarding the consequences of metastereotypes in such areas as stereotype threat, prejudice and discrimination, or intergroup anxiety, hardly any other work has examined the exact nature and the specific role of the beliefs held about one's ingroup by members of another group (Vorauer, 2006; see also Klein & Azzi, 2001). In an effort to make progress on this front, we present recent work in which we explore intergroup beliefs in the context of what has come to be known as a full ingroup–outgroup design (Judd & Park, 1993). In such a design, members of two groups are asked to provide information about both groups. We also examine group stereotypes more completely in that we focus on perceived variability in addition to valence. We think that documenting such beliefs is important because any discrepancy in stereotypes and perceived variability between members of two groups is likely to lead to potential misunderstandings and to preclude positive intergroup interactions. Before we do this, however, and given our strategy to use a full ingroup–outgroup design, we need to introduce a new terminology.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: A NEW TYPOLOGY OF INTERGROUP BELIEFS

Fascinating as it may be, the available work on metastereotypes suffers from one noticeable limitation: members of only one group report their stereotypes and metastereotypes. Vorauer and colleagues (1998) never actually asked Native Indians what they thought about White Canadians. Although people's beliefs about what others think about their group clearly is a key determinant of their behavior, these conceptions are likely to pose an even more dramatic problem when they are

in fact wrong or inadequate, that is when each group thinks they are seen more negatively by their outgroup than in fact is the case. This is precisely what Shelton and Richeson (2005) suggest in their work on intergroup pluralistic ignorance. We would thus argue that the same concerns must characterize the study of stereotypes and metastereotypes.

For instance, imagine that female students are asked by a male teacher to perform a math test. If they think that the male teacher holds a stereotyped view of women's ability in math such that he would expect them to be rather incompetent, this conviction may well lead to a deterioration of the performance on the test. This is exactly what the flourishing work on stereotype threat alluded to above has been stressing for more than a decade. But assume for a moment that the teacher has no specific expectation regarding the performance of women in math. The consequences of such misunderstanding are not trivial. Indeed, the poor results of the female students may contribute to the creation of the belief that there is in fact a sex difference in math ability. This is a striking form of self-fulfilling prophecy (Snyder, 1981) as it is guided by the beliefs of the target rather than by those of the perceiver.

In a recent set of studies, we (Judd, Park, Yzerbyt, Gordijn, & Muller, 2005; see also Muller, Yzerbyt, Judd, Park, & Gordijn, 2005; Yzerbyt, Provost, & Corneille, 2005) set out to more systematically explore intergroup beliefs in a way that would inform us about the views of all parties involved in the relation, relying on a full ingroup–outgroup design. In order to achieve this goal, we needed to clarify the terminology. This is because the terms encountered in the work on metastereotypes generate a great deal of confusion when one looks at more than one group at the same time. As the complexity of the research questions increases, the need for a new set of labels becomes apparent.

Our typology of intergroup beliefs rests on the observation that the existing literature on intergroup relations can be organized around two roles: the perceiver and the target. When we talk about the perceiver, we mean the specific person or group who is seen to possess stereotypic beliefs. Both the group to whom one belongs (i.e., one's ingroup) and the group to whom one does not belong (i.e., one's outgroup) can be seen as holding stereotypic beliefs. In addition to these group-level perceivers, it is also clear that the people themselves have expectations about the members of both groups. Given that one and the same person informs the researcher about these three perceivers, it is easy to see that the respondents could on an individual basis provide information about their own individual beliefs, about the beliefs that they attribute to the ingroup, and the beliefs attributed to the outgroup. This explains why we opted for the labels own beliefs, ingroup-attributed beliefs, and outgroup-attributed beliefs.

Turning now to the target of these stereotypic beliefs, there are of course two possible target groups in a two-group situation. For the sake of clarity, we decided here to adopt the labels endo-beliefs and exo-beliefs. As in more popular expressions such as "endogamy" and "exogamy," the prefixes "endo" and "exo" refer to "ingroup" and "outgroup," respectively. Whereas endo-beliefs refer to the ingroup of the perceiver, talking about exo-beliefs makes clear that the beliefs pertain to the outgroup of the perceiver. Endo-beliefs and exo-beliefs focus on target differences rather than perceiver differences.

To illustrate, let us take the example of a U.S. tourist landing in Marrakech, Morocco. As she arrives at the airport, she may think about what Moroccans think of Americans. We propose to call these beliefs outgroup-attributed exo-beliefs (OA-Exo), which are the beliefs that our U.S. tourist attributes to her outgroup (Moroccans) concerning their outgroup (Americans, which happens to be her ingroup). Then there are the outgroup-attributed endo-beliefs (OA-Endo). These are the beliefs that our U.S. tourist attributes to Moroccans concerning their ingroup (Moroccans, which happens to be her outgroup). Of course, our U.S. tourist is likely to be aware of what her fellow U.S. citizens may think about Moroccans. In our terminology, these are the ingroup-attributed exo-beliefs (IA-Exo). Next, there are the ingroup-attributed endo-beliefs (IA-Endo) or, in other words, the beliefs that she thinks her ingroup members hold about themselves. Finally, on top of the various beliefs that our U.S. tourist may attribute to other people, be they U.S. citizens or Moroccans, she also holds stereotypic beliefs herself about her ingroup and her outgroup. These are respectively the own endo-beliefs (Own-Endo) and the own exo-beliefs (Own-Exo). Table 4.1 summarizes the typology we propose along with illustrative examples.

It should be clear by now that what researchers typically labeled metastereotypes fall into only one of these six cells, namely the outgroup-attributed exo-beliefs. To be sure, Vorauer and colleagues (1998) also asked their White Canadian participants how they thought Native Indians saw Native Indians (outgroup-attributed endo-beliefs in our terminology). Finally, other White Canadian participants were requested to indicate what White Canadians thought of White

TABLE 4.1   Definition of Stereotypic Beliefs

		Who holds the belief?		
		OA: outgroup-attributed	IA: ingroup-attributed	Own: self
Which group is the target of the belief?	Endo (beliefs about the believer's ingroup)	My outgroup's beliefs about themselves	My ingroup's beliefs about themselves	My beliefs about my ingroup
	Examples			
	I am an American arriving in Morocco	What I think Moroccans believe about Moroccans	What I think Americans believe about Americans	What I believe about Americans
	Exo (beliefs about the believer's outgroup)	My outgroup's beliefs about their outgroup	My ingroup's beliefs about their outgroup	My beliefs about my outgroup
	Examples			
	I am an American arriving in Morocco	What I think Moroccans believe about Americans	What I think Americans believe about Moroccans	What I believe about Moroccans

Canadians and Native Indians (ingroup-attributed endo- and exo-beliefs). Still, the point here is that Native Indians were not asked to report on their beliefs. It should also be noted that only one intergroup context, the one opposing White Canadians and Native Indians, has been studied.

In an initial study (Yzerbyt, Provost, & Corneille, 2005, Study 1), the goal was precisely to examine people's intergroup beliefs in the context of a full ingroup–outgroup design. We wanted to know whether members of two groups agreed on the features characterizing one group and those characterizing the other. Participants were French-speaking Belgians and French. Because the Paris-based bourgeoisie accent and lexicon is perceived as the (high-status) norm in French, perceived as the proper French, other French-speakers are often seen as low-prestige speakers. Whatever the actual linguistic performances of the various French-speaking groups, evidence suggests that French-speaking Belgians belong to a longstanding stigmatized speech community. Sociolinguistic studies indicate that Belgians possess negative beliefs about the linguistic practices of ingroup members (Provost, Yzerbyt, Corneille, Désert, & Francard, 2003). Several findings point to the existence of self-derogatory views among Belgians as far as their linguistic ability is concerned. For instance, Provost et al. (2003) observed that Belgians show a decreased performance in French in stereotype threat contexts (i.e., in contexts where they expect to be compared to French participants).

We questioned samples of French and French-speaking Belgians, asking them to evaluate the linguistic performance of both groups (Own-Endo and Own-Exo). We also inquired about the way the linguistic performance of their ingroup would be seen by the other group (OA-Exo). Belgian and French respondents alike were predicted to see the linguistic skills of Belgians to be lower than those of the French. This is what we found. We also predicted and found that the OA-Exo beliefs would be lower among Belgians than among French. In sum, members of both groups agreed on the relative linguistic superiority of French. Of course, such an agreement does not provide any definitive statement about the true state of affairs. Indeed, a follow-up study (Yzerbyt et al., 2005, Study 2) with "independent" Swiss respondents reveals that the linguistic gap separating French and Belgians is apparently exaggerated by the members of these two groups. Interestingly, Belgians were also likely to be somewhat pessimistic regarding the views of the outgroup as they expected the French to be denigrating them more than was actually the case.

As we said, earlier research was largely restricted to the evaluative component of the stereotype. Whereas evaluation or valence is a crucial facet of group stereotypes, the strength of the stereotype, conceptualized as perceived variability, is another component of group stereotypes that importantly affects intergroup relations. According to Park and Judd (1990), perceived variability has two components, stereotypicality and perceived dispersion, both of which can be measured independently of valence. Whereas stereotypicality refers to the degree to which two groups are judged to differ on various group-stereotypic attributes, perceived dispersion concerns the extent to which individual group members, within each group, are judged to vary on those stereotypic attributes. Stereotypicality and perceived dispersion jointly determine the contrasting perception of the two groups, a notion akin to the metacontrast ratio popularized by self-categorization theorists

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(Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987): The greater the stereotypic difference between two groups and the smaller the perceived dispersion within each group, the stronger the contrasting group stereotypes.

For both valence and perceived variability, the traditional pattern, using what we call here people's own beliefs, reveals that group members often hold different views about the ingroup and the outgroup. With a few notable exceptions, a recurrent pattern, as far as the evaluative content of stereotypes is concerned, is that group members see their group in more positive terms than they see the outgroup (for a review, see Brewer & Brown, 1998). For perceived variability, the prevailing message is that outgroups are seen to be less variable or more homogeneous than are ingroups, although various factors have been found to moderate this difference (for an overview, see Yzerbyt, Judd, & Corneille, 2004).

RESEARCH ON ATTRIBUTED BELIEFS: PESSIMISM AND GLOBAL REACTIONS

Our ambition in this chapter is to examine the extent to which intergroup beliefs in general, and attributed beliefs in particular, play a role in the emergence of misunderstanding between social groups. A first issue, already discussed in the previous section, is whether people tend to be overly pessimistic about how others see their group. There are several reasons to predict that people will not expect members of other groups to see them in as positive a light as themselves. Precisely because outgroups are not perceived as being as valuable as the ingroup, people may anticipate that outgroup members will not have the most positive view of them. Said differently, part of what makes outgroups dislikable is precisely the fact that they are thought to question the ingroup's judgment of the relative standing of the two groups on a number of evaluative dimensions (with, most often, the ingroup being better than the outgroup).

Our second question pertains to the potential differences that may emerge as a function of drawing people's attention to general beliefs of intergroup bias and outgroup homogeneity as opposed to more specific features characterizing the respective groups. Indeed, our reading of the prolific literature on intergroup contact suggests that these two strategies may make a difference (e.g., Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). Research on intergroup contact stresses a number of paths that can be taken to improve the relations between two groups. One fruitful approach consists of putting people in a position where they can pay attention to or find out about specific (and valuable) features that characterize the members of the outgroup. This suggests that, in contrast to relying on more global judgments that stick to the level of general judgments about the groups, a consideration of the particular features of one's group and of the outgroup may foster a more moderate representation of the groups. Whether this makes any difference at the level of attributed beliefs remains unknown.

We conducted various studies that provide us with the necessary data to shed some light on these issues. Given space limitation, we focus here on one of

our studies in which we collected all three kinds of beliefs presented in Table 4.1 (Judd et al., 2005, Study 3). This study provides a useful basis for our analysis of the role of pessimism and type of measure in the emergence of intergroup misunderstandings. The study, conducted in fall 2002, focused on nationality groups and involved a total of 140 respondents, 75 French and 65 American. Respondents were first asked to provide their own perceptions of the ingroup (Own-Endo) and the outgroup (Own-Exo). Next, they answered questions about ingroup-attributed beliefs (IA-Endo and IA-Exo) and about outgroup-attributed beliefs (OA-Endo and OA-Exo). The order of ingroup-attributed and outgroup-attributed questions was counterbalanced. Also, the order of the target group was counterbalanced within each section.

ARE WE OVERLY PESSIMISTIC CONCERNING OTHER PEOPLE'S VIEWS OF US?

Pessimism, as understood in the present context, means that people attribute stereotypic views to others that are more deprecating than is actually the case. To examine this, we turn to those questions that tapped the valence and perceived variability aspects of own, ingroup-attributed (IA), and outgroup attributed (OA) beliefs. Turning to Own-Endo beliefs first, respondents were asked to indicate on a 9-point rating scale whether they disliked a lot (= 1) versus liked a lot (= 9) most members of their ingroup. They were then asked to say whether they saw big differences among members of the ingroup or whether they saw the members of the ingroup as being similar to each other on a scale ranging from 1 (= very different) to 9 (= very similar). These two measures constituted the global measures of valence and variability of the ingroup. The same set of measures was then repeated for the outgroup. These two sets of ratings were then repeated twice, once in order to convey respondents' views of the beliefs held by their fellow ingroup members (IA) and once to convey their views of the beliefs held by the members of their outgroup (OA).

In general, respondents' judgments revealed the presence of intergroup bias, both in their own beliefs and in the stereotypic beliefs they attributed to others. As can be seen in the top part of Figure 4.1, evaluations of the ingroup (Endo) were more positive than evaluations of the outgroup (Exo). Interestingly, this difference was significant for all three types of beliefs although it was smallest in respondents' own beliefs, more substantial in ingroup-attributed beliefs, and most pronounced in outgroup-attributed beliefs. In other words, more intergroup bias was attributed to others, particularly others who are members of the outgroup. Turning to perceived variability (bottom of Fig. 4.1), respondents' ratings confirmed the presence of an outgroup homogeneity effect: Endo ratings reflected more heterogeneous perceptions than Exo ratings. Moreover, as was the case for valence, the difference in ingroup and outgroup homogeneity was more substantial for the attributed ratings than for own ratings, and this was particularly so in the case of outgroup-attributed ratings.

The finding that own beliefs, be it for valence or perceived variability, show less bias than attributed beliefs, especially outgroup-attributed ones, has been
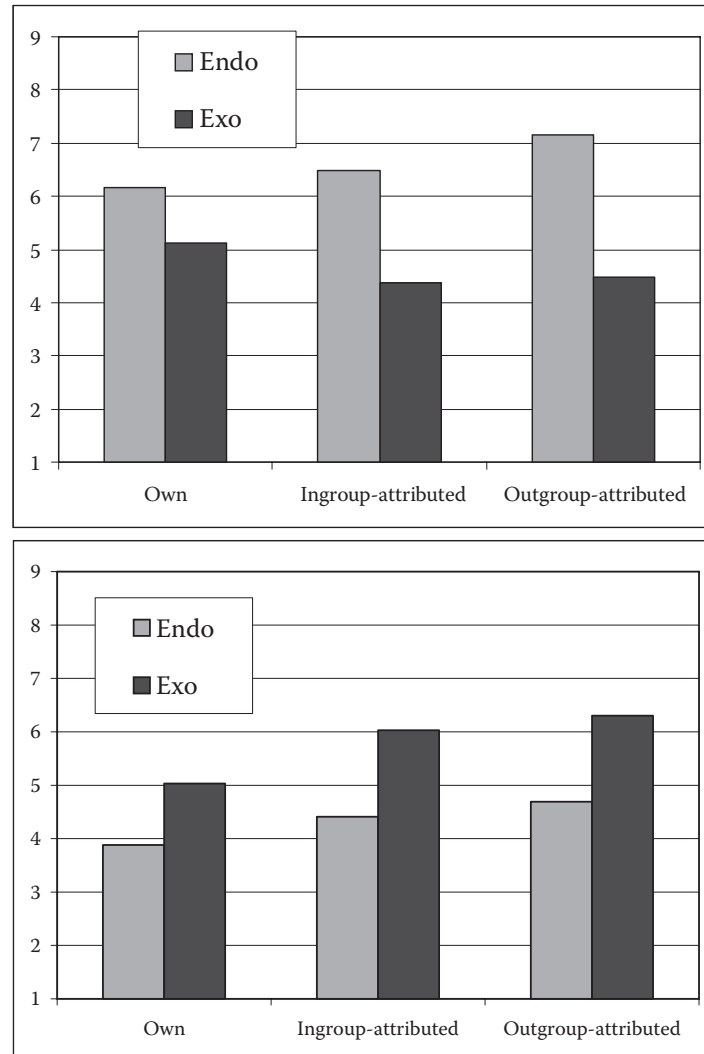
Figure 4.1   Global evaluation (top) and global similarity (bottom) as a function of who holds the belief and which group is the target of the belief.

replicated in other studies involving gender and ethnicity (for details, see Judd et al., 2005). This is the case even in a context of nationality groups where the relationship between the two countries (i.e., United States and France) was not at its best since the data were collected just before and just after the beginning of the war in Iraq (see Muller et al., 2005). Hence, it can be assumed that in such a context people are less sensitive to social desirability concerns and could freely express some level of bias in their ratings. The tendency for more bias to emerge in outgroup than in ingroup-attributed ratings is reminiscent of other work. Notably, in their research on intergroup pluralistic ignorance, Shelton and Richeson

(2005, Study 1) found that, as far as desire for cross-race friendships or for more general contact, own beliefs and outgroup-attributed beliefs were located at the extremes, with ingroup-attributed beliefs falling in between.

As we suspected, these data reveal the presence of pessimism in metaperceptions. The views that respondents communicated to us concerning their own beliefs or that they attributed to their fellow ingroup members about their outgroup members were indeed more positive than the views they attributed to outgroup members. However telling these data may be, they do not allow us to address these issues in the most direct way because they do not distinguish participants' answers in terms of the specific perceiver and target groups. Therefore, we decomposed these Own-Exo and OA-Exo beliefs according to the specific nationality expressing the judgment and the nationality being judged. We decided to focus on these specific comparisons here for several reasons. First, the same global message emerges when IA-Exo beliefs are pitted against OA-Exo beliefs. Indeed, the means were in the predicted direction in three out of the four comparisons involving the attributed beliefs. Second, many would argue that what people tell us they believe is likely to be a better predictor of their own future behavior than what people tell us what others, be they ingroup members, believe. Last but not least, our nation study (Judd et al., 2005, Study 3) showed clear evidence of intergroup bias and outgroup homogeneity in own beliefs, demonstrating only a small antidiscrimination norm, if one exists at all.

Table 4.2 gives the resulting means, again for the global evaluations and similarity measures. For each of these variables, the values on the main diagonal are in bold and represent Own-Exo beliefs. Thus, for instance, on global evaluations,

TABLE 4.2   Global and Feature-Based Ratings Relevant to Pessimism in the Nation Study (Judd et al., 2005, Study 3)

	Target of judgment	
Judge	**French**	**American**
Global evaluation		
American	**5.83**	3.90
French	5.07	**4.41**
Global similarity		
American	**5.78**	6.09
French	6.71	**4.31**
Feature-based evaluation		
American	**1.41**	−1.89
French	1.03	**−0.18**
Feature-based stereotypicality		
American	**1.20**	1.41
French	0.93	**2.01**

Values in bold are Own-Exo beliefs; values in normal font are OA-Exo beliefs.

Americans' mean judgment of the French was 5.83. The values off the diagonal are OA-Exo beliefs. For instance, again looking at the means for global evaluation, 5.07 is the mean value that the French attributed to Americans in how they thought Americans would judge the French. The pessimism that we are talking about is revealed by the fact that the French, in this case, think Americans are judging them more negatively (i.e., 5.07) than in fact the Americans are actually judging them (i.e., 5.83). Pessimism also emerges in how the Americans think they are seen by the French. For global similarity, where higher numbers mean less perceived variability, again each group thinks their outgroup perceives them to be less variable than in fact that outgroup judges them to be.

Another one of our studies (Judd et al., 2005, Study 2) allows us to check whether this pattern can be replicated in other data sets. In this study, male and female respondents were asked to report the same six sorts of beliefs as in the French–American study (i.e., Own, IA, OA Endo- and Exo-beliefs). The only global measure we secured there concerned similarity. Again the interaction was significant, clearly illustrating the fact that our male and female respondents are pessimistic when it comes to the views that members of the other sex group may hold about them.

In our opinion, the divergence between the way people think that they are seen and the way they are actually seen by others raises the question of the correlates or, even better, the various factors that shape this pessimism. It is reasonable to think that people's level of prejudice influences the importance of the gap. One obvious possibility here is that less prejudiced people expect to be seen in less flattering terms (Vorauer et al., 1998). Alternatively, it could also be that both the less prejudiced and the more prejudiced people believe that they are viewed negatively by outgroup members. Indeed, it is possible that more prejudiced people are far from optimistic about what the members of a disliked outgroup think about them. As we will see later, a partial answer to these questions may be found by looking at the correlations between people's ratings. At any rate, we would like to suggest that the pessimism observed in our data is sufficiently important that it deserves further scrutiny. Indeed, it seems possible that correcting these views about how the outgroup sees one's own ingroup, making it clear that the outgroup has less negative views than those attributed to them, might be one step in an effective strategy design to reduce intergroup misunderstandings.

Having characterized the first way in which we believe that metastereotypes may contribute to intergroup misunderstandings, we now turn to another aspect that we believe has also been overlooked up to now. In doing so, we will also pay attention to the way people rely on their own beliefs to form some idea of the beliefs that others may hold.

DOES IT MATTER WHETHER WE TALK OF SPECIFIC FEATURES RATHER THAN GENERAL JUDGMENTS?

As we were investigating the nature of metastereotypes, we were struck by another intriguing question: Does it matter whether people think in terms of general
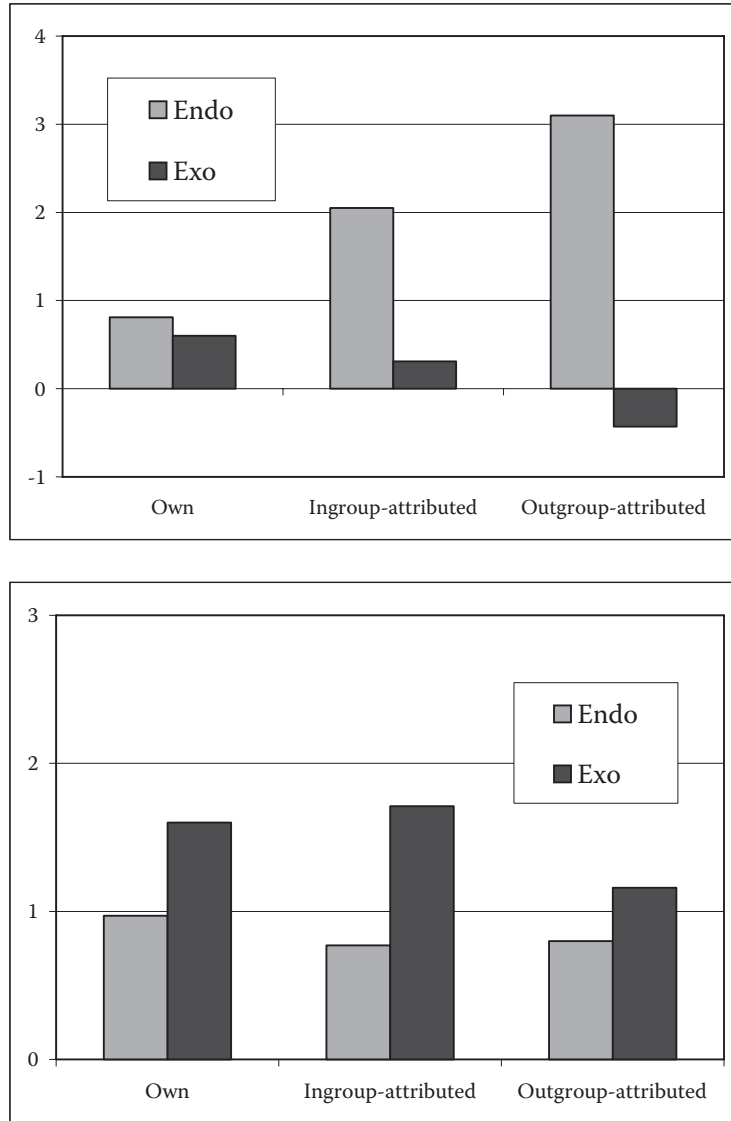
Figure 4.2   Feature-based evaluation (top) and feature-based stereotypicality (bottom) as a function of who holds the belief and which group is the target of the belief.

judgments or more specific aspects? To illustrate this issue, let us turn again to the study presented above where we collected ratings from French students on the one hand and American students on the other (Judd et al., 2005, Study 3). In addition to the global measures mentioned earlier, our respondents were also asked a series of questions using a list of 16 personality traits. They were asked to indicate the extent to which they thought that each of these traits was characteristic of each of

the two groups on a scale ranging from 1 (= not at all) to 9 (= very much) and they did so from their own perspective (Own), from the perspective of the ingroup (IA), and from the perspective of the outgroup (OA).

The list of traits we used consisted of four positive traits that were stereotypic of French and counterstereotypic of Americans, four positive traits that were counterstereotypic of French and stereotypic of Americans, four negative traits that were stereotypic of French and counterstereotypic of Americans, and four negative traits that were counterstereotypic of French and stereotypic of Americans. These 16 ratings were used to compute our feature-based measures of evaluation and variability. Evaluation or valence was computed by subtracting the negative trait judgments from the positive ones. Variability was based on the difference between the stereotypical and the counterstereotypical traits (i.e., regardless of their valence, how widely shared are stereotypic attributes perceived to be in the group compared to counterstereotypic ones).

Again, respondents' evaluations revealed the presence of intergroup bias (see top of Fig. 4.2): Feature-based evaluations of the ingroup (Endo) were more positive than evaluations of the outgroup (Exo). It is important to note that, whereas this difference was again more substantial for outgroup-attributed than ingroup-attributed beliefs, it was totally absent this time in respondents' own beliefs (see also Muller et al., 2005, Study 2). Turning to feature-based perceived variability (see bottom of Fig. 4.2), respondents' ratings again confirmed the presence of an outgroup homogeneity effect: Endo ratings reflected more heterogeneous perceptions than Exo ratings. Interestingly, however, outgroup homogeneity was least present in the outgroup-attributed ratings.

Do these data confirm the presence of pessimism in metaperceptions? Once again, we decomposed the Own-Exo and OA-Exo beliefs according to the specific nation expressing the judgment and the nation being judged (again, the message would be largely the same if we were to compare IA-Exo and OA-Exo beliefs). Table 4.2 gives the resulting means for the feature-based evaluations and variability measures. As can be seen, for the feature-based evaluations, where higher mean values indicate more positive evaluations, both groups think that the outgroup sees them more negatively than it actually does. In sharp contrast, the feature-based variability measure revealed a different pattern, with respondents thinking they were perceived less stereotypically than they actually were. Other studies from our laboratory confirm the idea that feature-based measures are less conducive to pessimistic views than their global counterparts. Our tentative conclusion at this point is that intergroup bias and outgroup homogeneity may emerge much less consistently in the context of feature-based measures than when global judgments are used. To be sure, the evidence remains somewhat meager. We thus sought to examine the issue using other analytic strategies. One approach is to turn to social projection.

Several lines of research in social psychology demonstrate that social projection, the tendency to see others as agreeing with oneself, characterizes many kinds of social judgments (Clement & Krueger, 2002; Krueger, 1996, 1998; Mullen et al., 1985; Otten, 2002; Ross, Greene, & House, 1977). We thus have every reason to expect social projection in the context of metastereotypes. After all, how I think

other people see my group is likely to be somewhat related to the way I myself see my group. Similarly, one may conjecture that the way I think of my outgroup would be linked to how I believe others see my outgroup. Maybe, but maybe not. To make a long story short, the overwhelming emergence of positive correlations between own beliefs and those attributed to others reported by Judd et al. (2005, Study 3) suggests that social projection is indeed the rule. This means that what I think is also generally thought to prevail among other people, be they members of the ingroup or the outgroup. But our data offer the possibility to look at a host of different social projection relations between the various types of beliefs. Given our current interest in the comparison between global and feature-based measures, we concentrate here on two sets of correlations that prove to be particularly interesting.

The first set of correlations concerns the extent to which respondents' views about their ingroup and their outgroup are related to the beliefs about these same groups that they attribute to their outgroup members. That is, we may look at the way people characterize a given group, be it their ingroup (Own-Endo) or their outgroup (Own-Exo), and how they think that members of their outgroup manifest similar judgments about the same groups (OA-Exo and OA-Endo, respectively). For example, in our French–American data set, we might examine whether the French judgments about themselves (Own-Endo) correlate with how they think the Americans judge the French (OA-Exo). Because we are interested here in the way people think that others agree with them about specific target groups, we will talk of social projection regarding specific groups.

A second set of correlations examines the extent to which respondents' views about their ingroup and their outgroup are related to the beliefs they attribute to outgroup members about the ingroup and the outgroup, as seen from the perspective of the outgroup members. In other words, we look at the way people characterize their ingroup (Own-Endo) and their outgroup (Own-Exo) and whether they think that members of their outgroup manifest similar judgments about their own ingroup (OA-Endo) and outgroup (OA-Exo). Again, to illustrate, we might examine whether the French judgments about Americans (Own-Exo) correlate with how they think the Americans judge the French (OA-Exo). Are one's judgments of one's outgroup correlated with one's estimate of the outgroup's judgment of their outgroup? In this case, we talk about social projection regarding target groups.

The predictions one would make for these two sets of correlations differ as a function of whether we look at feature-based measures or more global measures. We hypothesized that feature-based measures should be prone to producing stronger social projection for specific groups than for target groups. This is because, whenever the measurement procedure focuses on the particular features of a specific group, one would expect to see people consider that all observers, be it themselves, the members of the ingroup, and the members of the outgroup, would converge on which features are more descriptive of the members of a specific group than others.

In contrast, we expected more social projection for target groups in the case of global measures. That is, people who demonstrate intergroup bias and outgroup homogeneity should tend to see other observers expressing the same tendencies.

Specifically, respondents who evaluate their group positively should thus expect other judges to also evaluate their own group positively. Likewise, respondents who see members of their outgroup as being similar to each other should expect other people to reach the same conclusion.

The verdict emerging from Judd et al.'s (2005, Study 3) data is unambiguous: When our dependent variables were computed on the basis of features, social projection emerged more strongly at the level of the specific group (average $r = .37$, for the correlations between Own-Endo and OA-Exo or Own-Exo and OA-Endo) than at the level of the target group (average $r = .20$ for the correlations between Own-Endo and OA-Endo or Own-Exo and OA-Exo). The reverse pattern occurred for our global measures with lower social projection at the level of the specific group (average $r = .14$) than at the level of the target group (average $r = .25$). This pattern has been replicated in other studies we conducted. To take but one illustrative example, when gender was the grouping variable and stereotypicality was being examined (Judd et al., 2005, Study 2), social projection manifested itself more on the specific group (average $r = .40$) than on the target group (average $r = .20$) for the feature-based measure. In contrast, for the global measure, there was less social projection on the specific group (average $r = .14$) than on the target group (average $r = .30$).

In sum, turning respondents' attention to particular characteristics that describe the groups facilitates social projection at the level of the specific group. One fascinating message here is that people may then be more likely to expect reactions from the members of their outgroup that confirm their own views about the groups. In particular, people who are ethnocentric may hope to see their outgroup counterparts agree with them about the value of the ingroup (i.e., the other people's outgroup). Remember the studies by Vorauer et al. (1998) where it was found that high-prejudiced Whites expected Native Indians to see them in a more positive light than low-prejudiced Whites. One should note here that Vorauer et al. (1998) collected feature-based measures. It thus remains to be seen whether prejudiced Whites would expect Native Indians to express a similar level of outgroup favoritism if they were presented with global measures. In fact, the present findings suggest that outgroup members, as long as they are asked to use global measures, would be expected to express ingroup favoritism instead.

On the basis of these findings, we may venture some heretofore untested predictions as far as intergroup encounters are concerned. To the extent that people are induced to think about the views of the members of another group in a way that focuses on specific features underlying intergroup beliefs, they may well end up expecting much less ethnocentrism in other people. This in turn may contribute to more harmonious intergroup encounters. As it turns out, we think that research on intergroup contact points in a similar direction. According to Hewstone and Brown (1986), a promising strategy for intergroup interactions consists in having people acknowledge their respective group membership while recognizing that the different groups are associated with different characteristics. The complementarities of these features are then used to facilitate the achievement of common goals (Brown & Hewstone, 2005). Taking people's attention away from specific features that may prove relevant in the problematic situation is potentially detrimental. A much better policy would have people focus on the specific qualities of the two groups.

CONCLUSIONS

Social psychology has long acknowledged the impact of stereotypes on the way intergroup relations unfold. What people believe are the characteristics associated with the members of an outgroup undoubtedly plays a hugely important role in shaping a host of affective reactions and action tendencies toward these individuals (Dovidio, Glick, & Rudman, 2005; Yzerbyt, 2006; Yzerbyt, Dumont, Mathieu, Gordijn, & Wigboldus, 2006). Interestingly, however, several recent lines of research also stress the fact that what people think the members of an outgroup think about their group also plays a hugely important role. Be it in the work on stereotype threat, on intergroup anxiety, or on the way people cope with discrimination, the beliefs we expect others to hold definitely shape our emotions and behaviors. Surprising as it may be, only a handful of studies have examined directly these attributed beliefs in intergroup encounters (Judd et al., 2005; Klein & Azzi, 2001; Muller et al., 2005; Vorauer et al., 1998; Yzerbyt et al., 2004).

In the present chapter, we decided to build upon our recent research on metastereotypes and to examine in more detail a number of ways in which such attributed stereotypes may or may not influence intergroup misunderstandings. Two findings were at the heart of this contribution. The first concerns the systematic gap we observed between what people believe others think about their group and what these others actually think. In several sets of data, using very different intergroup situations, we found that people seemed overly pessimistic and expected others to be more negative about them than was actually the case. The second aspect has to do with the way people rely on their own beliefs to make conjectures about other people's stereotypes. Our data revealed that social projection was very much the rule when it comes to attributing stereotypes to others. In other words, people think that others think what they think. At the same time, however, we confirmed the presence of some systematic differences in the nature of respondents' social projection depending on whether we looked at feature-based measures or at more global measures. Specifically, we found that respondents manifested stronger social projection for the specific group in ratings that focused on individual characteristics rather than in ratings that expressed more global evaluations. This means that, when people are led into thinking about the characteristics of two groups, they may well be inclined to think that others share their views. In contrast, social projection was more likely to emerge for the target group when global measures were used, suggesting that people confronted with general indices would expect others to manifest those same intergroup biases.

These messages coming from our data are far from trivial and delineate intriguing hypotheses for future research. For instance, it should be possible to manipulate the information people possess about what others think about them. By giving people what they expect or what others really think should probably make a difference in the way intergroup encounters unfold. Also, it is likely that having people concentrate on the details of the various characteristics that differentiate groups rather than on general indicators of bias may promote a better intergroup climate. Questions such as these entail the possibility that metastereotypes play a role in even more ways than has been imagined up to now.

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