

# International Journal of Conflict and Violence

## Vol. 4 (2) 2010

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Differentiation – Within and  
Between Cultures**

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**International Journal of Conflict and Violence – IJCv**

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# Editorial

## Letter from the Editors

Our focus section this time concentrates on prejudice and intergroup conflicts, and especially on a comparative approach to understanding prejudice. Many thanks go to our guest editors Katharina Schmid (Oxford University, United Kingdom) and Andreas Zick (University of Bielefeld, Germany) who have put together a fine collection on the topic.

Fortuitously, the first two of the three articles featured in our open section this time are closely related to the focus topic (and are therefore introduced in the guest editorial). The issue closes with Denis Ribeaud and Manuel Eisner's promising exploration of the possibilities for developing a unified scale of moral neutralization of aggression.

December 2010

Wilhelm Heitmeyer    Douglas S. Massey    Steven F. Messner    James Sidanius    Michel Wieviorka

## Guest Editorial

Andreas Zick, Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, University of Bielefeld, Germany  
Katharina Schmid, Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

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## Guest Editorial

Andreas Zick, Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence, University of Bielefeld, Germany  
Katharina Schmid, Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

This issue of IJCV takes two different perspectives on prejudice and the processes of intergroup differentiation. The first looks at causes, expressions, and outcomes of prejudice and prejudice-based differentiations between groups, including discrimination, violence, and exclusion. In doing so, the authors focus on one of the most crucial characteristics of intergroup conflicts, since there is no conflict without prejudice. Prejudice against outgroups is often the most relevant legitimizing myth that inflames, maintains, and prolongs conflicts. Violent clashes based on intergroup comparisons use prejudice to discriminate, oppress, and continuously exclude groups within societies. This also means that prejudices are highly relevant indicators of the civic state of societies. Such a focus is not new, but research on prejudice suffers from going in and out of fashion. It becomes relevant in public and scientific discourses when racist violence or hate crimes are committed, but it rapidly recedes when these events leave the headlines. This wavering attention leads societies and scholars to overlook that prejudice and discrimination, nested within the normality of cultures and nations, more and more are critical devices for measuring the civic state of societies. Open borders and transparent international communications have made prejudice an overt as well as a covert indicator of control, normality, and democracy in states. So this collection of papers not only offers new insights into the causes, expressions, and outcomes of prejudice in intergroup conflicts, but also hints at the civic state of societies. Their authors address a wide range of measures, results, and indicators of stereotypic devaluations and prejudice.

The other perspective focuses on the comparative understanding of prejudice, explicitly addressing the problem of comparability of empirical studies across national and social contexts. The goal is to gain more evidence on the relation between culture or society and the social dimension of prejudice and intergroup conflict. This comparative perspective has been hard to apply because of methodological limitations. Very rarely are cross-cultural comparisons conducted explicitly. We find a large number of entries when searching scientific databases for the keywords “prejudice” or “intergroup conflict,” but rarely discover “cross-cultural comparisons of these phenomena. The comparative perspective on prejudice and intergroup conflict is still in the early stages of development, perhaps in part because of the labor-intensity and cost of running cross-cultural comparisons – whether their sample size is small, as in qualitative studies, or larger as in cross-cultural or cross-national surveys.” Comparative studies are even more burdensome for

specific regions. In Western societies like Europe, Canada, and the United States we have some survey data which are accessible for secondary data analyses, but for other regions of the world studies and data are rare.

From within these two perspectives on prejudices and intergroup conflicts, we are fortunate to have found seven strong papers to present, plus two closely related papers in the open section. While each paper makes unique contributions, it is understood that one journal issue cannot encompass the entire range of scientific research into cross-cultural perspectives of prejudice and discrimination. Nonetheless, these articles, as a group, represent an approach that shares six specific features:

1. The papers contribute to an *interdisciplinary perspective*. Prejudice and conflicts are themselves found in social-scientific disciplines. The papers offer sociological, psy-

chological, political science, and social science approaches, theories, explanations, and concepts. We hope that each paper is read across disciplinary boundaries. We strongly support attempts to cross disciplinary borders in order to foster understanding of prejudice and intergroup conflicts from a wide range of perspectives.

2. The papers address a wide range of stereotypes, prejudices, and conflicts. The *phenomenological range* of explanatory concepts is broad, although concentrated on hostile intergroup conflicts. The papers explicitly address prejudices and conflicts in Burundi, Chile, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Rwanda, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and the Xinjian region of China.

3. The papers prove empirical insights into the so-called *emics and etics* of prejudices and conflicts. They show that across cultures and countries some causes, expressions, and outcomes are similar and universal (etic). Prejudices and conflicts are triggered by similar social and psychological causes and are expressed in comparable evaluations of outgroups, and so forth. The papers also identify roots of prejudices and conflicts which are specific to a certain culture (emic).

4. All papers are empirical, but they are not restricted to specific methods. A *wide range of methodological approaches* to studying prejudice, discrimination, and conflict is presented in this issue. Surveys, small-sample quantitative interviews, qualitative interviews, and analyses of debates are all used to understand the phenomena. Taken together, the papers make clear that the borders between methodological approaches are fluid. Methods are not restrictions but opportunities to make phenomena accessible.

5. The issue has a *multilevel focus*. The papers look at micro-, meso-, and macro-social roots of prejudice and conflict between groups, and discuss the interaction of individual and contextual explanations for them. They show that the authors take seriously the relations among individual, group, and societal factors.

6. Last but not least, another special character of this issue is its freshness. The majority of the authors are excellent *young*

*scientists*. We do not know how this affects the insights offered, but we deliberately recruited young scholars to publish in this peer-reviewed open-access journal.

These and many more features characterize the whole issue, allowing the development of a comparative perspective on prejudice and conflict between groups in several societies. Each paper contributes in its own right to this understanding. The issue starts with micro- and meso-social perspectives and tries to reach the macro-social level of explanation. Additionally, it starts with smaller units of analysis and ends with a broader focus on politics.

*Eva Green, Nicole Fasel, and Oriane Sarrasin* discuss how different types of cultural diversity can influence anti-immigration attitudes across the small comparative unit of municipalities in Switzerland. They refer to two fundamental basic theories that are cited in this issue by several authors. Threat theory argues that a high number of immigrants within a region increases subjective threats, which foster prejudice. Contact theory proposes that culturally diverse societal contexts increase contacts, and that these are accompanied by reduced prejudice. The authors present data from a multilevel study showing that contact indeed is associated with lower rates of prejudice and exclusionary attitudes toward immigrants, via reducing perceived threat. However, the presence of a larger proportion of Muslims is related to higher threat perceptions and more prejudice. On the basis of their findings the authors invoke critical questions on the construction of immigrant categories, the social position of groups, and the ideological climate.

*Jolanda van der Noll's* paper is consistent with this analysis, as she presents a cross-European view focusing on a highly relevant, aggressive, and sometimes violent discourse in Europe, which is legitimized by widely shared prejudices against Islam and Muslims. She compares psychological explanations of support for a ban on headscarves in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. She also focuses on threats and prejudice, but her secondary analyses of representative survey data in these countries show that context matters: countries differ. The paper also shows the limited impact of prejudices on the support for the ban of headscarves. This is relevant for an estimation of

the attitude-behavior link of prejudice and discrimination. When it comes to Islam and Muslims in Europe, it seems as though differences in prejudice disappear.

*Beate Küpper, Carina Wolf, and Andreas Zick* concentrate on a comprehensive and often quoted theory of intergroup conflict, the Social Dominance Theory introduced by Jim Sidanius and Felicia Pratto. Basically the theory assumes that prejudices are legitimizing ideologies which are used to discriminate against low-status groups. Societies and social contexts produce individuals with high and low levels of social dominance orientation. This orientation predicts the readiness to adopt prejudice. The authors present the first complete test of the theory with survey data from eight European countries. They test the theory with reference to anti-immigrant prejudices and intentions to discriminate against immigrants. Contrary to the theory itself, structural equation modeling of the theory shows that low-status groups express prejudice. These results require a critical discussion about theoretical modifications. A theory is needed that includes assumptions about the impact of social positions, status hierarchies, and relative positioning of individuals within and between groups.

Taking a similar focus, *Héctor Carvacho* argues that social dominance orientations have to be addressed as ideological configurations. Carvacho offers a fresh perspective on the two most frequently cited concepts for understanding prejudice and discrimination: authoritarianism and social dominance orientation. Using survey data from Chile and Germany, he shows that both can be defining dimensions of an ideological schema. This ideological configuration is used to predict attitudes toward foreign residents in Germany and toward Peruvian and Argentinean immigrants in Chile. This psychological perspective on the etics (universal processes) of ideological configurations offers a more comprehensive theoretical understanding of the attitudes underlying prejudice.

*Michal Bilewicz and Ireneusz Krzemiński* add an interesting approach by focusing on anti-Semitism and its relation to the most classical cause of prejudice: scapegoating. They argue that anti-Semitism can become a comprehensive ideology, especially in countries that suffer from social and

economic crises. The authors refer to the ideological model of scapegoating, which has been used to explain anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe. By comparing survey data from Poland and Ukraine they show that conspiracy beliefs about Jews (that they are powerful, cunning, and dangerous) are linked only in Poland to economic deprivation. In Ukraine, anti-Semitism is directly linked to discrimination. These results suggest that a closer look be taken at the societal conditions and processes in which dispositions, ideological configurations, prejudices, and discrimination take control.

*Enze Han* analyses a specific conflict that is accompanied not only by prejudice and discrimination but also by patterns of severe violence. Han concentrates on the extremely tense ethnic relations between the Uighur and Han Chinese in the Xingjian Uighur Autonomous Region. He cites Fredrik Barth's approach to ethnicity and focuses consistently on intergroup boundaries. The paper explores how rigid boundaries generate distrust and discrimination between the groups. It opens the debate between micro-social approaches that focus on categorical differentiation, and macro-social approaches that focus on boundaries and their function.

The issue concludes with *Carla Schraml's* comprehensive review of ethnicized politics. She discusses conventional definitions of politics of exclusion. Schraml compares Rwanda and Burundi theoretically, historically, and empirically, as two institutional models for overcoming ethnicized politics. She presents evidence for her conceptualization of ethnic politics as patterns of interpreting exclusion based on ethnic categories. Beyond prejudices and the traditional frame of exclusion for understanding discrimination, the paper shows the impact of taken-for-granted realities of ethnic relations and how they constitute different social realities. This is close to the micro-social effect debated by Carvacho and Küpper et al., who stress the legitimizing function of prejudice.

The above papers reflect the binary focus of this special issue on prejudice and intergroup conflict. However, we would also like to direct readers' attention to the two excellent papers in the open section of this issue:

Chiara Volpato, Federica Durante, Alessandro Gabbiadini, Luca Andrighetto, and Silvia Mari present a study that is highly interesting for our understanding of prejudice, and which calls for a cross-cultural comparison. The paper discusses and empirically analyzes images of Italian fascist propaganda and present-day right-wing materials in considering the impact of political propaganda in different historical periods. It also adds the theory of delegitimization as a framework for the understanding of racist prejudice and ideologies.

Judy Tan, Tania B. Huedo-Medina, Carter A. Lennon, Angela C. White, and Blair T. Johnson present an excellent methodological addition. Their paper provides an overview of meta-analysis as a tool for examining geotemporal trends in intergroup relations. The authors do not explicitly address the causes of prejudice, conflict, and discrimination but introduce meta-analyses as greatly needed methods for understanding the phenomena. The paper also discusses the gains, limits, and opportunities of cross-cultural comparisons based on a meta-analytic approach. These features are highly relevant for other methods as well.

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# The More the Merrier? The Effects of Type of Cultural Diversity on Exclusionary Immigration Attitudes in Switzerland

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We investigate how different types of cultural diversity influence anti-immigration attitudes across Swiss municipalities. While from a threat theory perspective, a high number of immigrants within a region increases (perceived) threat which fosters negative immigration attitudes, intergroup contact theory contends that culturally diverse societal contexts increase opportunities for contacts with immigrants, which give rise to more positive immigration attitudes. Prior research on ethnic hierarchies and host society acculturation attitudes led us to hypothesize that the presence of valued, “culturally similar” immigrants from wealthier countries increases contact and decreases threat, thereby reducing anti-immigrant prejudice. The presence of devalued, “culturally distant” immigrants from poorer countries should increase threat perceptions and dissuade contact thus heightening prejudice. A multilevel study was conducted using the 2002 European Social Survey ( $N = 1472$  Swiss citizens,  $N = 185$  municipalities). Replicating previous research, contact reduced exclusionary immigration attitudes through reduced threat. On the municipality level, higher proportion of North and West European immigrants increased contact, thus reducing threat. A larger proportion of Muslims was related to an increase in threat, leading to more pronounced exclusionary attitudes, but also to increased contact. Finally, we discuss how the impact of diversity depends on the social construction of immigrant categories, respondents’ social position and ideological stances, and the prevailing local ideological climate.

## 1. Introduction

Switzerland is a multicultural society defined by linguistic diversity (four official languages: German, French, Italian and Romansh) and by a large population of foreign residents (over 20 percent, the highest in Europe after Luxemburg). As in many other European countries, immigration and cultural diversity are highly politicized and frequently under the media spotlight. A recent study shows that many Swiss citizens regard immigration as one of the country’s most pressing problems (Nicolet and Sciarini 2006). The rise of right-wing populist parties, especially the Swiss People’s Party (SVP), also reveals widespread anti-foreigner sentiment (Kriesi et al. 2005). For example, the SVP ran a widely publicized campaign for an initiative to expel immigrants who commit certain crimes or abuse

the welfare system, regardless of their residency status ([www.ausschaffungsinitiative.ch](http://www.ausschaffungsinitiative.ch)). Despite heavy public criticism from national and international organizations and the media, the campaign quickly collected more than 200,000 signatures and will be voted on by the Swiss public.

While links between cultural diversity in a region and prevailing immigration attitudes are widely reported, less is known about how the *type of cultural diversity* people are confronted with affects their attitudes. We draw on two well-established theoretical frameworks in the social psychology of prejudice – threat theory and intergroup contact theory – to investigate how different types of cultural diversity influence endorsement of expulsion of norm-violating immigrants across Swiss municipalities.

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### 1.1. Intergroup Contact, Threat, and Exclusionary Immigration Attitudes

Threat theory and intergroup contact theory both provide convincing – though competing – frameworks and empirical evidence concerning the effect of cultural diversity on anti-immigration attitudes. Both allow us to predict the impact of individual and municipal characteristics on support for expelling norm-violating immigrants from Switzerland. Intergroup threat and conflict theorists (Blalock 1967; Blumer 1958; Riek, Mania, and Gaertner 2006; Stephan and Renfro 2003) demonstrate that perceived threat at the individual level underlies hostile attitudes towards immigrants.<sup>1</sup> In Switzerland, as in other countries, immigrants evoke both material and symbolic threat perceptions (e.g., risk of losing economic resources, cultural and value differences of immigrants; Falomir et al. 2004). Intergroup contact theorists (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006), in contrast, show that opportunities for and frequency of contact with immigrants (e.g., friendships) lead to more tolerant attitudes through a reduction of perceived threat.

A rapidly expanding body of research from a range of social science disciplines has expanded the threat and contact approaches to examine whether immigration attitudes are influenced by contextual characteristics, usually investigating the effects of country-level characteristics (e.g., Green 2009; Quillian 1995; Sides and Citrin 2007) and more rarely of regional characteristics within a country (e.g., in Sweden, Hjerm 2009; in Germany, Wagner et al. 2006). The degree of cultural diversity in terms of percentage of immigrants is one of the most studied contextual characteristics.

From the intergroup conflict and threat perspective, a high proportion of immigrants increases perceived threat, which fosters negative attitudes towards immigration (e.g., Blalock 1967; Scheepers, Gisberts, and Coenders 2002; for the changing effect over time see Meuleman, Davidov, and Billiet 2009). A high proportion of immigrants may be seen as detrimental to the economic conditions and welfare of established residents (Quillian 1995), but also as diluting local culture and values and challenging existing social

arrangements. Threat perceptions are likely to be enhanced where media reports target specific immigrant groups and highlight or even exaggerate the negative consequences of their presence using anti-foreigner rhetoric. If politicized and confounded with other societal problems such as crime, the presence of immigrants in one region of a country may foster threat perceptions in other parts with little or no immigrant population.

Intergroup contact theory, on the other hand, contends that culturally diverse societal contexts increase opportunities for and frequency of contacts with immigrants, giving rise to more positive attitudes towards them (Schlüter and Wagner 2008; Wagner et al. 2006). It is suggested that intergroup contact effects leading to a reduction in prejudice occur when individuals are exposed to immigrants at a proximal level (e.g., municipality) where immigrants and members of the national majority can truly interact in their daily activities (Wagner et al. 2006; Schmid et al. 2008).

In the current research, the type of cultural diversity within a region is put forward to clarify mixed findings concerning the effects of immigrant presence.

### 1.2. Distinguishing Between Different Immigrant Groups

The proportion of immigrants in a country or region is frequently used as a measure of cultural diversity without differentiating between different groups. But some immigrant groups are viewed more positively than others and enjoy a better reputation. In other words, in everyday thinking ethnic and immigrant groups are ranked as more or less attractive social partners and within society there is substantial consensus on this “ethnic hierarchy” (Hagendoorn 1995; see Deschamps et al. 2005 for an examination of traits associated with different immigrant groups in Switzerland). “Culturally distant” immigrant groups, whose members may wear visible signs of cultural or religious affiliation such as headscarves or other attire (and are sometimes also “visible” in terms of skin colour or ethnic features differing from national majority), usually rank low on the ethnic hierarchy.

<sup>1</sup> Though various threat theories (e.g., group position, group threat and integrated threat theories) differ in underlying assumptions

and their focus on real or perceived threat, they share the view that competing interests between groups generate conflict.

These groups engender different reactions (threat perceptions and reduced desire for contact) than “culturally similar” immigrants who rank high on the ethnic hierarchy (see also Osbeck, Moghaddam, and Perreault 1997). We should, however, note that similarity can sometimes evoke threat: for example, where immigrants have the same vocational or professional qualifications as host society members, competition on the job market increases (Thomsen, Green, and Sidanius 2008; Zárate et al. 2004). Nevertheless, European survey research shows that highly qualified citizens express more positive attitudes toward high-status immigrants than less educated and less skilled citizens (Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007), indicating that other factors apart from job market competition influence attitude construction.

Acculturation research has demonstrated that the national origin of the immigrant group affects the acculturation attitudes held by dominant host society members (Montreuil and Bourhis 2001). For instance, integration (simultaneous adoption of host culture and maintenance of cultural heritage) may be preferred for “valued” immigrants whose language and culture are similar to the host society, while assimilation (adoption of host culture and eradication of cultural heritage) and segregation (maintenance of cultural heritage, but separate from host population) are preferred for “devalued” immigrant outgroups whose culture and religion are felt to differ considerably. Similarity and value often also coincide with social status. Thus, “culturally distant” and “devalued” immigrants often have low social status and come from poorer countries, whereas “culturally similar” and “valued” immigrants come from wealthier countries. Findings from the ethnic hierarchy and acculturation research traditions suggest that immigration attitudes may also vary as a function of the type of immigrants people are exposed to.

Evidence from survey research supports this contention. For example, Schneider (2008) found that across European countries the proportion of non-Western immigrants increased ethnic threat perceptions whereas the proportion of poorly educated immigrants was unrelated to threat perceptions. Similarly, in a study across European countries, Hjerm and Schnabel (forthcoming) find that the proportion of Muslims in a country is positively related to xenophobia

(although Strabac and Listhaug [2008] find no link between the proportion of Muslims in a country and anti-Muslim prejudice). Quillian (1995) finds that the proportion of immigrants from non-EC countries increases racial prejudice, with a stronger effect under poor economic conditions. This means that the presence of devalued, “culturally different” immigrants in a region would not increase positive contacts, such as friendships (despite the opportunities), but instead increase threat perceptions and heighten anti-immigrant prejudice (see also Brewer 1996). Apart from the proportion of immigrants in general, research to date has mainly examined the impact of presence of devalued, culturally distant immigrants. The arguments outlined above suggest that the presence of valued, “culturally similar” immigrants should increase contact and decrease threat, thereby reducing anti-immigrant attitudes.

### 1.3. Studying Support for Expulsion in Switzerland

Differentiating between immigrant groups provides a finer-grained analysis of the impact of diversity on attitudes and may allow us to bridge the contrasting predictions of the threat and intergroup contact approaches. Muslims have become the targets of increased suspicion and prejudice (Ozyürek 2005; Strabac and Listhaug 2008; see Schneuwly Purdie, Gianni, and Jenny 2009 for an overview of the situation of Muslims in Switzerland) and are frequently depicted as a threat in terms of political violence and gender inequality (Richardson 2004). As a case in point, the November 2009 referendum against the construction of minarets received an astonishing level of support, 575 percent of votes cast. Danaci’s analysis of the Swiss data from the World Value survey (2009) shows that Muslims were regarded as the least welcome potential neighbours (see also Helbling 2010).

The 2000 census shows 4.3 percent of the Swiss population to be Muslims, most of whom (88 percent) do not hold a Swiss passport. For political and economic reasons, the number of Muslims in Switzerland increased from some 16,000 in 1970 to over 310,000 in 2000. (CFR 2006). The majority originate from former Yugoslavia, Albania, and Turkey. While some came for work, others fled wars, human rights violations, and dictatorships (CFR 2006). Despite the small number and diverse backgrounds of



Muslims in Switzerland, they are a salient group due to high – mainly negative – media interest and political debate, and recently also due to efforts by the “Muslim community” to form cross-cultural and linguistic organizational structures representing common interests (e.g., [www.religionenschweiz.ch/islam.html](http://www.religionenschweiz.ch/islam.html)). Muslims are devalued and regarded as a culturally different group at the bottom of the ethnic hierarchy (Stolz 2006; Wimmer 2004). It is important to note that Muslim immigrants in Europe often remain in low-status positions in society, suggesting that majority populations’ perceptions of “cultural distance” are connected with institutional discrimination (Ozyürek 2005). In Switzerland, certain asylum-seekers from former Yugoslavia have lived for years with only temporary residence permits, which hampers integration in the labour market. Immigrants from Turkey, former Yugoslavia, and Albania have higher unemployment rates (overall 11.9 percent) than the Swiss (2.0 percent; statistics for 2003, [www.admin.ch/bfs](http://www.admin.ch/bfs)), and even among second-generation immigrants the majority have no qualifications beyond compulsory schooling (Piguet 2004).

Increasing demand for highly skilled workers in Switzerland has changed the pattern of immigration. Over the last decade highly skilled workers have arrived from neighbouring countries (Pecoraro 2004), with the German population doubling and the French population increasing by one third ([www.admin.ch/bfs](http://www.admin.ch/bfs)). Immigrants from northern and western Europe – Germany (7.75 percent of the overall immigrant population), France (4.25 percent), Austria (2.01 percent), the Benelux countries and Liechtenstein (1.69 percent), the UK and Ireland (1.66 percent), and Scandinavian countries (0.89 percent) – have unemployment rates closer to the local population (5.3 percent vs. 2 percent). Sharing traditions, religion, and often language with the majority population puts them at the top of the ethnic hierarchy where they are likely to be regarded as culturally more close and valued immigrants.

Finally, Swiss immigration policy explicitly adopts a geographical classification of potential immigrants that reflects the distinction between culturally similar and different groups. While citizens of the European Union and other countries deemed culturally close to Switzerland are priori-

tized, immigrants from the “rest of the world” are less likely to be granted permits (Piguet 2004). Bilateral agreements with the European Union grant immigrants from EU countries largely the same rights – apart from political participation – as the Swiss have, although immigrants from new EU member states are only gradually gaining access to these rights. The strictness of immigration policy is also reflected in restrictive naturalization. A proposal to simplify the naturalization of young immigrants educated in Switzerland and to automatically naturalize their offspring was rejected for the third time in a referendum in 2004.

We use a multilevel design with the Swiss sample of the European Social Survey (ESS 2002, Round 1 Data) to investigate how the proportion of immigrants from northern and western Europe and the proportion of Muslims in Swiss municipalities affect perceived threat associated with immigrants, friendships with immigrants, and exclusionary immigration attitudes. We use support for expulsion of immigrants who violate social norms of orderly conduct and hard work (i.e., immigrants with a criminal record or unemployed) as the indicator of anti-immigration attitudes because this topic has recently been the subject of political debate in Switzerland. Examining municipality effects is particularly pertinent in Switzerland, as in a decentralised federal state (with over two thousand municipalities and twenty-six cantons) political discussion and deliberation often take place at the local level (Horber-Papazian 2007). Municipalities have substantial power in the domain of immigration policy, for example in naturalization decisions.

The hypotheses of the current study are based on the outlined arguments:

Hypothesis 1: A high proportion of culturally similar, valued immigrants from western or northern European countries in a municipality increases intercultural friendships thereby reducing perceived threat associated with immigration and support for expulsion of norm-violating immigrants.

Hypothesis 2: A high ratio of stigmatized and supposedly culturally different Muslim immigrants in a municipality increases perceived threat and discourages intergroup

friendships, leading directly or indirectly to more support for expulsion.

Hypothesis 3: The relationship between friendships with immigrants and opposition to expulsion of norm-violating immigrants is mediated by a reduction in perceived threat related to immigration.

The proportions of western/northern European and Muslim immigrants may also have joint effects. Cultural diversity in terms of the number of different cultural groups is particularly high in municipalities with high proportions of both western/northern European and Muslim immigrants. It is plausible that in such a multicultural context individuals will frequently encounter people from many different countries and cultural difference therefore becomes commonplace and accepted. This should enhance intergroup friendships due to the increased opportunities and desire to meet people with different immigrant origins – including Muslim immigrants – and consequently reduce perceived threat and support for expulsion.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Participants

The initial sample consisted of 1,609 Swiss citizens who declared no ethnic minority membership. To ensure a stable sample size for model comparison, missing data was excluded by listwise deletion, reducing the sample to 1,472 individuals from 185 municipalities (on average eight individuals per municipality). The final sample consisted of 725 men and 747 women (mean age 47 years,  $SD = 17$ ). The respondents had on average 10.52 years of full-time education ( $SD = 3.09$ ), positioned themselves midway on the left-right political continuum ( $0 = left$   $10 = right$ ;  $M = 4.97$ ,  $SD = 1.84$ ) and reported an average annual net household income between 45,600 CHF and 90,000 CHF (income was assessed with 12 categories from 1 to 12;  $M = 8.64$ ,  $SD = 1.96$ ; the national average income was around 80,000 CHF in 2002; [www.admin.ch/bfs](http://www.admin.ch/bfs)). Missing values for political orientation (6.59 percent) and household income (20.70

percent) were imputed using multiple imputations (*uvis* command in Stata, see Royston 2004). These individual-level characteristics were included in the models testing our predictions.

### 2.2. Individual-Level Measures

Intergroup contact, perceived threat, and support for expulsion are the dependent variables used in this study. As the items making up these constructs were on different scales, they were linearly transformed to a 0 to 100 scale. *Intergroup contact* was assessed using a self-reported measure of friendships with foreigners (recoded from 1 = *none* to 3 = *several*). *Perceived threat* was composed of eight items ranging from material threats related to the economy (e.g., “Average wages and salaries are generally brought down by people coming to live and work here”) to symbolic threats related to norms and customs (e.g. “Would you say that Switzerland’s cultural life is generally undermined or enriched by people from other countries coming to live here”;  $\alpha = .76$ ). Material and symbolic threat were separated in preliminary analyses, but as the constructs were highly correlated ( $\phi = .82$ ,  $p < .001$ ), a combined threat measure was used for the sake of parsimony. Finally, three items assessed *support for expelling immigrants* that violate social norms of orderly conduct and hard work (committing a serious crime, or committing any crime, or long-term unemployment) ( $\alpha = .65$ ). High scores represent higher perceived threat and stronger support for expelling immigrants.

As perceived threat is often considered a component of prejudice (Pettigrew and Meertens 1995), confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to ensure that perceived threat and support for expulsion were indeed separate concepts (Scheepers et al. 2002). They revealed that a two-factor model distinguishing between expulsion attitudes and perceived threat yielded a better fit (CFI = .90, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05) than a one-factor model combining both concepts (CFI = .84, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .06,  $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 197.42$ ,  $p < .001$ ), although the threat and expulsion constructs were related ( $\phi = .68$ ).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Allowing for the residuals of two items of the threat construct (“immigrants harm the economic prospects of the poor” and “im-

migrants bring wages down”) to correlate further improved model fit, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .04,  $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 119.41$ ,  $p < .001$ .

### 2.3. Contextual-Level Measures

The percentage of Muslims and the percentage of immigrants from northern and western Europe in municipalities were employed as indicators of the two different types of cultural diversity. The average percentage of Muslims in a municipality was 3.94 percent ( $SD = 2.79$ ; range 0 to 13.29 percent) and the average percentage of immigrants from northern and western Europe was 3.26 percent ( $SD = 2.26$ ; range 0 to 14.52 percent; United Nations classification of geographical sub-regions, <http://unstats.un.org>). Both sets of data were obtained from the 2000 census data of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (SFSO). Both measures were log transformed to correct for skewness. The proportion of Muslims and proportion of northern/western European immigrants were unrelated ( $r = -.08, p = .30$ ).

Much like in other countries, exclusionary immigration attitudes in Switzerland are stronger in rural regions than in urban regions (Armingeon 2000; Trechsel 2007). As urban areas are typically more diverse and progressive, people more readily accept social diversity. Rural areas are less diverse and more traditional, so immigration is more likely to be perceived as a threat. The degree of urbanization of a municipality was thus controlled in the tested models. We constructed a variable based on SFSO coding (1 = *city centre*; 2 = *agglomeration*; 3 = *individual city*; 4 = *rural municipality*) where 1 to 3 were recoded as *urban*, which gave us 116 urban and 69 rural municipalities. Urban municipalities had a larger percentage of northern/western European immigrants ( $M = 3.83, SD = 2.26$ ) and of Muslims ( $M = 4.42, SD = 2.55$ ) than rural municipalities ( $M = 2.31, SD = 1.91$  and  $M = 3.14, SD = 3.01$  respectively),  $t(183) = -4.66, p < .001$  and  $t(183) = -3.08, p = .002$ .

### 3. Results

Analyses were performed with Mplus 5.1 software in two steps. First, multilevel regression analyses were carried out, investigating the relationship between individual-level and municipality-level factors and each dependent variable separately (intergroup contact, perceived threat, support for expulsion of norm-violating immigrants). In a second step,

multilevel path analyses were conducted to examine the predicted indirect effects of individual- and municipality-level predictors through contact and threat. All predictors were standardized.

#### 3.1. Multilevel Regression Analyses

The structure of the data is such that individual citizens are nested within municipalities (citizens are level-1 and municipalities are level-2 units in the analysis) and are thus not independent (Hox 2002). Multilevel modelling allows testing of the part of the variation in individual-level dependent variables explained by municipality-level effects (percentage of Muslims, percentage of immigrants from northern and western Europe, urbanization), and the part explained by individual-level effects. Table 1 shows the step-by-step improvement of goodness-of-fit statistics (i.e., model deviance provided by  $-2 * \log\text{-likelihood}$ ) when additional predictors were added to the model in blocks (separately for each dependent variable). For the three dependent variables, intercept models (i.e., without predictors; Model 0) were tested to estimate variance on both individual and contextual levels. Intra-class correlations revealed that a substantial part of the overall variance was due to the clustering structure (i.e., individuals living in municipalities): contact 8 percent, perceived threat 13 percent, and support for expulsion 13 percent. Table 1 shows that inclusion of individual-level background predictors in Model 1 decreased the log-likelihood ( $\chi^2$  distribution) for each dependent variable, indicating that the model fit was improved. In the next step, for support for expulsion and perceived threat, Model 2a revealed that adding intergroup contact to the model significantly improved the model fit. For contact and support for expulsion, the inclusion of perceived threat in Model 2b improved the model fit. Including both perceived threat and contact in Model 2c improved the model fit for support for expulsion. Model 3, adding contextual-level predictors to previous models, improved the model fit of each dependent variable. Finally, inclusion of the interaction between proportion of Muslims and proportion of immigrants from northern and western Europe in Model 4 improved the model fit for perceived threat only.

**Table 1: Change in model fit for multilevel models for contact, threat, and support for expulsion**

	Contact		Perceived threat		Expulsion	
	-2*log likelihood	$\Delta$ -2*log likelihood	-2*log likelihood	$\Delta$ -2*log likelihood	-2*log likelihood	$\Delta$ -2*log likelihood
Model 0 (intercept only)	14720.94 (df = 0)		11740.70 (df = 0)		12873.64 (df = 0)	
Model 1 (individual background predictors)	14582.60 (df = 5)	138.34*** ( $\Delta$ df = 5)	11585.62 (df = 5)	155.08*** ( $\Delta$ df = 5)	12675.47 (df = 5)	198.17*** ( $\Delta$ df = 5)
Model 2a (Model 1 + contact)	-	-	11509.59 (df = 6)	76.03*** ( $\Delta$ df = 1)	12650.96 (df = 6)	24.51*** ( $\Delta$ df = 1)
Model 2b (Model 1 + threat)	14504.15 (df = 6)	78.45*** ( $\Delta$ df = 1)	-	-	12377.69 (df = 6)	297.78*** ( $\Delta$ df = 1)
Model 2c <sup>a</sup> (Model 1 + contact + threat)	-	-	-	-	12375.48 (df = 7)	299.99*** ( $\Delta$ df = 2)
Model 3 (individual + contextual predictors)	14476.48 (df = 9)	26.67*** ( $\Delta$ df = 3)	11497.16 (df = 9)	12.43** ( $\Delta$ df = 3)	12360.79 (df = 10)	14.69** ( $\Delta$ df = 3)
Model 4 (individual + contextual predictors + interaction)	14475.38 (df = 10)	1.10 ( $\Delta$ df = 1)	11491.24 (df = 10)	5.92* ( $\Delta$ df = 1)	12360.42 (df = 11)	0.37 ( $\Delta$ df = 1)

Note. <sup>a</sup> Comparison with Model 1.  
 \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The upper panel of Table 2 presents the Model 4 results for individual-level predictors of contact, perceived threat, and support for expulsion. Perceived threat was associated with lower levels of contact with immigrants ( $b = -8.26, p < .001$  and  $b = -2.91, p < .001$  with contact and perceived threat respectively as outcome variables), when controlled for individual-level background variables. Although the inclusion of contact in predicting expulsion attitudes significantly reduced deviance in Model 2a, the relationship between contact and support for expulsion was no longer significant in the final Model 4 ( $b = -0.50, p = .32$ ). This suggests that the effect of contact is mediated by perceived threat (see 3.2). Support for expulsion, in turn, was related to higher perceived threat ( $b = 8.14, p < .001$ ). In line with previous research, more education and left-wing political orientation were positively related with contact with immigrants and negatively related with perceived threat and support for expulsion. Further, men, younger people, and people with higher household income experienced more frequent contact with immigrants. Women and older people supported expulsion more than men and younger people. Individual-level predictors explained 12.1 percent of individual-level

variance in contact, 12.5 percent in perceived threat, and 26.9 percent in support for expulsion.

The results of the municipality-level predictors included in Model 4 are examined next, in the lower panel of Table 2. The main effects found in Model 3 remained almost identical after including the interaction between proportion of Muslims and proportion of immigrants from northern and western Europe. After controlling for the degree of urbanization of municipalities, the proportion of northern/western European immigrants was positively related with contact with immigrants ( $b = 3.72, p = .001$ ), but negatively related with perceived threat ( $b = -1.51, p = .001$ ), and negatively related, though only marginally, with support for expulsion of immigrants ( $b = -1.05, p = .08$ ). These findings are in line with hypothesis 1. A larger proportion of Muslims in municipalities was, in turn, related to an increase in perceived threat ( $b = .80, p = .04$ ). However, the proportion of Muslims also was positively related with contact ( $b = 2.47, p = .02$ ). Thus, hypothesis 2 was partially confirmed. Model 4 revealed an interaction between proportion of Muslims and proportion of immigrants from northern and western

Europe only for perceived threat ( $b = -1.03, p = .005$ ). Multi-level simple slope tests (Preacher, Curran, and Bauer 2006) showed that proportion of Muslims was related to higher perceived threat only in municipalities characterized by a low proportion of northern/western Europeans immigrants ( $b = 1.83, p < .001$ ; municipalities with a large proportion of immigrants from northern and western Europe,  $b = -.02, p = .70$ ). Although threat was not reduced as predicted, living in highly diverse, multicultural municipalities seems to attenuate threat perceptions associated with Muslim immigrants. Finally, support for expulsion was lower in urban

than in rural municipalities ( $b = -3.00, p = .02$ ). Municipality-level factors explained more variance for contact than for perceived threat or support for expulsion, suggesting that high a proportion of immigrants does actually increase opportunities for contact. Indeed, while the model explained 68.8 percent of contextual-level variance in contact, 54.7 percent in perceived threat, and 61.5 percent in expulsion attitudes, it is important to note that a substantial part of the differences between municipalities for all three dependent variables was driven by their different socio-demographic compositions.

**Table 2: Individual- and contextual-level predictors of contact, threat and support for expulsion in Model 4 (non-standardized regression coefficients, standard errors in parentheses)**

	Contact		Threat		Expulsion	
Intercept	52.93	(3.44)	49.24	(1.18)	62.93	(1.68)
Level 1 (individual)						
Contact			-2.91***	(0.37)	-0.50	(0.50)
Threat	-8.26***	(1.00)			8.14***	(0.53)
Sex ( <i>male</i> = 0, <i>female</i> = 1)	-3.93*	(1.69)	-0.09	(0.67)	2.50**	(0.94)
Education	3.66***	(0.85)	-2.35***	(0.32)	-1.70***	(0.44)
Age	-4.95***	(0.86)	-0.50	(0.37)	0.92#	(0.50)
Right-wing political orientation	-1.96*	(0.89)	2.18***	(0.37)	2.88***	(0.51)
Income	1.78#	(0.97)	-0.57	(0.37)	-0.48	(0.50)
% of explained variance	12.1		12.5		26.9	
Level 2 (municipality)						
Proportion of northern/western Europeans	3.72***	(1.16)	-1.51***	(0.47)	-1.05#	(0.60)
Proportion of Muslims	2.47*	(1.06)	0.80*	(0.40)	-0.01	(0.63)
Urbanization	2.39	(2.46)	0.44	(0.93)	-3.00*	(1.26)
Proportion of Muslims x northern/western Europeans	-1.07	(1.03)	-1.03**	(0.36)	0.34	(0.56)
% of explained variance	68.8		54.7		61.5	
% of explained variance without individual predictors	19.3		11.8		7.8	

Note: #  $p < .10$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

### 3.2. Multilevel Path Analysis

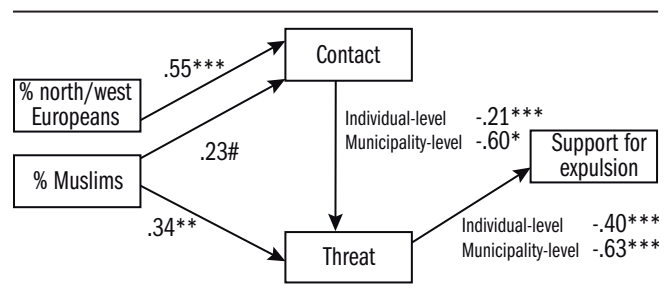
Next, following the procedure for multilevel mediation analyses proposed by Preacher, Zyphur, and Zhang (2010), we examined whether contact and perceived threat mediated the effects of the proportion of Muslims and northern/western European immigrants on support for expulsion. While contact, perceived threat, and support for expulsion were measured on the individual level, a significant part of their variance is due to their clustering structure. Mplus allows the group averages of these variables to be treated as latent variables (Muthén and Muthén 1998–2007), thus enabling individual- and contextual-level effects to be examined simultaneously.

The multilevel path model is summarized in Figure 1. In order to simplify the presentation, only significant paths are displayed.<sup>3</sup> On the individual level, perceived threat increased support for expulsion, whereas contact lowered threat. The direct effect of contact on support for expulsion on the other hand did not reach significance. Examination of the indirect effects showed, in line with previous research and hypothesis 3, that the impact of contact on lowering support for expulsion was explained by a reduction of perceived threat (indirect effect =  $-0.04$ ,  $SE = .01$ ,  $p < .001$ ). On the municipality level, the mediating effect of threat on the relationship between contact and expulsion attitudes was close to significance (indirect effect =  $-0.26$ ,  $SE = .16$ ,  $p = .11$ ).

On the municipality level, we found no direct effects of percentages of immigrants from northern and western Europe or of Muslims on support for expulsion after controlling for contact and threat. However, different mediating mechanisms were revealed. The percentage of immigrants from northern and western Europe in a municipality increased contact with immigrants thereby reducing perceived threat (indirect effect =  $-1.32$ ,  $SE = .62$ ,  $p = .03$ ). Further, the

proportion of Muslims increased perceived threat which marginally heightened support for expulsion (indirect effect =  $1.32$ ,  $SE = .71$ ,  $p = .06$ ). No other indirect paths reached significance, although proportion of Muslims also marginally increased contact.<sup>4</sup>

**Figure 1: Multilevel path model for contact, threat, and support for expulsion**



Note: Standardized path coefficients displayed. Controlled for age, sex, political orientation, education, and income on the individual level and urbanization on the municipality level. #  $p = .05$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

### 3.3. Additional Analyses by Linguistic Region

As repeatedly reflected in referendum results on immigration-related topics, stances towards immigrants are stricter in the German- and Italian-speaking regions than in the French-speaking region (see also Armingeon 2000; Cattacin et al. 2006). The multilevel regression analyses were conducted separately for the participants from the German-speaking part ( $N = 1,107$ ) and from the French-speaking part ( $N = 321$ ) to improve the validity of our findings. The Italian-speaking part was excluded due to small sample size,  $N = 44$  in 12 municipalities.<sup>5</sup> Although the patterns were similar, some relationships did not reach significance in the French-speaking sample (e.g., proportion of Muslims and perceived threat). This could be due to the small sample size.

<sup>3</sup> According to Preacher and Hayes (2008), in order to avoid spurious inclusions of indirect effects, even small values of direct paths should be included in the model. Thus, a saturated model was tested. However, also a model including only significant paths fitted the data well;  $\chi^2(13) = 27.18$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ;  $\chi^2/df = 2.09$ ; CFI = .98; TLI = .96; RMSEA = .03 SRMR = 0.02.

<sup>4</sup> As Muslims and their life style have been shown to mainly elicit symbolic threat (Velasco et al. 2008), the analyses were also conducted with a three-item symbolic threat construct. The result pattern was essentially the same.

<sup>5</sup> Note that the distribution reflects the proportions of linguistic groups in the overall population: in 2000, 72.4 percent of the population had German, 21 percent French and 4.3 percent Italian as first language (less than 1 percent had Romansh, see SFSO, www.admin.ch/bfs).



#### 4. Discussion

We find that in Switzerland a higher proportion of northern/western European – valued – immigrants in a municipality increases contact and indirectly decreases threat, thereby leading to opposition to expulsion of norm-violating immigrants. A high proportion of Muslim – devalued – immigrants increases perceived threat which, in turn, leads to support for expulsion (confirmed only for the German-speaking region). The proportion of Muslim immigrants also increases intergroup contact. These findings provide support for both threat and contact theories, suggesting a beneficial impact of immigrant presence on reducing prejudice when immigrants are “culturally similar” and valued, whereas the impact of “culturally different” and devalued immigrants is mixed.

On the individual level, in line with past research, perceived threat mediates the effect of intercultural friendships on exclusionary attitudes. Insofar as the data is correlational, firm causal claims are not warranted. Considering perceived threat as a mediating variable between intergroup contact and prejudice is nevertheless in line with intergroup contact theory and with past research. Alternatively, contact may mediate the relationship between threat and prejudice. In the current study, after perceived threat was included in the model contact was no longer directly related to support for expulsion, so this reverse mediational relationship was not confirmed.

Our findings raise several points. First, immigrant types are more complex and fluid than categorization on a simple “cultural distance – similarity” axis can reveal (Wimmer 2004). This dimension intersects with a number of others, many of which are *constructed* in political discourse and lay discussion. A distinction between “old” and “new” immigrants is one example. The Italians, Spanish, and Portuguese immigrants of the 1970s are now “old” immigrants perceived to be part of the Swiss ingroup, as opposed to “new” immigrants (e.g., from outside Europe). Moreover, some supposedly culturally distant immigrant groups are perceived as willing to adapt to the Swiss lifestyle (e.g., Tamils), whereas others are viewed as incapable or unwilling to adapt (Wimmer 2004). Yet another distinction is made between supposedly legitimate immigrants – those

coming to work – and illegitimate asylum seekers and undocumented immigrants. Indeed, depending on the case, Muslim immigrants can be at either end of the described dichotomies (“new”/“old”, “legitimate”/“illegitimate”). Membership of low-status social categories is, however, a shared feature of the heterogeneous category of Muslims (Afonso 2005). Indeed, because “culturally distant” immigrants are often in the lowest social categories and “culturally similar” immigrants often more closely resemble the citizens of the host country, the threats associated with the two groups may also differ. While culturally distant, poor immigrants may be seen as threatening local values and burdening the welfare state, culturally similar, richer immigrants may be felt to threaten access to high-status positions on the job market. Defining finer distinctions between different immigrant groups and cross-cutting memberships will therefore be a fruitful avenue for future research.

Second, one must keep in mind that due to the data at our disposal, we were examining attitudes towards “generic” immigrants rather than attitudes specifically towards Muslims or northern/western Europeans. This shortcoming makes it impossible to know which groups the participants were thinking of when they responded to the questions. It is plausible that the respondents’ ideas about “immigrants” are partly built upon their everyday experiences. For people living in municipalities with a visible population of Muslim immigrants, images of Muslims are more likely to come to mind when they read questions about immigrants than for people living in municipalities where Muslim immigrants are just one group among many. This may explain why a high proportion of Muslims was related to higher perceived threat only in municipalities with a low proportion of immigrants from northern and western Europe. Though we cannot know how salient (if at all) the proportion of Muslim or immigrants from northern and western Europe was to the respondents (see Glaser 2003), the findings of the current study are interesting in their own right for both contact theory and threat theory as they reveal that the effect of being exposed to a specific immigrant group extends to relationships with and perceptions of immigrants in general.

Third, in order to understand the two processes related to the proportion of Muslims in a municipality – the increase

in both intergroup contact and perceived threat – we must remember that contextual effects are not necessarily direct as individuals react differently to contextual cues. We might for instance assume that the presence of “culturally distant” immigrants triggers perceptions of threat in particular among people who rely on contextual cues. Danaci (2009) shows that the proportion of Muslims in a Swiss municipality does not affect intolerance towards Muslims among citizens who are politically clearly conservative or liberal. It does, however, affect middle-of-the-road individuals without a clear political stance: A higher proportion of Muslims in a municipality increased tolerance among moderately conservative individuals, whereas the opposite was true among moderately liberal individuals. Moreover, even when we examine diversity at a proximal level such as within a municipality, some people within the municipality will have more opportunities for contact with immigrants than others, for example due to self-selection or holding similar positions at work, whereas others who lack direct opportunities for contact may perceive enhanced levels of threat. The impact of social position on attitudes towards immigrants has also been amply demonstrated (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010). Host country citizens with low socioeconomic status (education, occupation, and income) are more likely than high-status citizens to compete for the same jobs or housing as immigrants, who generally have lower status. Thus, it is plausible that members of low-status categories will experience immigrants as more threatening (Scheepers et al. 2002). High-status citizens have more positive attitudes toward immigration, regardless of the immigrants’ status

(Hainmueller and Hiscox 2007). Accounting for variation in individuals’ social position and ideological values when analyzing effects of different types of diversity opens yet another interesting direction for future research.

Finally, studying how the prevailing “ideological climate” (Sarrasin et al. 2010) affects immigration attitudes may help us to understand the simultaneous increase of threat and contact that occurs as the proportion of Muslims in a municipality increases. In municipalities where intolerant dominant worldviews legitimize negative immigration attitudes, the proportion of Muslims may evoke threat, whereas this should not be the case in tolerant municipalities. It is thus necessary to examine whether shared ideological worldviews affect the relationship between proportion of Muslims and immigration attitudes. Indeed Sarrasin and colleagues (2010) find the lowest levels of intergroup contact in conservative municipalities with low proportions of immigrants, whereas in municipalities with a high proportion of immigrants, conservative climate does not affect intergroup contact. Further research should also investigate the interaction between ideological climate and proportion of different types of immigrants in a region.

In sum, this paper underscores some pitfalls of examining the influence of generic diversity on xenophobia. Understanding *how* and *why* exposure to specific immigrant groups has beneficial or detrimental effects on immigration attitudes can help counteract xenophobic tendencies in multicultural societies.



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# Public Support for a Ban on Headscarves: A Cross-National Perspective

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# Public Support for a Ban on Headscarves: A Cross-National Perspective

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This paper compares a psychological explanation of support for a ban on headscarves in the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the Netherlands. This study examines how perceptions of threat posed by Muslims and Islam and the overall attitude towards Muslims explain support for a ban on headscarves. In addition, cross-national comparisons are made to study how these relations are affected by contextual differences. Analyses are based on the 2005 survey on Islamic extremism by the Pew Research Center. Results show that the countries have a large influence on whether someone supports the ban on headscarves, indicating that contextual differences matter. In addition, having a negative attitude towards Muslims makes it more likely to support a ban on headscarves. In general, perceived threat contributes to stronger support, although there are slight differences in effect between the countries. Finally, perceived threat equally influences support for the ban on headscarves among prejudiced and non-prejudiced people.

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion are core principles underlying democratic western societies, have been central in the development of the constitutions of many Western European countries, and have been valued within these societies for even longer. Rarely, however, have these countries been confronted with the arrival of a large number of immigrants who do not share the religious background of the majority population (Hunter 2002). The growing number of Muslims in Western Europe has generated renewed interest in the debate on freedom of religion and religious practices. This debate is not only limited to the individual and private practice of religion, but often revolves around questions of religious discrimination and the extent to which Muslims or minorities in general, can practise their faith within Western societies. The interplay between the private and public spheres of religion is, for instance, illustrated by controversies that have arisen throughout Europe concerning the wearing of headscarves by Muslim women. Restricting a minority group in their rights and liberties can cause tensions and conflicts between groups within a society, such as increased discrimination, marginalisation and social isolation of Muslims by non-Muslims. This, in turn, can result in stronger feelings

of social exclusion and radicalisation among Muslims. A deteriorating relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims would have a great impact on the political and social cohesion of western societies and it is important to identify the determinants of the willingness to limit the right of Muslims to practise their religion.

In this paper I examine psychological factors that may explain support for a ban on headscarves, emphasising the individual and the overall attitude towards Muslims, perceived threats posed by Islam and Muslims, and the interaction with cross-national differences.

My comparison is between the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the Netherlands. These countries have similar profiles with respect to the position of Muslims in their societies: Muslims arrived as immigrants from the 1950s mainly as guest workers (later joined by their families) or as post-colonial migrants, and Muslims are overrepresented in the lower socioeconomic segments of society. Unemployment rates of immigrants in general, and Muslims in particular are considerably higher than unemployment rates of the overall population. Furthermore, there are large income

differences between Muslims and the overall population in Western European countries (Buijs and Rath 2006; Pew Research Center 2007; EUMC 2006). Despite the similarities, the countries differ in other aspects such as the number of Muslims, countries of origin, and the way Muslim minorities and immigrants in general are dealt with, for instance with respect to citizenship requirements (Weldon 2006) and formal church-state arrangements (Fetzer and Soper 2005). Exact estimates of the Muslim population in Western Europe are difficult to arrive at because most countries do not record religious affiliations.

In *France* the number of Muslims is generally estimated to be between 6 and 9 percent of the population, most of whom have an Algerian or Moroccan background (Buijs and Rath 2006; Dassetto, Ferrari, and Maréchal 2007). French society is characterised by a strict version of secularism (*laïcité*) and a rigorous separation of state and church (Hunter 2002).

The *United Kingdom*, in contrast, officially recognizes distinct cultural and religious groups, which have equal status under the law (Borooah and Mangan 2009). Muslims in the United Kingdom mainly have an Asian background and come from India, Bangladesh and Pakistan. Muslims are generally estimated to make up less than 3 percent of the total population (Dassetto, Ferrari, and Maréchal 2007).

The Netherlands and Germany can be placed between France and the United Kingdom. In both countries the number of Muslims is estimated at approximately 5 percent of the population. *German* Muslims have predominantly a Turkish background. Immigrants were long perceived as temporary and encouraged to maintain their own culture, customs and language. With the liberalisation of citizenship policies in the 1990s, the emphasis shifted towards similarities, rather than differences (Brubaker 2001). Integration policies in *the Netherlands* were also aimed at empowering different ethnic groups and supported, for instance, teaching and broadcasting in minority languages, and the establishment of religious schools. In contrast to Germany, the Dutch aim was to integrate ethnic minorities into society, facilitated by a relatively easy naturalisation process, granting local voting rights to foreigners and anti-discrimination

legislation that ensured their ability to maintain their own culture (Michalowski 2005). In recent years, the focus has shifted more towards assimilation, meaning that minorities are expected to adopt the majority's culture rather than maintaining their own.

### 1. The Headscarf Debate in Western Europe

The wearing of headscarves by Muslim women has become one of the central issues in the debate over the position of Muslims in Western Europe. This is a complex and multifaceted debate and although many Muslim women voluntarily choose to wear a headscarf for religious or cultural reasons (Bouw et al. 2003; Shadid and Van Koningsveld 2005), non-Muslims often interpret the headscarf as a symbol of oppression of women, patriarchy, and rejection of gender equality (EUMC 2006; McGoldrick 2006). Opponents of the headscarf often argue that Muslim women wear a headscarf because they are forced to do so by their parents, brothers, husbands or religious leaders (Shadid and Van Koningsveld 2005; Saharso and Lettinga 2008). The headscarf debate also touches on other concerns related to Muslim minorities; there is for instance discussion on whether the headscarf is really a requirement of the Islamic religion. Given that this is not entirely clear, the wearing of the headscarf is perceived as a symbol of Islamic fundamentalism, which, in turn, is associated with terrorism and violence (Shadid and Van Koningsveld 2005; McGoldrick 2006). More generally, the headscarf is perceived as a sign of immigrants' unwillingness to integrate into western societies and as a rejection of western values (McGoldrick 2006).

Several European countries have recently implemented laws concerning the wearing of headscarves in public places (Dassetto, Ferrari, and Maréchal 2007; McGoldrick 2006; Saroglou et al. 2009). The best-known example is probably the *French* law of 2004, prohibiting pupils in public schools from wearing any ostensible religious signs (Law no. 228, March 15, 2004). The main argument for this prohibition was that religious symbols, and thus the headscarf, would conflict with the secular and neutral character of the republican state (McGoldrick 2006). The French Republic and its *laïcité* emerged through intense fights against the Catholic Church, especially, and the hard-won separation of reli-



gion and public schooling remains a sensitive issue (Gunn 2004). Similar legislation has been proposed in Belgium and Denmark, but has been rejected (Dassetto, Ferrari, and Maréchal 2007).

In contrast to France, the *United Kingdom* has a very liberal approach to the wearing of religious symbols. In most teaching institutions the Islamic headscarf is accepted and if conflicts arise, they are generally resolved within the institution. There is no general legislation that prohibits women from wearing headscarves, but there are other provisions that regulate the issue, for instance, that pupils' headscarves should comply with the school uniform (McGoldrick 2006; Molokotos-Liederman 2000).

In *Germany*, regulations on the wearing of headscarves in public places such as schools are laid down at the level of the federal states, which has led to a variety of approaches for teachers and other civil servants. Three states (Berlin, Bremen and Lower Saxony) follow a secular approach and have implemented legislation that prohibits teachers and other civil servants from wearing any visible religious symbols and clothes. Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Hesse, North Rhine-Westphalia and Saarland implemented a more conservative Christian approach and only prohibited teachers and civil servants from wearing a headscarf, whereas Christian crucifixes, nuns' habits and the Jewish kippah are allowed. The remaining states have not passed explicit regulations on religious clothing. School and university students in Germany are generally not restricted in the wearing of headscarves (Berghahn 2008; Faas 2010).

Lastly, in *the Netherlands* there is a broad ability to live according to particular group identities and traditions, including in the public sphere. The Dutch Equal Treatment Commission generally rules in favour of women who want to wear the headscarf, ruling that it is an expression of their religious identity, and as such protected by the right to freedom of religion. Distinctions are, however, made between institutional contexts; for reasons of neutrality, religious symbols (including the headscarf) are prohibited in courtrooms and the police force, but teachers and pupils are allowed to wear headscarves in schools (Saharso and Lettinga 2008).

Although there are differences depending on institutional settings and traditions, there seems to be a cross-national consensus that face-veiling is undesirable (McGoldrick 2006; Berghahn 2008). The French parliament recently approved a law that prohibits Muslim women from wearing veils that cover their face, like the burqa or the niqab, in public. According to President Nicolas Sarkozy, the law is intended to protect women from being forced to wear the veil (NOS 2010). The lower chamber of the Belgium parliament has also voted in favour of a similar ban on face-covering veils, but this law still has to be approved by the senate. In addition to reasons of morality and the oppressed position of women, Belgian supporters of this ban focus on reasons of public safety; people who cover their face pose a security risk (Cendrowicz 2010).

## 2. Perceived Threat as an Explanation for Support for a Ban on Headscarves

Studies identify the perception of threat as one of the main predictors of the strength of support for the rights and liberties of others (Gibson 2006; McIntosh et al. 1995; Scheepers, Gijsberts, and Coenders 2002; Sullivan and Transue 1999). Integrated Threat Theory suggests four basic types of threat that can result in negative attitudes towards out-groups: *realistic threats*, *symbolic threats*, *intergroup anxiety* and *negative stereotypes* (Stephan et al. 1998, 559). *Realistic threat* refers to economic and physical threats, such as competition over material and economic resources and safety concerns. Despite the label "realistic", these threats do not have to be "real"; the mere perception of threat can also result in a negative attitude. Nor does the label imply that other forms of threat would not be "realistic". *Symbolic threat* is conceptualised in terms of differences between norms, values and belief systems (Riek, Mania, and Gaertner 2006). Perceptions, for instance, that Islam and democracy are incompatible, or that values Muslims adhere to substantially deviate from what is valued in the West contribute to feelings that Islam and Muslims pose a threat to the values and belief systems of western societies. *Intergroup anxiety* refers to the fear of being treated negatively in interactions with the out-group. *Negative stereotypes* refer to characteristics of an out-group that may be perceived as threatening for the individual's well-being (Stephan et al. 1998). Support for the rights and liberties of others is a societal issue, rather

than a personal one; it is about how society should react to minorities who practice their own (religious) customs.

Public discourse concerning Islam and Muslims in Europe has been dominated by associations with violence and terrorism. The Iranian Revolution in 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini's fatwa against Salman Rushdie in 1989, the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001, Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005, and the murder of Theo van Gogh by a Muslim fundamentalist in the Netherlands in November 2004 have contributed to a perception of Islam posing a security threat to western societies (Volpp 2002; Oswald 2005; Cashin 2010). In addition, debates about Islam and Muslims increasingly focus on whether the world views and ways of life of Muslims are compatible with that what is valued within western societies. Majorities in France (50 percent), the United Kingdom (61 percent), the Netherlands (61 percent) and Germany (84 percent) disagreed with the statement that the culture of Muslims fits well into their country. Conflicting values are perceived in terms of gender relations. One widely shared opinion (more than 75 percent of the population in West European countries) is that the attitude of Muslims towards women contradicts western values (Zick and Küpper 2009).

The Islamic headscarf is often said to stand for Islamic extremism and terrorism, rejection of western societies and their values, and a general failure of integration (Shadid and Van Koningsveld 2005; McGoldrick 2006; Saharso and Lettinga 2008). My first hypothesis is that people who perceive Islam and Muslims as a greater security threat will be more likely to support a ban on headscarves. The second hypothesis is that people who perceive Muslims as preferring to remain distinct from the larger society will be more likely to support a ban on headscarves. However, individual attitudes and beliefs and the relations between them need to be considered in the context in which they are expressed. Prevailing ideologies and existing policies on how to deal with diversity and historical arrangements between religions and the state influence people's notions on what should and should not be supported (Fetzer and Soper 2005; Coenders et al. 2008). It is expected that in France, which has a strict separation of church and state, support for a ban on headscarves will be more widespread, even where

people have low levels of perceived threat. In contrast, in the United Kingdom, and to a lesser extent in the Netherlands and Germany, there is a tradition of multiculturalism and religious groups are encouraged to follow their own practices. I expect that in these countries there will be more opposition towards such a ban, despite possibly higher levels of perceived threat.

Traditionally, research on support for rights and liberties of others focuses only on those who indicate a negative attitude towards others. More general value orientations such as universalism or an overall orientation towards civil liberties and cultural diversity can lead prejudiced people to positive tolerance positions (Sullivan and Transue 1999). The assumption in tolerance research is that the question of tolerating activities of others is only relevant for those with a negative attitude towards the out-group and would not apply to those with a favourable attitude (Marcus et al. 1995; Vogt 1997). A few studies have shown, however, that even when people have a positive attitude towards an out-group, they can also be reluctant to support its rights and liberties (Saroglou et al. 2009; McIntosh et al. 1995; Van der Noll, Poppe, and Verkuyten 2010). Sniderman and Hagendoorn (2007) show that emphasizing national identity can elicit exclusionary reactions among unprejudiced people. In addition, a comparison between prejudiced and non-prejudiced adolescents in the Netherlands showed that the perception of symbolic threat influenced the level of tolerance among prejudiced and non-prejudiced respondents alike (Van der Noll, Poppe, and Verkuyten 2010). This finding suggests that perceptions of threat are important for making tolerance judgements – for people with a positive attitude as well as for those with a negative attitude. In light of these studies, I expect no differences between people with positive or negative attitudes towards Muslims in the relationship between perceived threat and support for a ban on headscarves.

### 3. Methods

The analyses presented here are based on the 2005 survey on Islamic extremism, which was part of the Pew Global Attitudes project (Pew Research Center 2005). The Pew Research Center is a non-partisan "fact-tank" that provides information on issues, attitudes and trends that are important for America and the world. The Pew Global

Attitudes Project measures attitudes towards globalisation, democracy, terrorism and the United States in all regions of the world (Pew Research Center 2005, 9). The 2005 survey on Islamic extremism covers seventeen nations, including the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the Netherlands. The original sample from each country consisted of approximately 750 respondents aged 18 and above. Respondents who indicated that they were Muslim and those who did not answer whether they would support a ban on headscarves were excluded from the analyses. This resulted in sample sizes of 668 (United Kingdom), 722 (France), 710 (Germany) and 738 (the Netherlands). Data was collected via telephone interviews in April and May 2005.<sup>1</sup>

### 3.1. Measures

The dependent variable is support for a ban on headscarves worn by Muslim women. The question was worded as follows: “Some countries have decided to ban the wearing of headscarves by Muslim women in public places including schools. Do you think this is a good idea or a bad idea?” The variable is dichotomous, with the answer possibilities “good idea” (1) and “bad idea” (0).

Overall attitude towards Muslims was measured by the question: “Please tell me if you have a very favourable, somewhat favourable, somewhat unfavourable or very unfavourable opinion of Muslims?” Answers were rated on a four-point scale, recoded into a scale in which 0 represents a very favourable opinion, .33 a favourable opinion, .67 an unfavourable opinion and 1 a very unfavourable opinion of Muslims. With this measurement of the overall opinion of Muslims, I follow the one-dimensional conceptualisation of an attitude as an overall favourable or unfavourable evaluation (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). An unfavourable overall attitude reflects prejudice towards Muslims. Although this item could be sensitive to social desirability, it is the only possibility offered by the questionnaire, and the results show that respondents did not refrain from indicating a negative opinion of Muslims.

Perceptions of threat were measured with several questions. First of all, to account for the perception that Muslims reject western societies and its values (symbolic threat), respondents were asked: “Do you think most Muslims coming to our country today want to adopt [survey country’s] customs and way of life, or do you think that they want to be distinct from the larger [survey country] society?” This is a dichotomous variable with “adopt our ways” (0) and “want to be distinct” (1) as answer categories. Strictly speaking, this item does not ask about threat; people can perceive that Muslims want to remain distinct and have no problem with it, or even encourage it. Because the debate on headscarves is often associated with a perceived rejection of western societies and values by Muslims and thus the desire of Muslims to be distinct from the larger society, I expect that this variable will function as a proxy for perceived symbolic threat. To measure perceived security threat, a question elicited concerns related to Islamic extremism: “How concerned, if at all, are you about the rise of Islamic extremism in our country these days? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?” The original four-point scale was reduced to a three-point scale ranging from 0 to 1, collapsing the “not too concerned” and “not at all concerned” categories. A higher score indicates more concern. A dummy variable was created indicating whether respondents perceived Islam as more violent than other religions. Respondents were asked to choose between the statements “Some religions are more prone to violence than others” or “All religions are about the same when it comes to violence”. Respondents who agreed with the first statement were subsequently asked which religion they perceived as most violent, choosing between Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. Respondents who indicated that “all religions are the same when it comes to violence” (45 percent) and who indicated a religion other than Islam to be most violent (12.5 percent of those who stated that some religions are more prone to violence) were the reference category (coded 0) compared to those who perceived Islam to be more violent (coded 1).

<sup>1</sup> The dataset is available from the website of the Pew Global Attitudes project <http://pewglobal.org/category/data-sets/> under May 2005 Survey Data.



Background characteristics like gender, age, education and income were also collected. These background variables are often found to relate to prejudice. A common finding is that women, younger people and people with a higher level of education and income have generally less negative attitudes towards minorities (Chandler and Tsai 2001). The country-specific scales for education were reduced to one scale of low, middle and high level of education. A four-point scale was created for income by dividing the country-specific income scales into quartiles.

### 3.2. Analyses

In the first step of analysis, differences in levels of support for a ban on headscarves, attitude towards Muslims and threat perceptions across countries were identified by analysis of variance with Scheffé's post-hoc comparisons. Analysis of variance is preferred in this situation because general mean comparisons between the countries would inflate the risk of falsely rejecting the null hypothesis (Type I error). Scheffé's post-hoc comparison is among the more conservative methods and was used to reveal which countries differed from each other. The second step was to examine the bivariate correlations (Spearman's rho) of support for a ban on headscarves and the various predictors and to compare these across countries. Lastly, to test whether support for a ban on headscarves could be explained by

attitude towards Muslims and perceptions of threat, logistic regression analysis was conducted. To test whether there were structural differences in the explanatory model across countries, dummy variables were included for the countries, and interactions between the countries and the predictor variables were tested for their significance. Missing values were excluded from the analyses via list-wise deletion.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Descriptives

A majority of respondents in France, Germany and the Netherlands favoured a ban on headscarves in public places (Table 1). In the United Kingdom, on the other hand, a majority of 68 percent perceived such a ban to be a bad idea. The analysis of variance showed that the level of support differed significantly between the four countries, with the French respondents being most supportive, followed by the German and Dutch, and the British respondents being the least supportive ( $F(3, 2838) = 122.6, p < .001, \eta^2 = .11$ ). These results correspond with the expectations based on traditional relations between church and state: in France there is broad support for a neutral and secular public sphere, whereas in the United Kingdom there is broad support for the presence of different religious and cultural identities in the public sphere; Germany and the Netherlands fall between these two extremes.

**Table 1: Frequency distributions of dependent and independent variables, by country**

		UK		France		Germany		Netherlands	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Support for ban on headscarves	Yes	213	32	572	79	425	60	380	51
	No	455	68	150	21	285	40	358	49
	Total	668	100	725	100	740	100	752	100
Opinion of Muslims (overall attitude)	Very positive	117	20	58	8	28	4	33	5
	Positive	365	63	415	59	289	46	306	43
	Negative	61	11	158	22	248	40	268	37
	Very negative	37	6	78	11	65	10	109	15
	Total	580	100	709	100	630	100	716	100
Muslims want to remain distinct (symbolic threat)	Yes	411	76	413	60	611	89	483	68
	No	127	24	274	40	73	11	230	32
	Total	538	100	687	100	684	100	713	100
Concern about extremism (security threat)	No	201	30	175	24	178	25	170	23
	Somewhat	242	37	322	45	306	44	335	45
	Very	216	33	224	31	221	31	232	32
	Total	659	100	721	100	705	100	737	100
Islam more prone to violence (security threat)	Yes	200	30	303	42	301	42	393	53
	No	468	70	419	58	409	58	345	47
	Total	668	100	722	100	710	100	738	100

About half of the respondents in the Netherlands and Germany, 52 and 50 percent respectively, indicated that they had a negative opinion of Muslims. Significantly more positive were the British and French respondents, of whom 83 and 67 percent respectively reported a (very) favourable opinion of Muslims ( $F(3, 2635) = 75.6, p < .001, \eta^2 = .08$ ). The results indicate no clear relationship between the overall attitude towards Muslims and support for a ban on headscarves. In France and Germany, support for a ban on headscarves was more widespread than prejudice towards Muslims, whereas in the United Kingdom prejudice towards Muslims was more widespread. Bivariate correlations show that people with a negative attitude towards Muslims were more likely to support a ban on headscarves, but the associations were weak ( $\rho < .30$ , Table 2).

**Table 2: Spearman's rho ( $\rho$ ) correlation coefficients, with support for a ban on headscarves, by country**

Variable		UK	France	Germany	Netherlands
Negative opinion of Muslims (overall attitude)	$\rho$	.29***	.19***	.18***	.29***
	<i>N</i>	580	709	630	716
Muslims want to remain distinct (symbolic threat)	$\rho$	.17***	.11**	.03	.22***
	<i>N</i>	538	687	684	713
Concern about extremism in country (security threat)	$\rho$	.19***	.10**	.17***	.14***
	<i>N</i>	659	721	705	737
Islam more prone to violence (security threat)	$\rho$	.11**	.10*	.12**	.17***
	<i>N</i>	668	722	710	738

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$

A majority of respondents in all four countries had the opinion that most Muslims prefer to remain distinct from the larger society, rather than adopting the country's way of life. Nevertheless, analysis of variance showed that there were still medium-sized differences between all countries, with the German respondents most strongly endorsing this view (89 percent), followed by the British, the Dutch and finally the French (60 percent) ( $F(3, 2710) = 62.0, p < .001, \eta^2 = .06$ ). The perception that Muslims want to remain distinct from the larger society was weakly associated with support for a ban on headscarves in the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands ( $\rho < .22$ ), while in Germany, this association was not found. This could be explained in terms of the German historical practice of treating immigrants as a separate community and encouraging them to maintain their own culture and habits. On the other hand, the lack of association might also have a technical reason because there is little variation among German respondents.

Around one third of the respondents in all four countries were very concerned about the rise of Islamic extremism in their country. Respondents in the United Kingdom were most divided in their opinion; here we found the highest percentage who were not concerned about extremism, as well as the highest percentage who were very concerned. However, the differences between the countries were marginal and not significant ( $F(3, 2932) = .38, p = .769$ ). As expected, people who were more concerned about the rise of Islamic extremism were more likely to support a ban on headscarves, but the relation was very weak ( $\rho < .19$ ). Lastly, more than half of the Dutch respondents had the opinion that Islam is more violent than other religions. In Germany and France 42 percent and in the United Kingdom three out of ten respondents indicated that Islam is more violent than other religions. The differences between the countries were small but significant ( $F(3, 2886) = 28.5, p < .001, \eta^2 = .03$ ), except between Germany and France. People who perceived Islam as being more prone to violence were more likely to support a ban on headscarves, but the association was weak ( $\rho < .17$ ).

Although all associations were in the expected directions, they differed in strength across countries. The association between the overall attitude towards Muslims and support for a ban was weakest in Germany and was significantly weaker

than the associations found in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. Further significant differences were found, between Germany compared to the United Kingdom and to the Netherlands, in the strength of the association between the perception that Muslims want to remain distinct and support for a ban on headscarves. These findings strengthen the expectation that a psychological explanation of public support depends on contextual and cross-national differences.

#### 4.2. Explaining Support for a Ban on Headscarves

Logistic regression analyses were conducted to examine the extent to which attitudes towards Muslims and threat perceptions explain support for a ban on headscarves in the different countries. Evaluation of the model for the individual countries shows that the explanatory model was a good fit for the data for all countries (Table 3). However, the extent to which the predictors contributed to correct classification of supporters and opponents of a ban on headscarves varied across countries. Compared to the baseline model, in which no predictors were included, the ability of the model to predict whether a respondent supports or opposes a ban on headscarves increased by 14 percent for the Netherlands. The increase was, however, much lower in the other countries and at its minimum in France, where the predictors added not even one percent to the correct prediction of support of a ban on headscarves. This means that in France the psychological factors in this model did not explain why a person supports a ban on headscarves.

**Table 3: Logistic regression of support for a ban on headscarves: Model evaluation by country and pooled sample**

		UK	France	Germany	Netherlands	All
Likelihood ratio test	$\chi^2$	63.1***	39.5***	53.5***	88.8***	447.3***
	<i>df</i>	12	12	12	12	30
	<i>N</i>	398	658	520	607	2174
Classification rate (percentages)	· Baseline	66.3	79.8	61.0	52.1	59.3
	· Countries					65.1
	· Predictors	72.2	80.2	66.9	65.9	70.1

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

The differences in explanatory power between the countries can have different underlying causes. One possibility is that there are structural differences between countries in the effect that a predictor variable has on the dependent variable. For instance, the perception that most Muslims do not want to adopt the way of life of the country might be related to support for a ban on headscarves in some countries and not in others. To test this hypothesis, the country samples were pooled and dummy variables were included in the logistic regression analyses for the countries. Interactions between the countries and the predictor variables were included to test whether there were structural differences between the countries. The model had a good fit to the data (Table 3, last column) and results in a correct classification rate of 70 percent, meaning that for 70 percent of the respondents the model could rightly predict whether they supported or opposed a ban. This is an increase of 11 percent compared to the baseline model. A substantial part of the increase is due to the inclusion of the countries.

Table 4 shows that compared to the Dutch respondents, Germans are four times more likely to support a ban on headscarves, and the French nine times. The British were 1.5 times less likely than the Dutch to support a ban on headscarves, with an odds ratio of 0.63. The results shown for the predictor variables (Table 4, top rows) are the main effects for the Netherlands (reference country). The main effects for the other countries can be obtained by adding the interaction effects (displayed under the respective countries) to the main effect of the reference category.

The results are quite similar across countries. Among the psychological factors a negative attitude towards Muslims was the strongest predictor of support. In the Netherlands and France, a more negative attitude made it six times more likely that someone would support a ban on headscarves. In Germany and the United Kingdom, this effect was slightly weaker, but the differences between the countries were not significant. Significant differences did, however, exist with respect to the effect of the perception that Muslims prefer to remain distinct. This was the second most important predictor for support for a ban on headscarves in the Netherlands, France and the United Kingdom; people who perceived that Muslims do not want to adopt the country's way of life were almost twice as likely to support such a ban as respondents

who did not have this opinion. This was different in Germany: Germans who perceived that Muslims want to remain distinct were only half as likely (odds ratio is 0.46) to support a ban as Dutch respondents with the same opinion. The perception that Muslims want to remain distinct did thus not have a significant impact on support for a ban on headscarves in the German sample. This might, again, be attributed to German national practices.

Dutch and German respondents who had the perception that Islam is more prone to violence than other religions were 1.5 times more likely to support a ban on headscarves. This effect seemed to be weaker in France and the United Kingdom (odds ratios 0.65 and 0.64 respectively), but the differences between the countries were not significant. The seemingly weaker effects in France and the United Kingdom are in line with the expectation that in countries with strong secularist or multicultural traditions, perceptions of threat (high or low) are less relevant.

Being "somewhat concerned" about the rise of Islamic extremism was chosen as the reference category for the logistic regression analysis. The question wording more or less stated that there has been a rise of Islamic extremism, and answering that one was not concerned might have been seen as inappropriate (even though, on average, one fourth of the respondents did indicate that they were not (or not at all) concerned about this). The results show that being very concerned or unconcerned about the rise of Islamic extremism did not contribute to the explanation of support for a ban on headscarves.

I hypothesised that there would be no differences between people with a positive or negative attitude towards Muslims with respect to the effect of the indicators of perceived threat on support for a ban on headscarves. Interactions between attitude towards Muslims and the indicators of perceived threat were included, but were very weak and not significant. This supports the expectation that perceptions of threat affect prejudiced and unprejudiced people alike in their tolerance judgements.

The model was controlled for the effect of gender, age, education and income, none of which showed a significant effect in any of the countries.

**Table 4: Logistic regression of support for the ban on headscarves, pooled sample (N= 2174).**

	B	(SE)	Wald	df	Exp(B)
Constant	-0.21	(.34)	36.53	1	0.13***
Negative opinion of Muslims ( <i>overall attitude</i> )	1.86	(.39)	23.48	1	6.45***
Muslims want to remain distinct ( <i>symbolic threat</i> )	0.62	(.20)	9.86	1	1.87***
Concern about extremism ( <i>security threat</i> )					
- not at all / not too concerned	0.01	(.22)	0.00	1	1.01
- somewhat concerned	-	-	3.24	2	
- very concerned	0.36	(.21)	2.91	1	1.43
Islam more prone to violence ( <i>security threat</i> )	0.47	(.18)	6.69	1	1.59*
Netherlands (reference category)	-	-			
Germany	1.42	(.44)	10.43	1	4.15***
x negative opinion of Muslims ( <i>overall attitude</i> )	- 0.52	(.56)	0.85	1	0.60
x Muslims want to remain distinct ( <i>symbolic threat</i> )	- 0.78	(.36)	4.69	1	0.46*
x concern about extremism ( <i>security threat</i> )					
x not at all / not too concerned	-0.39	(.33)	1.46	1	0.68
x somewhat concerned	-	-	1.48	2	
x very concerned	-0.08	(.31)	0.07	1	0.92
x Islam more prone to violence ( <i>security threat</i> )	-0.07	(.27)	0.06	1	0.94
United Kingdom	-0.46	(.45)	1.09	1	0.63
x negative opinion of Muslims ( <i>overall attitude</i> )	0.26	(.62)	0.18	1	1.30
x Muslims want to remain distinct ( <i>symbolic threat</i> )	-0.05	(.37)	0.02	1	0.96
x concern about extremism ( <i>security threat</i> )					
x not at all / not too concerned	-0.18	(.38)	0.22	1	0.84
x somewhat concerned	-	-	1.20	2	
x very concerned	0.25	(.34)	.54	1	1.29
x Islam more prone to violence ( <i>security threat</i> )	-0.44	(.31)	2.03	1	0.64
France	2.20	(.36)	38.24	1	8.99***
x negative opinion of Muslims ( <i>overall attitude</i> )	-0.01	(.60)	0.00	1	0.99
x Muslims want to remain distinct ( <i>symbolic threat</i> )	-0.36	(.29)	1.57	1	0.70
x concern about extremism ( <i>security threat</i> )					
x not at all / not too concerned	-0.34	(.33)	1.08	1	0.71
x somewhat concerned	-	-	1.54	2	
x very concerned	-0.32	(.33)	1.00	1	0.72
x Islam more prone to violence ( <i>security threat</i> )	-0.44	(.28)	2.47	1	0.65

Note: Model is controlled for gender, age, education and income. None of the control variables had a significant effect.  
 \*\*\*  $p < .001$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*  $p < .05$

## 5. Conclusion and Discussion

The results of this comparison of psychological explanations of public support for a ban on headscarves between the United Kingdom, France, Germany and the Netherlands show differences in the mean levels of support between the countries. In accordance with what was expected on the basis of national traditions, support for a ban on headscarves was most widespread in France, which has a strict separation between religion and the state. Least support was found in the United Kingdom, the country with the strongest multicultural tradition. Germany and the Netherlands fall between these extremes.

Explanations for the public support were based on the overall attitude towards Muslims, concern about Islamic extremism, the perception that Islam is a violent religion and the perception that Muslims prefer to remain distinct from the larger society, rather than adopting the customs and way of life of the country. The model proved to be a good fit to the data and increased the ability to predict support for and opposition to a ban on headscarves. A substantial part of this increase was due to controlling for the country of residence of the respondents. This again strengthens the case that contextual factors are important in explaining public support.

It was hypothesized that there would be cross-national differences, not only in the mean levels of support, but also in the structure of the explanatory model. This was only partly confirmed; in Germany the perception that Muslims prefer to remain distinct was not related to support for the ban on headscarves, whereas it increased support in the other countries. This could be interpreted along the lines of the German tradition of perceiving immigrants as temporary and encouraging them to sustain their own culture (Brubaker 2001). Perhaps Germans do not perceive it as threatening when Muslims decline to adopt their customs and way of life. However, if that is the case, it might be seen as surprising that a majority (60 percent) is in favour of a ban on headscarves. Perhaps this is an indication of the shift towards assimilation that has taken place in Germany since the 1990s (Brubaker 2001). The lack of effect in Germany could, however, also be the result of the lack of variation in the predictor variable; a large majority of

the German respondents perceived that Muslims prefer to remain distinct.

Another tendency in the results, although not statistically significant, was that the perception of Islam being more violent than other religions had a weaker effect in France and the United Kingdom than in Germany and the Netherlands. Again, this can be interpreted as an indication that national traditions are important and shape the attitudes of the population. Individual perceptions of threat are of less importance when a country has a tradition of strict secularism (France) or strong multiculturalism (United Kingdom).

Although the results show that the explanatory models of the countries are largely similar, there are substantial differences between countries in the ability of the model to predict support for a ban on headscarves. In the Netherlands, the predictor variables increased this ability by 14 percent, whereas in France the increase was not even one percent. One explanation for this could be differences in the amount of variation within countries. When there is broad support for a ban on headscarves, as there was in France, there is not much variation that the model can explain, and thus the performance of the model will seem weaker.

At the level of the individual it was hypothesized that support for a ban on headscarves was not limited to people with a negative attitude towards Muslims. The study shows that the freedom to wear headscarves in public places meets resistance among non-prejudiced people as well. In the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, approximately one-fifth of the respondents had a positive opinion of Muslims yet supported a ban on headscarves; in Germany the figure was one quarter and in France half of the respondents. This challenges the assumption of tolerance research that the question of tolerating activities of others is relevant only for those with a prejudiced attitude (Marcus et al. 1995; Vogt 1997). In line with previous research (Van der Noll, Poppe, and Verkuyten 2010; Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007), this study shows that the perceptions that Islam is more violent than other religions and that Muslims want to remain distinct from the society – two arguments that are often used in the debates about headscarves (McGoldrick 2006) – make it more likely that prejudiced and also



non-prejudiced people will support a ban on headscarves for Muslim women. There is a need for further research to examine when and under what conditions threat perceptions provoke exclusionary reactions.

The variables used in this study suffer from severe limitations and future studies could be improved by including better measures. The dependent variables measures support for “a ban on headscarves in public places”, which is a very broad and vague formulation. The debates and controversies about the headscarf were more specific, for instance focused on schools, and it is very likely that support for a ban on headscarves is graduated, depending on the situation and the kind of headscarf, rather than a clear decision of supporting or opposing the idea of a complete ban on headscarves in public places.

In addition, better measures of perceptions of threat would improve the study. As mentioned above, the perception that Muslims prefer to remain distinct does not refer to a threat per se, and it may even be encouraged by the majority population. The question addressing concern about Islamic extremism is also problematic, because it suggests that there is actually a rise of extremism. Although the results show that around one-fourth of the respondents did not feel concerned, people might have felt uncomfortable (unconsciously perhaps) stating that they were not concerned. In future use, such items need to be carefully formulated. The measurement of the overall attitude towards Muslims is also limited and could be subject to social desirability. More subtle indicators to measure attitudes towards Muslims would be preferred.

Contemporary theories on prejudice argue that old-fashioned prejudice has given way to modern forms of racism and prejudice based on perceived conflicts of values (Sears and Henry 2003; Kleinpenning and Hagendoorn

1993). Future studies on support for the rights and liberties of Muslims would benefit from including measures of value orientations. Orientations such as universalism and multiculturalism or traditionalism and conformity could for instance at the level of the individual, as well as at the aggregated societal level, be an important predictor of support (Saroglou et al. 2009). In addition, discussions about the wearing of headscarves, and about Islam in general, are often focused on the position of women and value conflicts with respect to gender equality and patriarchy (Shadid and Van Koningsveld 2005; McGoldrick 2006). Including indicators that address these values and conflicts in the explanatory model could largely contribute to the explanation of support for a ban on headscarves. Including value orientations in the explanatory model would furthermore allow us to test whether support for issues such as a ban on headscarves is mainly driven by prejudice, or stems from value orientations reflecting what the society should be like.

Despite its limitations, the current study is one of the first to compare the level of support for one specific aspect of Muslims’ religious rights and to test an explanatory model across countries. The results of this study show that national contexts have a substantial influence on the tendency of the population to support a ban on headscarves. Furthermore, the results show that perceptions of threat posed by Islam and Muslims influence the tolerance judgements of both prejudiced and unprejudiced people. As long as the debate on headscarves is focused on threat and differences between Muslims and non-Muslims, the debate will harm relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. If, on the other hand, the focus of the debate were to shift to issues such as neutrality and non-discrimination, rather than Islamic extremism and rejection of western values, relations between Muslims and non-Muslims would not be that strongly affected by the debate and could (actually) improve.

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# **Social Status and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes in Europe: An Examination from the Perspective of Social Dominance Theory**

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# Social Status and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes in Europe: An Examination from the Perspective of Social Dominance Theory

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A full test of the Social Dominance Theory model addressed immigration as one of the most prominent current intergroup conflicts in Europe. The hypothesis that members of high status groups tend to discriminate members of low status groups because they are more prone to Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) and refer more to legitimising myths such as prejudice was tested using representative samples from eight European countries ( $N = 1000$  each), considering income and migrant background as social status indicators, SDO, anti-immigrant prejudice and diversity beliefs, and the intention to discriminate immigrants. The results confirm that individuals with higher SDO are more likely to discriminate immigrants, partly because of stronger anti-immigrant prejudice and partly because they believe less in diversity. However, the results question the role of social status. Contrary to the expectations of Social Dominance Theory, individuals with lower income are more prone to SDO and have stronger anti-immigrant attitudes and weaker diversity beliefs. The impact of migrant background was weak and ambivalent. We suggest reconsidering the role of social status to stress status maintenance and enhancement as general social motives. Regardless of their social position, people seemingly try to enhance their relative position by devaluing lower status groups.

Intolerance of diversity, prejudice, and discrimination represent challenges to a modern Europe that is experiencing increasing heterogeneity as a result of immigration. *Social Dominance Theory* (Pratto et al. 1994; Sidanius and Pratto 1999; Pratto, Sidanius, and Levin 2006) understands prejudice, beliefs, ideologies, and attributions as *legitimising myths* that serve to justify discrimination of members of low status groups and preferential treatment of members of high status groups with the aim of maintaining and enhancing group-based hierarchies. Social Dominance Theory has won increasing importance since it was established some fifteen years ago, and numerous studies have supported the Social Dominance Theory, mostly in the United States but also in other parts of the world. However,

empirical proofs have mostly been restricted to specific proposed relations, whereas the full theoretical model has been tested surprisingly little to the best of our knowledge. The present paper aims to fill this gap.

We tested the Social Dominance Theory model within the frame of immigration in eight European countries that differ with respect to several aspects related to the topic, such as the level of equality, the overall level of *social dominance orientation* (SDO), and the prevalence of intergroup conflicts between native citizens and immigrants. Our study contributes additional knowledge in three respects: a) a full-model test, b) a cross-country comparison of the model, and c) using probability samples (instead of student samples).

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**1. The Social Dominance Theory**

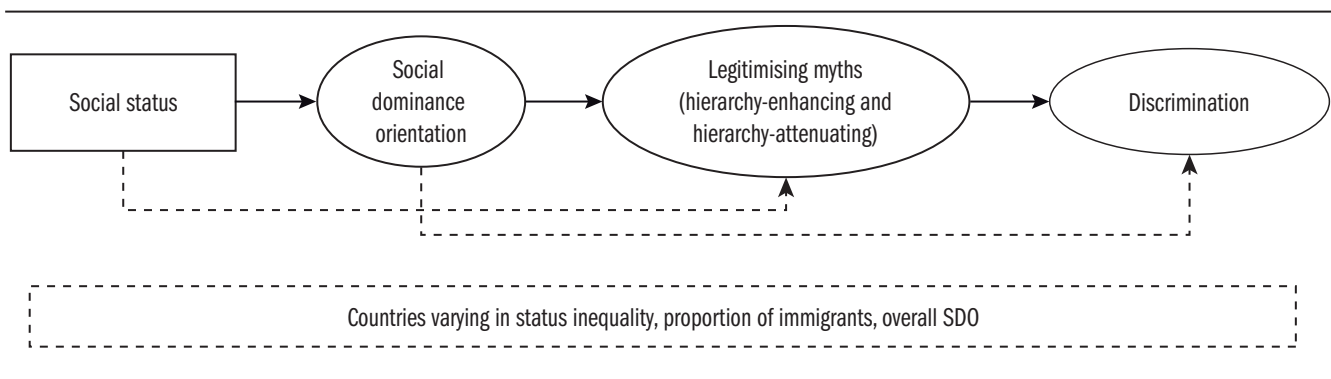
Social Dominance Theory perceives group-based hierarchies as a major source of intergroup conflicts. Depending on their ingroup’s position, individuals have different amounts of material resources, political power and influence, personal privileges and options, and institutional access and participation at their disposal. Members of dominant, high status groups have more resources, power and access than members of subordinate, low status groups that are more likely to face devaluation, discrimination and exclusion. The main psychological assumption of Social Dominance Theory is that members of high status groups are more likely to endorse group-based hierarchies than members of low status groups. They are also held to agree more strongly with prejudice and other ideologies, beliefs, and attributions that function as legitimising myths justifying the existence of group-based hierarchies. Group-based hierarchies are held to be realized through discrimination of low status groups and preferential treatment of high status groups. Figure 1 shows the Social Dominance Theory model as hypothesized and tested here.

*Social status* is defined as the relative position of an individual’s own group compared to other groups in a given social system. Status groups are defined by race, ethnicity, cultural background, religion, gender, education, or socio-economic status.

SDO is defined as “the degree to which individuals desire and support group-based hierarchy and the domination of ‘inferior’ groups by ‘superior’ groups” (Sidanius and Pratto 1999, 48). Individuals differ in their level of SDO. It is argued that many psychological and ideological forces tend to produce higher SDO in dominants (Pratto, Sidanius, and Levin 2006, 280). Therefore, members of dominant, high status groups such as older individuals, men, whites, and native citizens are held to endorse group-based hierarchies in general more strongly, i.e. they are more social dominance orientated than members of low status groups such as younger individuals, women, blacks, and immigrants.

Group-based hierarchies are justified by *legitimising myths* that assert that an individual holds the position he or she deserves within the social hierarchy; i.e. legitimising myths offer plausible reasons for equal or unequal distribution. Legitimising myths are defined as “consensually held values, attitudes, beliefs, stereotypes and ideologies” (Pratto, Sidanius, and Levin 2006, 275). Social Dominance Theory distinguishes between hierarchy enhancing legitimising myths (HELMs) and hierarchy attenuating legitimising myths (HALMs). Prejudices such as racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, and anti-immigrant attitudes serve as HELMs to justify the subordinate position of Blacks, women, Jews, and immigrants, etc.; the same role is played by ideologies such as nationalism, the protestant work ethic or free-mar-

**Figure 1: Social Dominance Theory: Theoretical model and tested links**



Note: Based on Sidanius and Pratto (1999, 48).

ket liberalism (Sidanius, Pratto, and Bobo 1996). Examples of HALMs are solidarity, socialism, Christian brotherhood, universal human rights, and multiculturalism (as expressed in the belief in ethnic, cultural and religious diversity). For example, anti-immigrant prejudice helps to legitimise denying immigrant children the support they need to improve their language abilities and gain more success in education. Conversely, multiculturalism and diversity beliefs help to justify interventions such as special language courses designed to improve educational achievement and ultimately to enhance equality between native citizens and immigrants. SDO should correlate positively with HELMs and negatively with HALMs. Nevertheless, HELMs are shared to some extent by low status groups as they have become deeply embedded into “cultural knowledge” and low status groups need to cooperate with high status groups if they are not to be excluded themselves (e.g. older women help to suppress young women to serve a patriarchy they themselves benefit from to some extent). This is considered to be one reason for the remarkable stability of social hierarchies.

Legitimising myths are adopted to justify hierarchies created through individual and institutional *discrimination* of low status groups and preferential treatment of high status groups. Sidanius and Pratto (1999) also refer to asymmetric behaviour as an additional form of discrimination, pointing to self-devaluative and self-destructive behaviour carried out by members of low status groups.

To sum up, Social Dominance Theory proposes that prejudices and ideologies determined by the individual’s SDO function to justify differential treatment of high and low status groups (discrimination). As hierarchies tend to serve the interests of high status groups, they are more likely to endorse them. Hence, high status groups tend more towards HELMs and less towards HALMs, at least partly because they are more prone to SDO; i.e., SDO is held to mediate the relation between social status and legitimising myths. In addition, high SDO individuals are more likely to discriminate low status groups, at least partly because they are able to legitimise their behaviour; i.e. in empirical terms, legitimising myths mediate the relation between SDO and discrimination.

## 2. Empirical Evidence

Although very many empirical studies have been conducted to test the predictions made by Social Dominance Theory, most have concentrated on particular selected aspects.

### 2.1. SDO, Prejudice, and Discrimination.

Numerous studies in a range of countries confirm the *strong link between SDO and prejudices*, such as prejudice against minority ethnic groups, women, homosexuals and immigrants (e.g., Pratto et al. 2000; Pratto, Sidanius, and Levin 2006). Moreover, some studies find that SDO predicts a common core of several types of prejudices (generalized prejudice) (Zick et al. 2008; Ekehammar et al. 2004). Fewer studies focus on the *link between SDO and discrimination*, but that link is nonetheless clearly supported. SDO was found to predict factual discriminatory behaviour in the justice system (Kimmelmeier 2005) and at the workplace (Machinov et al. 2005; Parkins, Fishbein, and Ritchey 2006), and racially biased selection of job applicants was shown to be influenced by the selecting individual’s SDO (Umphress et al. 2008). SDO was also found to correlate with positive allocation for the ingroup and negative discriminatory allocation for the outgroup (Amiot, and Bourhis 2005; Sidanius et al. 2007).

Studies on attitude-behaviour relations show a strong and positive *link between prejudices and discrimination* (discriminatory intentions) (see meta-analyses by Schütz and Six 1996). Those who more strongly endorse prejudices are also more inclined to support discrimination. This has been tested with respect to prejudices and discrimination towards several outgroups, e.g. immigrants in Europe (Pettigrew 1998), Muslims (Doosje et al. 2010), and women (Feather and Boeckman 2007).

Even though the authors of the Social Dominance Theory explicitly formulate a *mediation between SDO and discrimination by legitimising myths* as mediating factor (Sidanius and Pratto 1999, 105), this has relatively rarely been tested. In a simulated job selection situation Michinov and colleagues (2005) find that subjects with high SDO less often choose job candidates with a North African background compared to native French candidates for a top position, but more often for lower ranking positions within a team,

whereas such bias was not found in subjects with low SDO. The impact of SDO on the biased assignment of North African candidates was fully mediated by generalised prejudices towards immigrants from North Africa. Drawing on representative data Zick and colleagues (2008) show that SDO not only predict discriminatory intentions towards immigrants, but that this link runs via a common core of several different types of prejudice. Mediation effects by legitimising myths are also reported for the link between SDO and discrimination at the workplace (Parkins, Fishbein, and Ritchey 2006), and with respect to policies on social welfare, military programs, and the death penalty (Pratto, Stallworth, and Conway-Lanz 1998).

## 2.2. The Impact of Social Status

Numerous studies reveal systematic discrimination of low status groups by high status groups, e.g. in education (Kozol 1991; Jacobs 1996) and justice (Mauer 1999). There is also evidence supporting a *link between social status and SDO and/or prejudice*. Members of high-status groups tend more towards SDO and prejudice than members of low status groups; this has been shown for ethnic, religious, and national groups, as well as for groups defined by age, and by education (Sidanius and Pratto 1999), groups differing in socioeconomic status (Sidanius et al. 2000), and gender (e.g. Pratto, Sidanius, and Bobo 1994; Pratto et al. 2000, but see contrary findings on gender and SDO by Küpper and Zick 2010). There is also evidence for a causal connection between social position and prejudice where *SDO acts as mediator* (Guimond et al. 2003); this was tested in students in terms of perceived status differences in the professional area and in business.

However, the *impact of social status* when defined by education and income, or by gender, remains rather unclear. Whereas several studies find men to be more sexist than women (e.g., Eagly et al. 2004), the impact of gender on homophobia (see meta-analysis by Oliver and Hyde 1993) and racism (e.g., Ekehammar, Akrami, and Araya 2003) was less clear. Contradictory to the assumptions of Social Dominance Theory, most empirical studies show higher prejudices among lower educated than higher educated individuals (e.g. Schuman et al. 1997/2005; Hello, Scheepers, and Gijbsert 2002). Overall, findings show as well prejudice

decreasing with income, although the effect is stronger if the overall economic conditions are good (Kunovich 2004). Moreover, income is negatively related to exclusionary attitudes towards low status immigrant groups, but positively to what are seen as higher status immigrants (Green 2009). These findings are not in line with the propositions of Social Dominance Theory.

To sum up, Social Dominance Theory's second part, the link between SDO, prejudice and discrimination is largely confirmed by existing studies, even though the mediation aspect has been studied comparatively rarely. But the first part of the Social Dominance Theory concerning the impact of social status is less clearly supported and previous empirical findings are rather ambivalent; there is little hard evidence for the mediation effect by SDO. The evidence is hard to assess since there has never been a full test of the theory considering all factors and proposed links. This is frustrating, given that Social Dominance Theory claims to explain the prevalence of inequality in modern societies.

## 3. A Test of the Social Dominance Theory in Europe

Every year about two million immigrants from outside Europe come to the European Union, most legally but some illegally, most often from poorer countries, e.g. the former Soviet Union, the Middle East or Africa. These immigrants are often not made very welcome; national and EU anti-immigrant policies go hand in hand with discrimination in several spheres of life (Gauci 2009) and widely shared negative attitudes towards immigrants across Europe (e.g., Küpper, Wolf, and Zick 2010).

In this context two indicators of social status are of particular relevance: First, an individual's migrant background (membership of the dominant majority group of native citizens) and second, the individual's material resources as indicated by income. Whereas migrant background represents an arbitrary and socially defined status specifically related to the topic, income is a more general and factual indicator of social status commonly associated with other indicators of status such as age, gender, and education. Further, we considered anti-immigrant prejudice and belief in ethnic-cultural-religious diversity to be the most relevant legitimising myths justifying discrimination of immigrants



and group equality respectively. Within the limitations of a survey study, we finally considered the intention to discriminate immigrants. As the Social Dominance Theory claims universal validity, the model as shown in Figure 1 should fit in all countries regardless of macro- and micro-level differences.

### 3.1. Measures

All measures were pretested in extended versions in all countries ( $N = 150$  each country); items with the best measure quality were selected for the main survey. Social status was operationalized by income and migrant background. *Income* was measured as equivalent household net (net income weighted by household members) on a 10-point scale from low to high adjusted for each country. We defined *migrant background* to include first-, second-, and third-generation migrants regardless of citizenship. Respondents with no migrant background were considered members of a high status group (coded +1), respondents with migrant background as members of a low status group (coded -1).

To keep the Social Dominance Theory model as simple as possible for this test, we decided to focus solely on the group-based dominance dimension of *SDO*. Items were selected from a larger sample based on Sidanius and Pratto (1999) after pretests in all countries: 1. *Inferior groups should stay in their place*; 2. *It is probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top, while others are at the bottom*. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was acceptable with  $\alpha = .57$  (varying from .62 to .47).

*Anti-immigrant attitudes* were covered by four items: 1. *There are too many immigrants in [country]*; 2. *When jobs are scarce, [native citizens of the country] should have more rights to a job than immigrants*; 3. *Because of the number of immigrants I sometimes feel like a stranger in [country]*; 4. *Immigrants enrich our culture* (reverse coded). Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was satisfactory with  $\alpha = .74$  (varying from .81 to .64).

*Diversity beliefs* were measured with two items addressing cultural and religious diversity: 1. *It is better for a country if there are many different religions*; 2. *It is better for a country if almost everyone shares the same customs and traditions*

(reversed coded). Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was not satisfactory, with  $\alpha = .44$  (varying from .56 to .44, with even lower values in France, .35, and Hungary, .18).

Four items addressed *discriminatory intentions*, addressing both individual discrimination and support for institutional discrimination: 1. *I would be reluctant to send my children to a school where the majority of pupils are immigrants* (for respondents without children, the interviewer added the introduction: *Please imagine you have children*); 2. *I would be reluctant to move into a district where many immigrants are living*; 3. *In the next elections, I will vote for parties that want to reduce the further influx of immigrants*; 4. *An employer should have the right to employ only native [citizens of country]*. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was satisfactory with  $\alpha = .73$  (varying from .80 to .68).

Respondents were asked to indicate agreement or disagreement with all items on a four point scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *somewhat disagree*, 3 = *somewhat agree* to 4 = *strongly agree*.

### 3.2. Countries and Data

We conducted the analyses on survey data collected in 2008 in Britain, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, Poland and Hungary by the Group-Focused Enmity project (Küpper, Wolf, and Zick 2010). These countries provide a spectrum of size of immigrant population, immigration history, major immigrant groups, immigration policy, and debates on immigration and integration. The Gini index shows the overall level of social inequality to be comparably low in Germany followed by Hungary, the Netherlands, Italy, France, Britain, and Poland, with the greatest inequality in Portugal. The percentage of immigrants (with and without citizenship) is quite low in Poland, Hungary, and Italy, intermediate in Portugal, and comparably high in Britain, the Netherlands, France, and Germany. The major immigrant groups and their legal status vary remarkably across Europe depending on the host country's colonial, economic and military history. Table 1 summarizes basic features of the samples and countries including regions/countries of origin of the major immigrant groups.



**Table 1: Sample characteristics and relevant features of the countries**

Country	N	Gender (% men/women in the sample)	M Age	Respondents without migrant background (%)	M SDO	Level of inequality (Gini Index) <sup>a</sup>	Immigrants in the country <sup>b</sup> (%)	Main regions/countries of origin
Britain	1000	48.3/51.7	46.8	79.4	1.23	34	9.1	South-East Asia, Caribbean islands
France	1007	48.0/52.0	46.5	68.1	1.11	33	10.4	Maghrib states, e.g. Algeria
Germany	1000	48.3/51.7	48.4	84.3	1.35	27	12.3	Turkey, former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe
Netherlands	1011	49.0/51.0	46.3	91.3	1.28	31	10.1	Indonesia, Surinam, Morocco, Turkey
Italy	1001	48.1/51.9	47.6	97.4	1.25	32	4.3	Balkan states, Africa
Portugal	1007	47.8/52.2	46.6	92.6	1.33	39	7.3	former African colonies, Ukraine
Poland	1000	47.7/52.3	44.2	91.8	1.41	35	1.8	Eastern Europe
Hungary <sup>c</sup>	1000	44.5/55.5	46.4	90.4	1.47	28	3.1	ethnic Hungarians from Romania
Total	8026	47.7/52.3	46.6	86.9	1.30			

Notes: N = sample size M = Mean.

<sup>a</sup> Source: CIA factbook, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>

<sup>b</sup> Sources: Migration Policy Institute. OECD Database, UN Migration Database (2005)

<sup>c</sup> The majority of immigrants in Hungary are ethnic Hungarians who became citizens of Romania after border changes.

Data was generated by computer assisted telephone interviews (CATI) lasting on average 36 minutes. In each country the sample comprises 1,000 representative citizens aged sixteen and above; in total 48 percent were male and 52 percent were female. The mean age of the combined European sample was 47 years. Altogether, 87 percent of respondents had no migrant background.

#### 4. Results

Data analyses were conducted with AMOS V.18. Data sets were weighted for probability criteria before correlation matrices were calculated.

##### 4.1. Cross-cultural Check of Measures

Before testing the model we verified the quality and cross-cultural comparability of all measures (their invariance across countries) by simultaneous confirmatory factor analyses across all eight countries followed by multiple group confirmatory factor analysis. Here, as in the follow-

ing, we tested all measurement models with increasing constraints. However, we rejected the option to compare model fits by chi-square difference test as this can lead to unjustified rejection of well-fitting models in large samples. Instead, we relied on goodness-of-fit indices as recommended by Cheung and Rensvold (2002). Our findings revealed the measures for SDO, anti-immigrant attitudes, diversity beliefs (tested together with SDO) and discrimination to be reliable and adequate for further cross-cultural analysis, as all models showed at least partial measurement invariance; i.e., the construct meanings can be assumed to be the same in all countries.

In addition, we tested the dimensional structure of anti-immigrant prejudice and discriminatory intentions as both constructs seemed to be very close in item wording. Two plausible modifications had to be introduced in order to achieve a reasonable fit of the uni-dimensional model,  $\chi^2(160) = 1376.506, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 8.603, GFI = .959,$

CFI = .939, RMSEA = .031. However, the model fit of the two factor model is good (and better compared to a one-factor model);  $\chi^2(144) = 893.108$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 6.202$ , GFI = .973, CFI = .963, RMSEA = .026. Modification indices suggest a reasonable error correlation between two items capturing individual discrimination (item 1 and 2), and a rather critical one between anti-immigrant item no. 2 and discrimination item no. 4, that questionings the distinctiveness of the two constructs;  $\chi^2(136) = 648.810$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 4.771$ , GFI = .981, CFI = .974, RMSEA = .022. This correlation is plausible as on the one hand the error correlation taps a substantive commonality between the two items; they both argue for preferential treatment of native over immigrant employees. On the other hand, the two items also share methodological variance as the wording is very similar and this makes it more likely that the same answer will be given (Sarlis and Gallhofer 2007).

We conducted an additional empirical test to discover whether the two concepts are really distinct. We constructed a two dimensional model in which the covariance between the two concepts is freely estimated and a second model in which the covariance was set to 1 (thus both concepts are assumed to be the same). In six of the eight countries (all except Britain and the Netherlands) the model in which the covariance was set to 1 was significantly worse. If we take the two dimensional model with two modifications as base model for this comparison, even in Britain the restricted model turned out to be significantly worse ( $p < .05$ ) than the model with freely estimated covariance. Thus, although the second modification in the two dimensional model is somewhat critical, the results support a two-dimensional structure, i.e. anti-immigrant prejudice and discriminatory intentions are confirmed as two distinct though highly correlated constructs.

An ANOVA on the SDO sub-dimension of group-based hierarchy yielded a small, but significant country effect,  $F(7, 7411) = 58.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .05$ . A post-hoc test (Duncan) indicated a relatively low level of SDO in France, somewhat higher levels in Britain, Italy and the Netherlands, followed by Portugal and Germany, and the highest

levels in Poland and Hungary; Table 1 provides the mean SDO values by country.

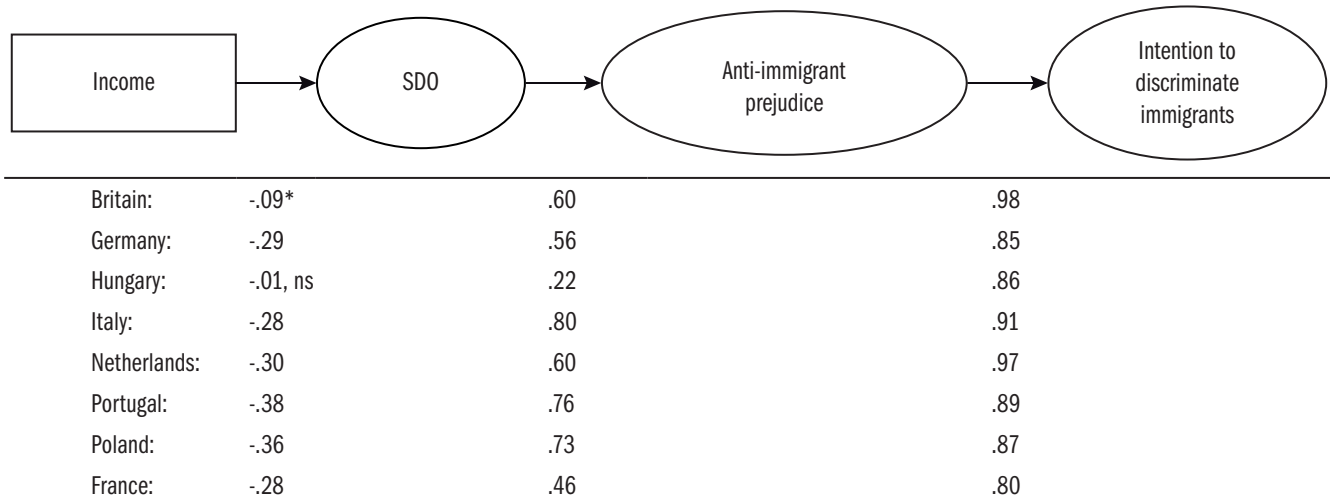
#### 4.2. Test of the Full Social Dominance Theory Model Across Europe

We analysed the full mediated model as described above and shown in figure 1 by structural equation modelling followed by multiple group comparisons to test for the cross-country comparability of the model. All variables except income and migrant background were introduced as latent constructs. We tested four alternative models separately, considering alternatively income or migrant background as indicator of social status, and alternatively anti-immigrant prejudice or diversity beliefs as legitimising myth. Direct paths were inserted from income or migrant background to SDO, from SDO to anti-immigrant attitudes or diversity beliefs, and in turn from anti-immigrant attitudes or diversity beliefs to discrimination. Finally, we tested mediations by SDO and mediations by anti-immigrant attitudes and by diversity beliefs following the multiple regression mediation procedure outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986) across countries and separately for each country with SPSS. All indicated beta coefficients are significant with  $p < .001$  if not otherwise stated.

##### 4.2.1. Model 1: Income, SDO, Anti-Immigrant Attitudes and Discrimination

The basic model treating income as indicator of social status, SDO, anti-immigrant attitudes and discrimination fitted fairly well to the data, but was very much improved by the two modifications referred to above,  $\chi^2(320) = 1946.72$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 6.08$ , GFI = .957, CFI = .933, RMSEA = .025. All direct paths were highly significant and in the expected direction. SDO was associated with higher anti-immigrant attitudes (from  $\beta = .22$  in Hungary to  $\beta = .80$  in Italy) and anti-immigrant attitudes with more discriminatory intentions (from  $\beta = .80$  in France to  $\beta = .98$  in Britain). In addition, there was a significant path from income to SDO in all of the countries except Hungary (from  $\beta = -.09$  in Britain to  $\beta = -.36$  in Poland); however, contrary to Social Dominance Theory, this effect was negative, i.e. the level of SDO decreased as income increased. Figure 2a presents the final model.

Figure 2a: Tested model 1, beta coefficients for all countries



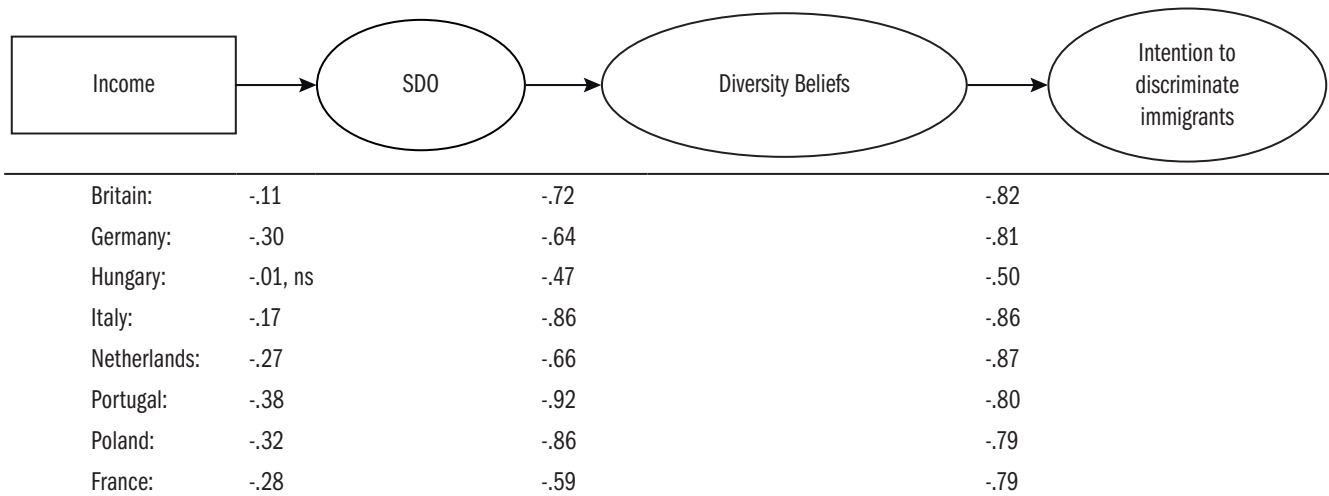
Notes: SDO, anti-immigrant prejudice and the intention to discriminate immigrants are inserted as latent constructs. All beta coefficients are significant with  $p < .001$ , unless otherwise indicated.

Fit indices indicated a good overall model fit of the measurement invariance model that was only slightly worse than the unconstrained model,  $\chi^2 = 2441.56$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 6.62$ , GFI = .947, CFI = .915, RMSEA = .027. Results suggest measurement invariance of model 1. Moreover, the multiple group comparison revealed that all models up to the structural covariances were acceptable, i.e. the beta coefficients can be assumed to be equal, NPAR = 131,  $\chi^2 = 2697.88$ ,  $df = 397$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 6.78$ , GFI = .941, CFI = .906, RMSEA = 0.27. Thus, in all eight countries the paths between the variables have the same weights if we look at the model as a whole. Altogether, individuals with lower income were more prone to SDO, leading to higher levels of anti-immigrant attitudes, and in turn to higher tendencies to discriminate immigrants.

#### 4.2.2. Model 2: Income, SDO, Diversity Beliefs and Discrimination

Model 2 differed from model 1 in considering diversity beliefs in place of anti-immigrant attitudes. The basic model already fitted well to the data. Again, an error correlation between discrimination item 1 and 2 was suggested. This modification greatly improved the overall model fit,  $\chi^2 (200) = 1131.28$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 5.656$ , GFI = .969, CFI = .932, RMSEA = .027. Beta coefficients of most paths are considerable and in the expected direction: SDO predicts less diversity beliefs (from  $\beta = -.47$  in Hungary to  $\beta = -.92$  in Portugal), and diversity beliefs in turn predict less discriminatory intentions (from  $\beta = -.50$  in Hungary to  $\beta = -.87$  in the Netherlands; see figure 2b). However, the beta coefficients from income to SDO again pointed to a negative relation (from  $\beta = -.11$  in Britain to  $\beta = -.38$  in Portugal; again Hungary's path is not significant).

Figure 2b: Tested model 2, beta coefficients for all countries



Notes: SDO, diversity beliefs and the intention to discriminate immigrants are inserted as latent constructs. All beta coefficients are significant with  $p < .001$ , unless otherwise indicated.

The cross-cultural comparison showed that not only was a measurement invariance model across the eight countries acceptable, NPAR = 125,  $\chi^2(235) = 1430.22$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 6.086$ , GFI = .961, CFI = .912, RMSEA = .025, but also a structural covariances model that turned out to be even better than a structural weights model, NPAR = 104,  $\chi^2(256) = 1511.23$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 5.90$ , GFI = .958, CFI = .908, RMSEA = 0.25. Again the paths of the model are invariant across the eight countries.

**4.2.3. Model 3: Migration Background, SDO, Anti-Immigrant Attitudes and Discrimination**

The basic model considering migrant background as the indicator of social status fitted fairly acceptably to the data. However, again the two modifications from model 1 were suggested and increased the model fit,  $\chi^2(320) = 1471.09$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 4.60$ , GFI = .968, CFI = .951, RMSEA = .021. All paths in the second part of the model turned out to be significant and in the expected direction; as expected, beta coefficients were very similar to those in model 1. However, the beta coefficients of the newly inserted path from migrant background to SDO were rather weak to non-significant or even negative, varying from  $\beta = -.08$ ,  $p < .05$ , in Poland up to  $\beta = .15$ ,  $p < .01$ , in France, with no significant prediction of SDO in Germany ( $\beta = -.03$ , ns.) or Hungary

( $\beta = .03$ , ns.). In Britain ( $\beta = .08$ ,  $p < .05$ ), Italy ( $\beta = .08$ ,  $p < .05$ ), Netherlands ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $p < .01$ ), Portugal ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $p < .01$ ) the effects are positive, but rather small. Hence, migration background is weak and differs in nature between countries. The multiple group comparison still yielded cross-cultural comparability on the measurement level, NPAR = 159,  $\chi^2(369) = , p = .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 5.41$ , GFI = .956, CFI = .931, RMSEA = .024, and on the level of structural weights, NPAR = 145,  $\chi^2(383) = 2142.57$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 5.59$ , GFI = .953, CFI = .925, RMSEA = .024, but not on the level of structural covariances.

**4.2.4. Model 4: Migration Background, SDO, Diversity Beliefs and Discrimination**

The model fit was acceptable in the first place and increased after considering the known error correlation between the two discrimination items,  $\chi^2(200) = 914.02$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 4.57$ , GFI = .975, CFI = .945, RMSEA = .021. As already known from model 2, there were significant paths from SDO to less diversity beliefs, and from diversity beliefs to more discrimination. However, now the path from migrant background to SDO was significant and negative in each country, varying between  $\beta = -.08$ ,  $p < .05$ , in Hungary to  $\beta = -.21$  in Britain. As in model 3, the multiple group comparison showed that we can accept the measurement

weights, NPAR = 111,  $\chi^2(235) = 1217.789$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 5.18$ , GFI = .967, CFI = .925, RMSEA = 0.23, and structural weights model, NPAR = 111,  $\chi^2(249) = 1303.88$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 5.24$ , GFI = .964, CFI = .919, RMSEA = 0.23.

### 4.3. Test of the Mediations

#### 4.3.1. Mediation by Anti-Immigrant Attitudes and by Diversity Beliefs

The link between SDO and discrimination was mediated significantly by anti-immigrant attitudes across countries; the effect of social dominance orientation on discriminatory attitudes was reduced to half from  $\beta = .33$  to  $.14$  (Sobel test for change in beta:  $z = 30.39$ ,  $p < .001$ ) when anti-immigrant attitudes were taken into consideration. There was no reverse mediation, i.e. the effect of anti-immigrant attitudes on discriminatory intentions remained nearly stable when SDO was considered ( $\beta = .76$  to  $.72$ ). A similar pattern occurred in each single country (all Sobel tests  $p < .01$ ); absolute mediation was particularly strong in Italy ( $\beta = .49$  to  $.26$ ), Britain ( $\beta = .40$  to  $.09$ ) and the Netherlands ( $\beta = .37$  to  $.11$ ), but rather weak in Hungary ( $\beta = .17$  to  $.13$ ). These results suggest that people with higher social dominance orientation to some extent have more discriminatory intentions because they hold more anti-immigrant attitudes.

The link between SDO and discrimination was also partly mediated by diversity beliefs across countries and within each country, although the mediation effect of diversity beliefs across countries was not very strong (beta reduction from  $\beta = .33$  to  $.27$ ,  $z = 18.72$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with strongest effects again in Italy ( $\beta = .49$  to  $.39$ ), Britain ( $\beta = .40$  to  $.29$ ) and the Netherlands ( $\beta = .37$  to  $.26$ ), but again weak in Hungary ( $\beta = .17$  to  $.13$ ). Thus, individuals with higher social dominance orientation have more discriminatory intentions against immigrants partly because they hold more negative diversity beliefs. However, also a reverse mediation by SDO was observed (beta reduction across countries from  $\beta = -.33$  to  $-.26$ ,  $z = 6.64$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

#### 4.3.2. Mediation by SDO

Although the effect of income on anti-immigrant attitudes and diversity beliefs was the exact opposite of what was predicted by Social Dominance Theory, we nevertheless demonstrated a mediation by SDO. Indeed, the link between income and anti-immigrant attitudes and between

income and diversity beliefs was to some extent mediated by SDO across countries (beta reduction from  $\beta = -.22$  to  $-.19$ ,  $z = -11.32$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and in certain individual countries, with strongest effects in Portugal ( $\beta = -.34$  to  $-.26$ ) and no significant mediation in Britain and Hungary. Similarly, SDO mediated the link between income and diversity beliefs across countries (beta reduction from  $\beta = .11$  to  $.08$ ,  $z = 10.61$ ,  $p < .001$ ) with comparably strongest effects in the Netherlands ( $\beta = .07$  to  $.02$ , *ns.*), but again no mediation in Britain and Hungary, and no significant path from income to diversity beliefs in Italy. There was hardly any link between migrant background and anti-immigrant attitudes, and therefore only a slight mediation by SDO. The mediation effect reached nevertheless significance across countries (beta reduction from  $\beta = .11$  to  $.08$ ,  $z = 10.61$ ,  $p < .001$ ), but not in any single country. There was no significant mediation of the link between migrant background and diversity beliefs by SDO either ( $z = 1.82$ , *ns.*).

### 5. Discussion

Social Dominance Theory is an established approach that explains social hierarchies in terms of prejudice and discrimination. We tested the proposed model within the frame of immigration, taking up a controversially debated intergroup conflict in Europe. The full Social Dominance Theory model was tested within representative samples of eight European countries. We considered two alternative indicators of social status (income and migrant background) and two alternative operationalisations for legitimising myths (anti-immigrant attitudes, a widely shared hierarchy enhancing legitimising myth, and diversity beliefs that can be used to attenuate group-based hierarchies).

Results confirm Social Dominance Theory to be a strong theory with respect to its second part. The important role of SDO as a predictor for discriminatory intentions was supported, and also the role of prejudices (and to some extent that of diversity beliefs) as legitimising myths. The results are somewhat limited by the empirical closeness of the two constructs of anti-immigrant prejudice and discriminatory intentions as measured in the present study. At the same time, the results suggest reconsidering the first part of Social Dominance Theory referring to the impact of social status.

### 5.1. The Role of Prejudice and Diversity Beliefs as Legitimising Myths

In all observed countries results showed that individuals scoring comparably higher on SDO hold more negative attitudes towards immigrants and are more likely to show intentions to discriminate immigrants. Moreover, anti-immigrant attitudes partly mediate the link between SDO and the intention to discriminate; in other words, individuals who score high on SDO are more ready to discriminate because they legitimise hierarchies between native citizens and immigrants. The similarity of the role of anti-immigrant prejudice in all countries is remarkable considering their very different cultural contexts with respect to immigrant groups, immigration history and politics. Effects were smallest in Hungary where the majority of immigrants are ethnic Hungarians who are widely accepted as equals. Here, our study is limited to the extent that we were only able to consider discriminatory intentions, but not actual discriminatory behaviour.

Whereas the model was also confirmed for anti-diversity beliefs, the mediating effect of diversity beliefs was less clear. We suggest reconsidering the role of diversity beliefs as legitimising myths and conceptualising them as a possible counterpart of SDO instead. Both constructs offer a general view on the structure of societies: Whereas SDO refers to the vertical structure of different social groups, diversity beliefs define on a horizontal dimension the homogeneity or heterogeneity of a society, i.e., which social groups should be accepted as members of the society.

### 5.2. The Role of Social Status for Intergroup Conflicts

The general importance of income for prejudice and discrimination was confirmed. However, the impact of income was the exact opposite to the prediction of Social Dominance Theory; we found that the higher an individual's income, the lower his or her SDO. At the same time SDO was found to slightly mediate the link between income and anti-immigrant attitudes and to a lesser degree also that between income and diversity beliefs in most of the countries. That means that individuals with lower income tend to agree more with anti-immigrant attitudes and somewhat less with diversity beliefs because they are on average more social dominance orientated. Our findings contradict Social Dominance Theory but are in line with previous findings

on the impact of income on prejudice (e.g. Kunovich 2004) and with prominent theories that focus on resources conflicts as a major cause of intergroup conflicts (e.g. Levine and Campbell 1972; Olzak 1992). These theories suggest that individuals who objectively or subjectively compete with an outgroup react with outgroup hostility. Low-income (and less educated) native citizens are the most likely to objectively or subjectively compete with immigrants over work, houses, public space, etc. as immigrants predominantly hold low-paid jobs. There is evidence that the direction of the link between income and prejudice varies with the targeted outgroup (e.g. skilled or less-skilled) and also with popular debate, i.e. with perceived competition (Green 2009). This may explain diverging findings on the relationship between income and SDO and between income and anti-immigrant attitudes in different cultural contexts.

When it comes to migrant background as an indicator of social status, our results revealed a fairly weak and rather ambivalent impact: Whereas in some countries SDO was – as predicted – slightly higher among individuals without migrant background, in others no relation or even the opposite was found. Neither with respect to anti-immigrant attitudes nor diversity beliefs did SDO play a mediating role. Unlike to previous findings in the United States that revealed higher levels of racism among whites (as high status group) than among ethnic minorities (as low status groups), we did not find considerably higher anti-immigrant attitudes in dominant native citizens compared to individuals with immigrant background in all considered countries.

It must be remembered that immigrants in Europe are far from being a homogeneous group, but differ enormously with respect to their country of origin, duration of stay, and level of integration. As we categorized migrant background in a broad sense, and were able to interview only immigrants with adequate language competence, our sample of immigrants is likely to be better integrated and educated than the immigrant population as a whole, i.e. presumably of higher objective and subjective status compared to immigrants in general. The diverging findings between countries might reflect the varying status positions of different immigrant groups within a given country compared to native citizens but also to other immigrant groups.



### 5.3. Reconsidering Social Dominance Theory

One of the major propositions of Social Dominance Theory – the assumption that higher social status is related to higher levels of SDO, HELMs and discrimination (but lower levels of HALMs) – was not confirmed. This is particularly crucial as Social Dominance Theory claims to explain the dynamics of status maintenance and enhancement. We suggest slightly adjusting the aspect of social status in the theory.

We would stress that social status mirrors relative position within a *multi-group society*. Considering this, low income respondents and those with migrant background in our sample share some notable characteristics. The vast majority of low income respondents in our representative surveys are native citizens. Even though low income native citizens are perceived as members of a low status group, this group is still of comparably higher status than immigrants in terms of both economical and legal facts and of subjective perceptions (Gauci 2009). The same can be assumed to apply to the specific immigrant group interviewed in our study compared to immigrants in general.

Considering the divergent theoretical propositions and the rather ambivalent empirical findings on the impact of social status on SDO, prejudice and discrimination, it seems likely that both relations are true: SDO and legitimising myths are likely to increase but also to decrease with social status, depending on the outgroup involved and depending on how promising they are for the goal of maintaining and enhancing one's own group's position. Obviously, generally individuals with high SDO tend to discriminate lower status outgroups such as immigrants and to legitimise status differences by prejudice regardless of their status. We assume that the motivation to maintain and enhance ingroup status is not limited to members of high status groups, but also shared by members of low status groups. Depending on the ingroup's social position, different outgroups are salient for an intergroup comparison that

promises a positive output, such as a positive social identity and a comparably better status position. In terms of Social Dominance Theory, one could assume that both low income native citizens and well integrated immigrants are particularly motivated to maintain and enhance their own status compared to that of "ordinary immigrants" in their country. This should be less true for immigrants in Hungary as they can rely on ingroup solidarity also supported by nationalist propaganda. For both groups ordinary immigrants represent a comparably lower status group that is a promising comparison group for a downward comparison to maintain and enhance their relative status within a multiple-group society (or in other words, to reach positive distinctiveness; Brewer 2003).

This interpretation suggests understanding an individual's orientation towards group-based hierarchies as a rather unstable variable depending on the context defined by intergroup comparisons (Guimond et al. 2007), not as a rather stable general orientation (Schmitt, Branscombe, and Kappen 2003). Pratto, Sidanius, and Levin (2006) themselves agree that low status groups can also be interested in maintaining social hierarchies, but still believe that this is more likely for high status groups. We share this assumption, but would like to add that it is more likely for *comparably* higher status groups with respect to *comparably* lower status groups. To maintain and enhance their status, groups draw on promising strategies that are available for the purpose of comparative status enhancement. Therefore, if prejudice and discrimination towards lower status groups such as immigrants seem to be promising, rather low status groups like low income native citizens and comparably well-integrated immigrants also take this option. We propose that each social group, regardless of their actual social position, tends to devalue comparably lower status groups if devaluation seems to be a reasonable (and possible) strategy for maintaining and enhancing their own social position.

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# Ideological Configurations and Prediction of Attitudes toward Immigrants in Chile and Germany

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# Ideological Configurations and Prediction of Attitudes toward Immigrants in Chile and Germany

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The concept of ideological configuration is proposed to refer to a complex of ideological attitudes – Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) – based on a shared core of derogation of outgroups. This concept is used in two surveys, in Chile and in Germany, to predict attitudes toward foreigners. Analyses using structural equation modeling (SEM) showed that a second-order factor involving RWA and SDO predicts hostility toward foreigners in Germany and affection toward Peruvian and Argentinean immigrants in Chile. This prediction was stronger in Germany than in Chile. The difference in strength is discussed in terms of the kind of measurements, different contexts of migration, and characteristics of the immigrants. Further research using the concept of ideological configuration is proposed.

Research in social sciences and particularly in social psychology has tried to explain the derogation of others using different notions of ideology (Billig 1982). Since *The Authoritarian Personality* was published (Adorno et al. 1950), most definitions in psychology describe ideology as an organization of attitudes, values, and beliefs giving meaning to political and social behaviors (Jost 2006). The concept of ideological configurations is proposed here to describe the articulation and constellation of certain ideological attitudes. One specific ideological configuration, encompassing the common core between Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) and Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), is used to predict attitudes toward others.

This article compares the prediction of attitudes toward foreigners in Chile and Germany by using the ideological configurations of the general population in both countries,

employing a comparative perspective with cross-cultural data. Research on attitudes toward immigrants and immigration using this approach has increased recently (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010; Citrin and Sides 2008; Meuleman et al. 2009), but it has been mainly used in surveys in North America and Europe. This article takes up the challenge of including countries outside of these regions, where migration has different characteristics. The comparison of attitudes toward immigrants and immigration between European countries and the United States has shown that individual ideological variables (e.g. political orientation, preference for cultural and religious homogeneity, and so on) are stronger predictors than country-level variables such as GDP, unemployment rate, or size of the migrant population (Citrin and Sides 2008; Sides and Citrin 2007). Investigating whether these findings are replicated in a different cultural context, such as Chile, becomes particularly relevant.

Portions of this research were previously presented at the Inaugural Conference of the Centre for Research in Political Psychology, Queen’s University Belfast (2010); at the International Conference on Discrimination and Tolerance in Intergroup Relations, Jena, Germany (2010); and at the Colloquium of the Graduate School “Group-Focused Enmity” at

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In addition, the definition of ideological configurations used here enriches the theoretical discussion of attitudes toward immigrants, because it is based on ideological attitudes (RWA and SDO) that have been widely used in different cultural contexts. The approach laid out in this study could be used in further research in different regions as a way to avoid the problem of contextual dependence of more specific ideological issues, focusing on the cross-cultural comparison of relations between variables.

This article belongs to the research tradition of the study of attitudes and prejudice research, which takes up the challenge of predicting discriminatory behavior. For example, meta-analytic studies have shown an important correlation between attitudes and behavior (Dovidio et al. 1996; Schütz and Six 1996). More recently, using experimental designs (Dovidio et al. 2004) and longitudinal data (Wagner, Christ and Pettigrew 2008), the causal relationship has been tested, concluding that prejudice predicts behavior. Identifying how attitudes lead to discrimination is a central task in conflict research, because a better understanding of this phenomenon has great potential for preventing conflict and discrimination.

### 1. Ideological Configurations

Even though a psychological component has been part of the discussion of the concept of ideology from the very beginning – for example in the Marxist notion of false consciousness (as outlined in *The German Ideology*) – research on social psychology of intergroup conflict has just started to use this notion systematically, drawing on research into authoritarianism mainly since the publication of *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al. 1950; see also Fromm 1942). Initially, the impact of Theodor Adorno and his colleagues' writings was not widespread. For example, in Gordon Allport's *The Nature of Prejudice* (Allport 1954) – probably the most influential work in prejudice research – the concept of ideology does not play an important role in the author's arguments, although some of his propositions could be interpreted to include ideological components.

Criticisms of *The Authoritarian Personality*, especially concerning methodological issues (Funke 2005), kept research on authoritarianism in the background for many years. But after Robert Altemeyer published *Right-Wing Authori-*

*tarianism* (Altemeyer 1981), methodological problems were partially left behind while an increasing number of scholars have considered ideology as a relevant concept to explain the derogation of others. Since then, the measurement of RWA has been widely used in social psychology.

Research on authoritarianism has not been the only field to include ideology as a key concept. Starting in the seventies, Social Identity Theory, or SIT (Tajfel and Turner 1986) proposed the importance of “individuals' belief systems about the nature and the structure of the relations between social groups in their society” (p. 9) to understanding the stability of group hierarchies. More recently, two new theories have been proposed with a focus on ideology, based on some of the basic assumptions of SIT: Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius and Pratto 1999) and System Justification Theory (Jost and Banaji 1994). The former argues that a general orientation toward social dominance (SDO) can enhance or attenuate hierarchies (captured by the two dimensions of SDO: support for group-based dominance and opposition to equality), via legitimizing myths such as prejudices. System Justification Theory has concentrated on psychological mechanisms, such as stereotyping, that have the ideological function of justifying the system and the status quo – even among groups where this justification could work against self or group interests. Measurements of RWA and SDO have been extensively used in social psychology to predict attitudes such as prejudice toward outgroups. This prediction has been tested in different cultural contexts (Duriez, Van Hiel, and Kossowska 2005; Pratto et al. 2000; cf. Lehmler and Schmitt 2007), and toward multiple groups, for example, in the form of a syndrome of prejudice (Bäckström and Björklund 2007; Zick et al. 2008).

RWA and SDO were developed to capture the ideological background of intergroup attitudes across societies. Authors of these theories were expecting to define a general ideological orientation that applies in many different contexts. The definition and operationalization of these concepts allowed researchers to find similar patterns independent of context. However, some evidence shows that both ideological attitudes are context-dependent and sensitive to group dynamics (Jetten and Iyer 2010). For example, Kreindler (2005) suggested that both variables depend on



group processes; SDO reflects category differentiation, based on group membership, whereas RWA reflects normative differentiation, based on group prototypicality.

In order to avoid this problem, here both concepts are treated as ideological attitudes, that is, as basic evaluations of ideological objects such as social hierarchies, norms, group boundaries, and so on. However, the definition of the concept of attitude itself is not free of problems, specially regarding the stability of attitudes. Attitudes have been defined as constructed on the spot from accessible information, and yet also as stable entities stored in memory (Bohner and Dickel 2011). According to recent findings, the proximity of the attitude's object strongly affects the stability of the attitude, with attitudes regarding proximal objects being more volatile than attitudes regarding distal objects (Ledgerwood, Trope, and Chaiken 2010). If this is so, ideological attitudes such as RWA and SDO, which refer to very abstract objects such as group hierarchies or norms, should be generally stable. Whether these constructs are stable enough to be shared in different contexts, with fixed meanings, as values seem to be (Fischer and Schwartz 2010), is an empirical question that remains open.

The relationship between RWA and SDO has been explored, first by Altemeyer (1998), who described how these measurements work in a complementary way, the dominant and the authoritarian being two complementary groups, although, he also found (Altemeyer 2004) that people with high levels of both variables are extremely prejudiced. Next, John Duckitt and his colleagues proposed a dual process model, distinguishing how each concept predicts prejudice based on different motivations: RWA is a response to perception of the world as dangerous, and SDO is a response to perception of the world as competitive (Duckitt et al. 2002). Taking up the challenge of disentangling the relationship between RWA and SDO, an increasing number of researchers have extended Duckitt's findings. J. Christopher Cohrs and Frank Asbrock (2009) found experimental evidence in support of Duckitt's theory regarding RWA, but not for SDO. Lotte Thomsen et al. (2008) showed that RWA predicts negative attitudes toward immigrant groups who do not assimilate into the dominant culture, because this violates ingroup conformity, and SDO predicts negative attitudes toward immigrant

groups who do assimilate into the dominant culture. Finally, in recent years, a new line of research has focused on identifying moderators of the relationship between the two concepts, finding, for example, that political interest heightens the correlation, whereas religious identity works in the opposite direction (Dallago et al. 2008). Michele Roccato and Luca Ricolfi (2005) found that the correlation between the two concepts was higher in countries with strong ideological contrasts and that, within these countries, the relation was greater in adult samples than in student samples.

However, there is not much research dealing with both concepts' shared derogation of others as a common defining core, although this derogation is differently motivated. Regarding RWA, this element refers mainly to justification of and support for punishing the deviants, which is captured in the notion of authoritarian aggression (see Passini 2008), one of the three components proposed by Altemeyer (1981). In SDO derogation is included in the idea of superiority of some groups over others, mainly present on the dimension of group-based dominance (Sidanius and Pratto 1999).

The concept of ideological configuration is proposed to refer to the organization of ideological attitudes. While ideological configurations can be defined at many levels (individual, group, society), in this article the configuration is assessed at the individual level. Specifically, one possible ideological configuration is used here to predict attitudes toward immigrants and immigration, based on the derogative component of RWA and SDO. Given the definition of RWA and SDO as ideological attitudes, this ideological configuration is expected to show (a) a certain stability across societies, even though under moderating influences; and (b) a strong prediction of attitudes toward outgroups.

## 2. Migration and Prejudice in Chile and Germany

There is a great disparity in the number of studies conducted in Germany and Chile. Germany has a longstanding research tradition in social psychology involving intergroup and ideological attitudes. For instance, in recent years German researchers have shown that prejudice toward immigrants is related to ideologies of assimilation and segregation in acculturation preferences among majority-group members (Zick et al. 2001); that the differentiated prediction

of prejudice proposed by Duckitt et al. (2002) works better for RWA than for SDO (Cohrs and Asbrock 2009); that RWA and SDO are some of the strongest predictors of prejudice toward immigrants (Pettigrew, Wagner, and Christ 2007); and that both attitudes strongly predict Group-Focused Enmity, a syndrome of generalized prejudice against several groups at the same time (Zick et al. 2008).

Yet research in Chile concerning these topics is relatively scarce, with only a few studies published to date. SDO and RWA measurements have been rarely used, with some exceptions: A panel study with students explored the relationship between social attitudes and religion (González et al. 2008). An SDO scale was recently tested and validated in Chile (Cárdenas et al. 2010). Published results on the relationship between RWA and political identity showed that RWA is, as expected, stronger among right-wingers (González et al. 2005); that it is predicted by a nonlinear interaction between socioeconomic level and political identity (Haye et al. 2009); and that it decreases with high income, although not for right-wingers after controlling for education (Carvacho and Haye 2008).

Publications concerning prejudice or intergroup attitudes toward immigrants are not common in Chile. Roberto González (2005) presented some research about prejudice toward different minorities, showing that levels of prejudice toward Peruvian immigrants are among the highest in Chile, just below prejudice toward poor people and Romanians. Manuel Cárdenas and his colleagues (Cárdenas 2006; Cárdenas et al. 2007) published some results showing high levels of subtle and blatant prejudice toward Bolivian immigrants among student samples. The only current article the author is aware of that explores the relationship between RWA and attitudes toward immigrants in Chile (Bolivians in this case) describes the expected pattern: prejudiced people show a high level of RWA (Cárdenas 2007).

The evidence of these Chilean studies leads us to expect the same results observed in most western societies to be replicated in Chile. Consequently, a strong relationship be-

tween SDO, RWA, and attitudes toward immigrant groups is hypothesized. However, a detailed description of this relationship is required to illustrate immigration in Chile from a psychological viewpoint.

There are two important reasons for the disparity in the amount of research on immigration and ideological attitudes between Germany and Chile. First, research on these topics in social psychology in Chile started just in the last decade, with the field still in the process of consolidation. Second, until now the phenomenon of immigration has been more relevant in Germany than in Chile (Martínez Pizarro 2005; Pettigrew et al. 2007; Zick, Pettigrew, and Wagner 2008). According to estimates by the United Nations, in 2005, 12.9% of the German population were foreigners, while in Chile only 1.4% of the population came from other countries. The number of immigrants in Germany has greatly increased since 1960, when they constituted only 2.8% of the population. In Chile, the percentage of immigrants was the same in 2005 as in 1960 (United Nations 2009). However, the Chilean government estimated a 71.9% increase in the number of foreigners living in Chile from 2002 to 2008, most of them being Peruvians (33.9%) and Argentineans (18.7%). Peruvians are the group with the most significant rise in the immigration rate (Martínez Pizarro 2003; Ministry of the Interior, Chile, 2009).

A comparison of Germany and Chile could indicate whether there are similarities in the structure of the relationship between ideological attitudes and attitudes toward foreigners in those different contexts. It is hypothesized that both countries have a similar ideological configuration that predicts attitudes toward immigrants.

### 3. The Chilean Study

#### 3.1. Sample

The relationship among RWA, SDO, and positive attitudes toward Peruvian and Argentinean immigrants was explored in a survey of the general population in Santiago, Chile, in the context of a large study of the political culture of Chileans.<sup>1</sup> The sample is composed of 663 Chilean adults living

<sup>1</sup> This study was founded by FONDECYT, Gobierno de Chile, grant no. 1050887.

in Santiago. It was selected in a two-stage procedure. The first stage resulted in a random selection of an equal number of city blocks from each of three socioeconomic levels. In the second stage, a maximum of five interviews per block – based on assigned quotas of sex and age – were conducted by trained interviewers at participants' residences.

### 3.2. Measurements

*Right-Wing Authoritarianism* was measured using a four-item scale based on Altemeyer's RWA scale (Altemeyer 1981; Altemeyer 1998). As usual, items including the dimensions of authoritarian aggression (3 items) and authoritarian submission (1 item) loaded on one factor in the factor analysis. The conventionalism dimension was not included.

*Social Dominance Orientation* was measured via a 4-item scale assessing the first dimension of SDO, group-based dominance. The items were translated into Spanish from the SDO<sub>6</sub> scale (Sidanius and Pratto 1999).

*Affection toward Immigrants* was measured with a three-item scale used with two target groups, Argentineans and Peruvians, as these are the biggest migrant groups. The items contained questions about how much people like the target group; how much people admire the target group; and how much they trust them. All the scales present good enough reliability statistics, as can be seen in Table 1. The full list of the used items in Spanish is in Appendix 1.

**Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha of scales used in the Chilean study**

Scales	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	n	Missing values
RWA	0.78	4	650	13
SDO	0.65	4	650	13
Affection toward Peruvians	0.88	3	636	27
Affection toward Argentineans	0.86	3	639	24

### 3.3. Results

#### 3.3.1. Measurement Models

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to test the proposed model. All the analyses presented in this and the following sections were carried out using the software Mplus, version

5.21 (Muthén and Muthén 1998–2007). Full information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimation for missing values was used to deal with incomplete data (1.15% of missing values).

A first measurement model (M<sub>1</sub>), using the maximum likelihood estimator (as in all the following estimations), was computed. In this model all the scales described in the previous section were built as latent variables predicting the observed variables (items). A second-order factor based on the latent variables of RWA and SDO was calculated in order to identify the common core shared by these ideological attitudes. Thus, the ideological configuration in M<sub>1</sub> was built as a second-order latent variable predicting the ideological attitudes. A second-order factor of affection toward immigrants was also built, based on the attitudes toward Argentineans and Peruvians (first-order latent variables). One additional path correlating the measurement error of two similar items from the scales of affection toward Peruvians and Argentineans (which differ only in the target) was included in order to improve the model, which presented adequate fit indices ( $\chi^2 = 167.106$ ;  $df = 71$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ; CFI = 0.973; RMSEA = 0.045; SRMR = 0.039). In Table 2, the standardized coefficients of the items' loadings are provided.

In addition, a second model (M<sub>2</sub>) was estimated. Whereas M<sub>1</sub> included second-order latent variables, M<sub>2</sub> did not, using the first-order ideological factors instead. This model was based on the theoretical definitions of RWA and SDO as two differently motivated predictors of intergroup attitudes (e.g., Duckitt et al. 2002), which led us to expect that both variables predict intergroup attitudes separately. Hence, the only difference between M<sub>1</sub> and M<sub>2</sub> was that the latter did not include the second-order ideological factor and the first-order ideological factors were correlated. The fit indices of M<sub>2</sub> were identical to those in M<sub>1</sub> since the models are equivalent, which means that they have the same number of estimated parameters, identical fit indices, covariance, correlation and other moment matrices, and residuals (Hershberger 2006). The standardized coefficients for this model are also in Table 2. The structural equation modeling (SEM) presented in the next section was carried out using both measurement models in order to compare the prediction of prejudice based on

a single ideological factor with the one based on RWA and SDO as different predictors.<sup>2</sup>

**Table 2: Standardized coefficients for M1 and M2**

Observed and latent variables	M1	M2
RWA		
RWA1	0.47*	0.47*
RWA2	0.83*	0.83*
RWA3	0.83*	0.83*
RWA4	0.63*	0.63*
SDO		
SDO1	0.52*	0.52*
SDO2	0.52*	0.52*
SDO3	0.65*	0.65*
SDO4	0.58*	0.58*
Affection toward Peruvians		
AFEPER1	0.83*	0.83*
AFEPER2	0.82*	0.82*
AFEPER3	0.89*	0.89*
Affection toward Argentines		
AFEARG1	0.83*	0.83*
AFEARG2	0.80*	0.80*
AFEARG3	0.83*	0.83*
Affection toward Immigrants		
Affection toward Peruvians	0.90*	0.90*
Affection toward Argentines	0.68*	0.68*
Ideological Configuration		
RWA	0.91*	
SDO	0.58*	
Affection toward Immigrants	-0.37*	
Correlations		
AFEPER2 with AFEARG2	0.33*	0.33*
RWA with SDO		0.53*
Affection toward Immigrants with RWA		-0.34*
Affection toward Immigrants with SDO		-0.22*

\* Coefficient is significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

<sup>2</sup> Additional models including the second dimension of SDO, opposition to equality, were also computed. However, since they didn't show the expected behavior they were excluded from analyses in both surveys. Theoretically opposition

to equality should show identical but mirrored relations as group-based dominance. Whether this is a measurement problem, for instance based on the wording of the items, or a conceptual difference, as Jost and Thompson (2000) suggested,

should be solved with additional evidence.

<sup>3</sup> Statistically the models are equivalent, hence they have identical number of parameters estimated. For the concept of parsimony see Preacher 2006.

### 3.3.2. Structural Equation Modeling

In M1, the ideological configuration explained 83% of the variance of RWA and 33.3% of the variance of SDO. Therefore, as expected, ideological configuration strongly predicts ideological attitudes because they share a central core. Once regressed, the ideological configuration negatively predicted affection toward immigrants, with the more authoritarian and social dominant reporting less affection toward immigrants. The standardized regression coefficient had a medium strength ( $\beta = -0.37$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) and explained 14% of the variance of the criterion.

In M2, affection toward immigrants was regressed on RWA and SDO. Due to the correlation of both predictors, they competed in the prediction of attitudes toward immigrants. As a result, SDO did not predict significantly the criterion ( $\beta = -0.05$ ). On the contrary, RWA was negatively and significantly related with affection toward immigrants ( $\beta = -0.31$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Both predictors together explained 12% of the variance of the criterion.

According to the dual process model (Duckitt et al. 2002), the stronger prediction of RWA should be explained by the assumption that in Chile immigrants are perceived as dangerous for the ingroup, probably threatening the ingroup's values. Further research should test this assumption.

Even though both models have the same fit indices and explained almost the same variance of affection toward immigrants, M1 is preferable as an explicative model because of its theoretical parsimony.<sup>3</sup> This parsimony is expressed by the explained variance in the criterion, which is based on one single path coming from a unique ideological indicator. Thus, the common core of derogation of others between RWA and SDO proposed here as an ideological configuration was successfully used to predict attitudes toward immigrants in Chile, with at least the same explanatory power as the prediction based on the separate ideological attitudes.

#### 4. The German Study

##### 4.1. Sample

The second survey included the same ideological attitudes and indicators of hostility toward foreigners in a German national representative sample of people older than sixteen with no migration background ( $n = 1740$ ). Those variables were employed in a larger study on prejudice, conducted in 2006 using telephone interviews.<sup>4</sup>

##### 4.2. Measurements

*Right-Wing Authoritarianism* was measured with a three-item scale, based on Altmeyer (1981; 1998). As in the Chilean study, only the dimensions of authoritarian aggression (2 items) and authoritarian submission (1 item) were included, but not conventionalism.

*Social Dominance Orientation*: In the German survey, SDO was measured with a three-item scale. These items were taken from the SDO<sub>6</sub> scale (Sidanius and Pratto 1999).

*Hostility toward Foreigners*:<sup>5</sup> A four-item scale was used asking participants about topics such as considering foreigners a burden for the welfare system, that there are too many foreigners living in Germany or in the educational system, and that when jobs are scarce foreigners should be sent it back. The content of the items refers to what the literature calls attitudes toward immigration, which has been shown to be very difficult to distinguish from attitudes toward immigrants. In fact, both variables are strongly connected, empirically and theoretically (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010).

A full item list in German is in Appendix 2. The reliability of the scales was satisfactory (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha of scales used in the German study**

Scales	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items	n	Missing values
RWA	0.74	3	1681	59
SDO	0.63	3	1677	63
Hostility to foreigners	0.81	4	1593	147

#### 4.3. Results

##### 4.3.1. Measurement Models

As in the Chilean survey, FIML estimation for missing values was used to complete the data (1.59% of missing values), and all the analyses were carried out in Mplus, version 5.21, using the maximum likelihood estimator.

Measurement models with the same structure were computed. First, M<sub>3</sub> included a second-order ideological factor built with both ideological measurements, in order to identify the common core of the ideology of derogation. This model also included the indicators of hostility against foreigners, a latent variable predicting four observed variables. The fit indices of M<sub>3</sub> were acceptable ( $\chi^2 = 172.206$ ;  $df = 32$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ; CFI = 0.973; RMSEA = 0.050; SRMR = 0.034). No additional path was needed to fit the model. The standardized coefficients of this model are shown in Table 4.

Second, M<sub>4</sub> was computed without the second-order ideological factor, and it included the correlations between all the latent variables (see Table 4). This model presented the same fit indices as M<sub>3</sub> because these are also equivalent models.

In order to confirm whether the strong relationship between the latent variables in both models is due to multicollinearity, additional factor analyses were carried out. Models where the observed variables loaded on one factor, on two independent factors (an ideological and a hostility factor), on two related factors, and on three independent factors were computed. Even though these models were more parsimonious than M<sub>3</sub> and M<sub>4</sub>, none of them explained sufficient variance to fit the data properly.<sup>6</sup> Since the equivalent solutions, one based on

<sup>4</sup> This study was conducted by the Institute of Interdisciplinary Research in Conflict and Violence (IKG), Universität Bielefeld.

<sup>5</sup> "Foreigner" is used to refer to the German word *Ausländer* (Zick et al. 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Fit indices for alternative models: 1 factor  $\chi^2 = 1002.312$ ;  $df = 35$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ; CFI = 0.813; RMSEA = 0.126; SRMR = 0.071, 2 independent factors ( $\chi^2 = 1413.688$ ;  $df = 35$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ; CFI = 0.734; RMSEA = 0.150; SRMR = 0.198), 2 re-

lated factors ( $\chi^2 = 671.105$ ;  $df = 34$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ; CFI = 0.877; RMSEA = 0.104; SRMR = 0.065), 3 independent factors ( $\chi^2 = 1131.196$ ;  $df = 35$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ; CFI = 0.789; RMSEA = 0.134; SRMR = 0.203).



three related factors and the other including a second-order ideological factor, were the best available solutions, the alternative models were not considered for additional analyses.

In the two selected models, further statistics were taken into account to check multicollinearity. The correlations of the parameter estimates were checked. No values above 0.95 were detected, meaning that the parameters in the model were estimated independent of each other. Since multicollinearity can affect the stability of the parameter estimates, the standard errors tend to be larger than usual. However, this is not the case in any of the models, where standard errors stay below 0.1. Finally, considering this statistical evidence and the fact that the measurements were based on conventional scales widely tested in prejudice research, the problem of multicollinearity could be ruled out.

**Table 4: Standardized coefficients for M3 and M4**

Observed and latent variables	M3	M4
RWA		
RWA1	0.72*	0.72*
RWA2	0.84*	0.84*
RWA3	0.57*	0.57*
SDO		
SDO1	0.63*	0.63*
SDO2	0.65*	0.65*
SDO3	0.57*	0.57*
Hostility to Foreigners		
HF1	0.74*	0.74*
HF2	0.86*	0.86*
HF3	0.54*	0.54*
HF4	0.71*	0.71*
Ideological Configuration		
RWA	0.71*	
SDO	0.63*	
Hostility to Foreigners	0.93*	
Correlations		
RWA with SDO		0.44*
Hostility to Foreigners with RWA		0.73*
Hostility to Foreigners with SDO		0.59*

\* Coefficient is significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

#### 4.3.2. Structural Equation Modeling

An SEM was conducted based on M3. RWA and SDO had a strong loading in the second-order ideological factor (see Table 4). Hostility toward foreigners was regressed on ideological configuration. Results showed a very strong relationship between both variables: 87% of the variance of hostility toward foreigners was explained by the ideological configuration.

Using M4, hostility toward foreigners was regressed on RWA and SDO. As a result, both predictors presented significant standardized regression coefficients: RWA = 0.50 and SDO = 0.37 ( $p < 0.001$ ). Thus, the ideological attitudes together explained 54% of the variance of hostility toward foreigners. In contrast with the results in Chile, in the German survey both predictors play a role in explaining attitudes toward foreigners. It could be interpreted that this group is perceived as both dangerous for the ingroup and competitive with it.

When hostility toward foreigners was predicted by the ideological configuration, the explained variance is over 30% greater than when predicted by the ideological attitudes separately. In addition to the theoretical parsimony of the model involving ideological configuration, the relevant difference in explanatory power supports the use of this model when predicting attitudes toward foreigners. Choosing the model with more explanatory power is considered to be a valid criterion in cases of statistical equivalence (Hershberger 2006).

#### 4.4. Summary of Results

Ideological configurations were suggested as a way to improve the understanding of derogative behaviors. This article presented one possible ideological configuration operationalized as a second-order factor built using ideological attitudes (RWA and SDO). As expected, in both samples the ideological attitudes loaded strongly on the second-order factor involving the proposed ideological configuration.

With regard to the prediction of attitudes toward foreigners, both models showed equivalent good fit. In both cases the ideological configuration predicted attitudes toward



immigrants. However, the regression coefficients showed a stronger prediction for hostility toward foreigners in the German sample than for affection toward immigrants in the Chilean sample (see Table 5).

When the ideological configuration models were compared with alternative models based on approaches emphasizing the differentiated prediction of ideological attitudes on attitudes toward immigrants, results suggested that ideological configuration is an equal (Chilean survey) or even superior predictor (German survey) compared with the separate ideological attitudes.

**Table 5: Ideological configuration and ideological attitudes predicting attitudes toward foreigners**

Latent variables	$\beta$	$r^2$
M1 (Chile)		
Affection toward Immigrants on Ideological Configuration	-0.37*	0.14
M2 (Chile)		
Affection toward Immigrants on:		0.12
RWA	-0.31*	
SDO	-0.05	
M3 (Germany)		
Hostility toward Foreigners on Ideological Configuration	0.93*	0.87
M4 (Germany)		
Hostility toward Foreigners on:		0.54
RWA	0.50*	
SDO	0.37*	

\* Coefficient is significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

## 5. Discussion

Results indicated empirical evidence for an ideological configuration based on the derogation of others with Chilean and German participants. Moreover, this ideological configuration could be considered as a valid way to explore the relationship between ideological attitudes in different cultural contexts. The second-order ideological construct could be understood as an extreme, socially available form of adhesion to norms and hierarchies that led to the derogation of others.

Nevertheless, there is a difference between surveys regarding the loadings of RWA and SDO on the second-order factor. In the Chilean sample the strongest loading was from RWA. In Germany, the two components were more or less equivalent. These results suggest that in Chile the ideological configuration is based mainly on the punishment of deviants, whereas in Germany both mechanisms, punishment of deviants and group hierarchies, are included. This difference between countries suggests that the ideological attitudes can be organized differently across societies, but share a common core regarding the function of the ideology, which is to justify and fuel the derogation of outgroups. However, these results should be examined carefully, because no multigroup comparison was carried out to test the measurement invariance, as the scales were not based on exactly the same items. Further research should help test whether ideological configuration shares the same meaning across different cultures.

Ideological configuration was successfully used in Chile and Germany to predict attitudes toward immigrants. Its explanatory power was even greater than when the variables were used separately. This evidence suggests that the exploration of the common core of RWA and SDO should be included in the agenda of prejudice research. However, since the present studies are cross-sectional, additional research should also address the problem of causality, for example with a longitudinal design.

The difference between the countries in the prediction of attitudes toward foreigners can be accounted for by three factors. First, in the Chilean study the dependent variable is operationalized as affection toward Argentineans and Peruvians; thus, it is a positive attitude specifically directed toward concrete target groups. In Germany, by contrast, the dependent variable is hostility toward foreigners, a negative attitude focused on a general target, with items that can be considered related to the general topic of immigration. This problem has been previously detected in the literature (Ceobanu and Escandell 2010, Meuleman et al. 2009); however, it is not clear if the strong relationship (theoretical and empirical) between both kinds of attitudes can be empirically distinguished. For that reason, the results presented here have to be carefully interpreted. We might

expect a stronger relationship of the ideological attitudes with negative attitudes toward outgroups than with positive attitudes. But the Chilean survey's identification of specific target groups could have moderated the relationship of the ideological attitudes with attitudes toward outgroups, by inhibiting the expression of negative feelings toward these specific outgroups.

Second, it is relatively easy to find a superordinate identity among Chileans, Argentines, and Peruvians – perhaps a larger Latin American identity – because their countries share the same majority language, Spanish; the same majority religion, Catholic; and the same majority ethnic background, *mestizo* (a mixture between Europeans and Native Americans).<sup>7</sup> In contrast, in Germany the prevalent migrant groups come from countries in which a different language is spoken, such as Poland, the former Soviet Union, or Turkey; some have a different religious background, particularly migrants from Muslim countries; and some have a different ethnic background, mainly the non-European immigrants. In this case the perceived similarity between the migrant group and the host country's inhabitants would differ between Chile and Germany. Previous research within Europe and the United States has shown that the issue of

language is one of the most important concerns in public opinions regarding the integration of immigrants (Citrin and Sides 2008).

The third factor is the history of migration. Chile has experienced significant immigration only in recent years, whereas in Germany migration has been a permanent phenomenon for the last five decades. These historical experiences could also produce a differentiation in the structure of prejudice. It would be interesting to observe if in the future the relationship between ideological configuration and attitudes toward foreigners becomes stronger in Chile because of the consolidation of migration groups living in the country.

Finally, further research regarding the concept of ideological configuration could be useful to improve the understanding of discrimination toward foreigners, specially if this approach includes a broader cross-cultural comparison that allows generalizing the findings presented here to other societies where migration is also becoming relevant. In the same way, other ideological attitudes and different targets should be included in the analyses to provide a more comprehensive model of ideological configuration.

<sup>7</sup> It should be taken into account that Uhlmann and others (2002) found that Chileans show higher preferences for white-skinned people than for mes-

tizos, and thus the argument of homogeneity among Latin Americans should be considered carefully.

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**Appendix 1: Items included in the Chilean survey***Right-Wing Authoritarianism:*

Voy a leerle un conjunto de frases que se refieren a distintos aspectos del mundo político, y para cada una de ellas le pido que me diga, de 1 a 5, su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo (1 = muy en desacuerdo; 5 = muy de acuerdo):

- Más que partidos y programas políticos, lo que nos hace falta es un líder que resuelva los problemas.
- Los gobiernos deben ocupar una dura cada vez que hay dificultades.
- En vez de tanta preocupación por los derechos de las personas, lo que este país necesita es un gobierno firme.
- Las verdaderas claves para una sociedad exitosa son la obediencia y la disciplina.

*Social Dominance Orientation:*

Voy a leerle un conjunto de frases que se refieren a distintos aspectos del mundo político, y para cada una de ellas le pido que me diga, de 1 a 5, su grado de acuerdo o desacuerdo (1 = muy en desacuerdo; 5 = muy de acuerdo):

- Algunos grupos dentro de nuestro país son simplemente inferiores a otros.
- En realidad no está mal que existan grupos que estén arriba y otros que estén abajo.
- En realidad no está mal que algunas personas tengan más oportunidades en la vida que otras.
- Los grupos inferiores debieran quedarse donde les corresponde.

*Affection toward Immigrants:*

Piense ahora en los peruanos/argentinos que han venido a vivir o trabajar a Chile. Usando la siguiente tarjeta (1 = muy poco; 5 = mucho), por favor dígame, de 1 a 5:

- ¿Cuánto le agradan los peruanos/argentinos?
- ¿Cuánto los admira?
- ¿Cuánto confía en ellos?

**Appendix 2: Items included in the German survey***Right-Wing Authoritarianism:*

Es gibt Meinungen die man immer wieder mal hört. Sagen Sie mir bitte für die folgenden Meinungen jeweils, ob sie

1. voll und ganz zustimmen
  2. eher zustimmen
  3. eher nicht zustimmen
  4. oder überhaupt nicht zustimmen.
- Verbrechen sollten härter bestraft werden.
  - Um Recht und Ordnung zu bewahren, sollte man härter gegen Außenseiter und Unruhestifter vorgehen.
  - Zu den wichtigsten Eigenschaften, die jemand haben sollte, gehören Gehorsam und Respekt vor dem Vorgesetzten.

*Social Dominance Orientation, group-based dominance:*

In Deutschland leben verschiedene Bevölkerungsgruppen.

Wie beurteilen Sie die folgenden Meinungen

1. voll und ganz zustimmen,
  2. eher zustimmen,
  3. eher nicht zustimmen, oder
  4. überhaupt nicht zustimmen
- Die Gruppen, die in unserer Gesellschaft unten sind, sollen auch unten bleiben.
  - Es gibt Gruppen in der Bevölkerung, die weniger wert sind als andere.
  - Einige Bevölkerungsgruppen sind nützlicher als andere.

*Hostility toward Foreigners:*

Wie beurteilen Sie die folgenden Meinungen. Sagen Sie mir bitte jeweils, ob sie

1. voll und ganz zustimmen
  2. eher zustimmen
  3. eher nicht zustimmen
  4. oder überhaupt nicht zustimmen.
- Die in Deutschland lebenden Ausländer sind eine Belastung für das soziale Netz.
  - Es leben zu viele Ausländer in Deutschland.
  - Die vielen ausländischen Kinder in der Schule verhindern eine gute Ausbildung der deutschen Kinder.
  - Wenn Arbeitsplätze knapp werden, sollte man die in Deutschland lebenden Ausländer wieder in ihre Heimat zurückschicken.



# Anti-Semitism in Poland and Ukraine: The Belief in Jewish Control as a Mechanism of Scapegoating

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# Anti-Semitism in Poland and Ukraine: The Belief in Jewish Control as a Mechanism of Scapegoating

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Systemic transition in post-communist Eastern Europe resulted in high inflation, rapid economic changes, and increased lack of control in everyday life. At the same time, anti-Semitic incidents were reported in this region after 1989. The ideological model of scapegoating (Glick 2002; 2005) might serve as an explanation of anti-Semitic prejudice in post-transition Eastern Europe. The model predicts that the ideology defining Jews as powerful, cunning, and dangerous would gain popularity in times of crises and would lead to greater discrimination against Jews. In two nationwide representative sample studies of anti-Semitism, in Poland ( $n = 1098$ ) and Ukraine ( $n = 1000$ ), we applied the ideological model of scapegoating to study various forms of anti-Semitism (conspiracy-based belief in Jewish control and discriminatory intentions toward Jews). In both samples, economic deprivation led to increased discriminatory intentions toward Jews; however, only in the Polish sample was deprivation linked with higher beliefs in Jewish control (scapegoat-defining ideology). In Poland the rise of conspiracy beliefs about Jewish control partially explained the effect of deprivation on discriminatory intentions toward Jews. The implications of these results are discussed.

The problem of anti-Semitism has drawn attention from social psychologists for decades (Adorno et al. 1950; Allport 1954; Cohen et al. 2009). Early research on anti-Semitism focused on the perception of Jews as threatening, immoral, and significantly different from the non-Jewish majority (Adorno et al. 1950; Allport 1954). Anti-Semitism was perceived by psychologists as caused by rather stable personality characteristics (Adorno et al. 1950; Dunbar and Simonova 2003; Frindte, Wettig, and Wammetsberger 2005). What seemed missing in such analyses is the understanding of situational causes of anti-Jewish prejudice.

Recent psychological studies provide more insight into situational factors responsible for anti-Semitism; however, most of them use American and West European student samples (Imhoff and Banse 2009; Cohen et al. 2009). Acknowledging the differences between such samples and the rest of

the world population (Henrich, Heine, Norezayan 2010), one could ask for more studies testing causal explanations of anti-Semitism in regions where prejudice against Jews is still a significant social problem. Social issues such as anti-Semitism have not been sufficiently studied in countries facing rapid systemic or economic transitions. It seems obvious that different cultural contexts might generate different causes for anti-Semitic beliefs and attitudes. Thus it is crucial to conduct comparative research on social-psychological phenomena, and on such culturally sensitive issues as stereotyping, prejudice and violence in particular (Heinrich, Heine, Norezayan 2010).

The main aim of the present paper is to apply one of the widely discussed causal theories of anti-Semitism, the ideological model of scapegoating, to the context of two post-Communist nations: Poland and Ukraine. Both

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Ukraine and Poland had large Jewish populations in the prewar period, and both countries witnessed the tragedy of the Holocaust (Krzemiński 2004; Michlic 2006). Currently the Jewish population in these countries is relatively small: estimates of the Jewish population in Poland ranges from around 1,000 to 50,000 people (Bilewicz and Wójcik 2010), and there are about 100,000 Jews currently living in Ukraine. However small the Jewish communities may be, anti-Semitic incidents still occur in both of these countries. Overt anti-Semitism is often expressed by football hooligans, Nazi signs and anti-Semitic slogans are painted on Jewish historical sites, politicians use anti-Semitic rhetoric, and several Jewish cemeteries have been desecrated in recent years (ADL 2009). Such incidents pose important questions of the causes and mechanisms of anti-Semitism in post-transitional Eastern Europe – in the part of the world where even absent Jews remain significant others.

### 1. The Ideological Model of Scapegoating

The scapegoating model of anti-Semitism is one of the psychological concepts that is most frequently referred to by researchers of anti-Semitism from other disciplines, such as history (e.g., Pok 1998), political science (e.g., Howard and Gibson 2007) and sociology (e.g., Bergmann 2008). Among contemporary psychologists, on the contrary, it has been very rarely mentioned after the wave of criticism targeting the concept in the 1950s (Stagner and Congdon 1955; Zawadzki 1948; Allport 1954).

The classic formulation of the scapegoat theory of prejudice is to link aggression toward minorities with the frustration of the aggressor by other sources: constitutional and personal factors, family relations, societal-level issues (Allport 1954). Anti-Semitism was usually described as resulting from widespread frustration and insecurity in times of economic depression, postwar readjustment, or other rapid social change. In the classic formulation of the scapegoating, (1) frustration generates aggression; (2) aggression is displaced toward relatively weak and defenseless minority groups; and (3) the displaced hostility is justified and rationalized by prejudiced attitudes, stereotypical beliefs, and so on. The main arguments against the classic formulation were: the difficulty of predicting the choice of scapegoats (Zawadzki 1948); that aggression is not always displaced and frustra-

tion does not always lead to aggression (Allport 1954); and, finally, that empirical findings did not support the claim that experimentally induced frustration (failure in a task) changes attitudes toward minorities (Stagner and Congdon 1955). One of the further developments in this area, the relative deprivation theory, suggested that ethnic prejudice arises not from an individual's relative deprivation (subjective perception of lower personal status), but rather from a group's relative deprivation (subjective perception of lower group status) (Pettigrew et al. 2008). Another insight into the link between frustration and prejudice, the cue theory of aggression, suggested that there are crucial individual differences (like anti-Semitic beliefs) that moderate people's reactions to frustrating conditions (Berkowitz 1959).

The ideological model of scapegoating proposed recently by Peter Glick (2002; 2005) overcomes many of these problems by suggesting that in times of shared frustration, majority members become more committed to ideologies that point to certain groups as responsible for the frustration. Warmth and competence are the key dimensions of stereotyping (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick and Xu 2002) – people perceive other groups in terms of their warmth (being good-natured, trustworthy, tolerant, friendly, and sincere) and competence (being clever, competent, creative, efficient, foresighted, ingenious, intelligent and knowledgeable). Minority groups that have high socioeconomic status are the usual targets of envious prejudice, and are depicted as very competent (ambitious, clever), but cold (manipulative, arrogant). Such a stereotype represents the group as combining high abilities with harmful intentions (Glick 2002).

The ideological model of scapegoating suggests that the envious stereotype becomes an ideology serving the heightened needs of groups in trouble who seek an explanation of their fate. The need for such ideology may be observed among majority groups that face relative deprivation and loss of control: notable historical instances include the German population of the depression-era Weimar Republic, Hutu in Rwanda before the genocide of Tutsi people, the Young Turks in the early-twentieth century (crime against Armenians), and in some aspects in the recent economic crisis in the United States that enhanced a need for conspiracy theories and anti-Semitism (Glick 2005).

Recent survey research in Poland suggests that in the post-transition era, Jews were often perceived as a group that conspires against Poles (Krzemiński 2004; Kofta and Sedek 2005). Widespread belief in Jewish conspiracy in Poland in the 1990s led to distrust of other ethnic groups. People who believed in Jewish conspiracy also entertained other paranoid ideas about politics: that NATO and Russia were in coalition against Poland, or that foreign entrepreneurs conspired against Polish companies (Kofta and Sedek 2005). Nevertheless, the core of the belief in Jewish conspiracy seems to correspond with Glick's concept of envious prejudice – it treats Jews as a highly competent group with harshly negative intentions toward the majority group.

At the same time, political science research found no evidence for scapegoating of Jews in the former Soviet countries, such as Ukraine. Jews were rarely blamed for the countries' misfortunes, and economic crises did not lead to a rise in anti-Jewish crimes (Howard and Gibson 2007).

Political scientists and psychologists who study this issue suggest that before the collapse of communism in Russia, anti-Semitic beliefs were not widespread enough to be successfully used by key political actors in their propaganda efforts. Economic frustration led to increased authoritarianism, but not directly to prejudice and scapegoating (McFarland, Ageyev, and Abalakina-Paap 1992). Marc Howard and James Gibson (2007), however, claim that other groups might serve as the main scapegoats in this region: Chechens and other nations of Caucasus were blamed for misfortunes more often than Jews in recent years.

A first glance at Internet searches in Poland and Ukraine in the past six years supports this opinion (fig. 1). In periods of intense interest in the source of current crises we observed increased interest in Jewish issues, as represented by the increasing number of Internet users searching for "Jews" and "crisis" in Poland. The relation between these trajectories among Ukrainian Internet users seems to be more complex.

Figure 1: Average search traffic of "crisis" and "Jew/Jews" through google.com in Poland and Ukraine



The cross-correlation in two Internet search samples revealed that the number of searches for “Jews” was related to the number of searches for “crisis” in a Polish sample (0 time lag: .11; –3 month time lag: .10; +3 month time lag: .10); however, there was no relation between the two in an Ukrainian sample (0 time lag: .02; –3 month time lag: –.04; +3 months time lag: .02).

The main aim of the current research was to empirically test the model of scapegoating as an explanation of anti-Semitic prejudice in Poland and Ukraine, using the nationwide sample data collected in both countries in the post-transition period (2002). The two countries selected for analysis share a similar history in recent years: both countries experienced systemic and economic transition, and both faced new phenomena such as unemployment and income inequality (Milanovic 1993). Economic problems related to job loss and inflation led many citizens of Poland and Ukraine to experience shared relative deprivation and loss of control. This in turn raised the level of authoritarianism in the years following the systemic transition (Korzeniewski 2006).

The ideological model of scapegoating predicts that people who experience relative deprivation are more willing to act against a minority group that is perceived as cold and competent (such as Jews) by discriminating against them in various fields of economic and social life. This process should be mediated by an increased commitment to ideology that portrays the minority group as powerful and as conspiring against the majority group. The current study examines whether the relative deprivation experienced on the collective and individual levels leads to an increased willingness to discriminate against Jews, and whether this link is mediated by the increased belief in Jewish conspiracy. We present the results of two surveys in order to test the ideological model of scapegoating, first from Poland and then from Ukraine.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Survey 1: Poland

The nationwide representative sample survey was performed in Poland in 2002 with 1,098 participants (random-quota sample) by the PBS research agency (Sopot). Three items addressed relative deprivation on the individual and collective levels: “Please evaluate the economic situation of your family – did it become worse, better, or not change in the last year?”; “Please evaluate the economic situation of our country – did it become worse, better, or not change in the last year?”; and “Please evaluate the economic situation of our country – did it become worse, better, or not change in the last five years?” Responses were scored on a 3-point scale ranging from “worse” to “better,”  $\alpha = .75$ . Two items diagnosed the willingness to discriminate against Jews in two aspects of economic life: “Do you think that Jewish people should be allowed to buy Polish land?” and “Do you think that Jewish people should be allowed to buy companies in Poland?” Responses were scored on a 3-point scales ranging from “not at all” to “definitely yes,”  $\alpha = .73$ . Three items measured belief in Jewish control, a subscale of a belief in Jewish conspiracy (Kofta and Sedek 2005): “Do you think that Jews control the media in Poland?”; “Do you think that Jews control the economy in Poland?”; and “Do you think that Jews control politics in Poland?” Responses were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from “not at all” to “definitely yes,”  $\alpha = .91$ .

### 2.1 Results

All items selected for the model were significantly positively intercorrelated. Table 1 presents the results of the correlations between items measuring discrimination, belief in Jewish control, and willingness to discriminate against the Jews.

<sup>1</sup> The Polish and Ukrainian models are analyzed separately because of the differences in factorial structure of the latent variables between Poland and Ukraine,  $\Delta CFI = .005$ ;  $\Delta c2 (5) = 45.74, p < .001$ . This is mostly due to dif-

ferences in measurement of belief in Jewish conspiracy,  $\Delta CFI = .005$ ;  $\Delta c2 (2) = 41.19, p < .001$ , and to some extent due to differences in measurement of discriminatory intentions against Jews,  $\Delta CFI < .001$ ;  $\Delta c2 (1) = 8.22, p < .01$ .

**Table 1: Correlation matrix between latent variables of a study in Poland (nationwide representative sample survey, 2002, N = 1,098)**

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Discrimination (prohibit buying Polish land)	2.27	.88	1						
Discrimination (prohibit buying Polish companies)	2.56	.76	.583**	1					
Belief in Jewish control in politics	3.20	1.32	.327**	.242**	1				
Belief in Jewish control in economy	3.14	1.30	.306**	.209**	.845**	1			
Belief in Jewish control in media	2.86	1.25	.254**	.163**	.723**	.768**	1		
Deprivation (family situation)	2.30	.65	.106**	.123**	.142**	.121**	.102**	1	
Deprivation (country situation, last year)	2.47	.65	.152**	.155**	.162**	.174**	.168**	.547**	1
Deprivation (country situation, last 5 years)	2.40	.75	.123**	.114**	.086**	.100**	.097**	.422**	.538**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

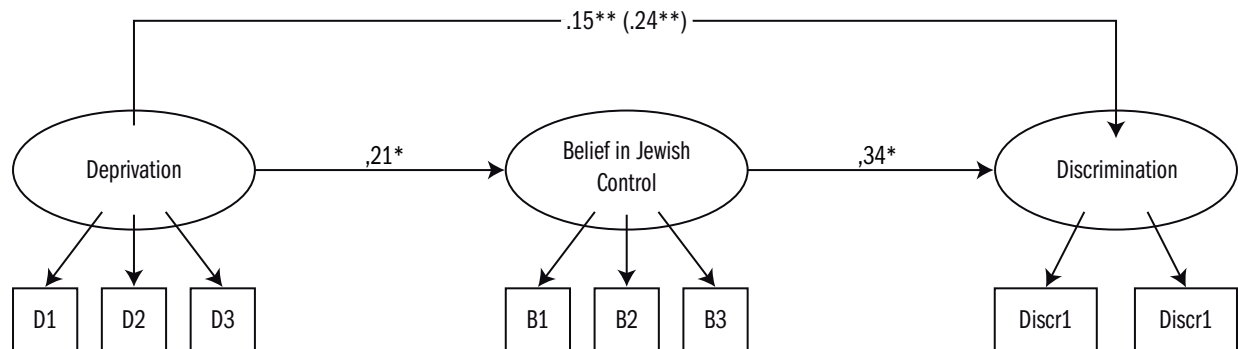
The whole model was tested as a structural equation model (SEM) with AMOS 7.0 software. The solution obtained for the whole sample is shown in Figure 2. The fit of the mediational model was good:  $\chi^2(17, N = 1089) = 27.61, p < .05$ ; RMSEA = .024, RMR = .014, CFI = .997.

Relative deprivation positively predicted willingness to discriminate against Jews ( $\beta = .24, p < .001$ ) and belief in Jewish control ( $\beta = .21, p < .001$ ). When relative deprivation and belief in Jewish control were entered simultaneously into the model, belief in Jewish control significantly predicted

willingness to discriminate against Jews ( $\beta = .34, p < .001$ ) and the impact of deprivation on discrimination was lower, but still significant ( $\beta = .15, p < .001$ ). The indirect effect of deprivation on discrimination was  $\beta = .07, CI = (.05, .10), p < .001$  (2000 bootstrap samples).

After removing the direct link from deprivation to discrimination, the model fit was still acceptable:  $\chi^2(18, N = 1089) = 42.98, p < .01$ ; RMSEA = .036, RMR = .024, CFI = .993. This suggests that the belief in Jewish control partially mediated the impact of deprivation on discrimination.

**Figure 2: Impact of deprivation (perceived negative situation of family/country) on support for discriminatory practices against Jews mediated by perceived Jewish control (of politics/economy/media) in Poland (nationwide representative sample survey, 2002)**



Note: \*\*  $p < .001$ .

### 3. Survey 2: Ukraine

A similar nationwide representative sample survey was performed in 2002–03 in Ukraine with 1,000 participants (random-quota sample) by the Socioinform research agency (Lviv). Three items addressed the relative deprivation on individual and collective level: “Please evaluate the economic situation of your family – did it become worse, better, or not change in the last year?”; “Please evaluate the economic situation of our country – did it become worse, better, or not change in the last year?”; “Please evaluate the economic situation of our country – did it become worse, better, or not change in the last five years?” Responses were scored on a 3-point scale ranging from “worse” to “better,”  $\alpha = .79$ . Two items diagnosed the willingness to discriminate against Jews in two aspects of economic life: “Do you think that Jewish people should be allowed to buy Ukrainian land?” and “Do you think that Jewish people should

be allowed to buy companies in Ukraine?” Responses were scored on a 3-point scale ranging from “not at all” to “definitely yes,”  $\alpha = .69$ . Three items measure belief in Jewish control: “Do you think that Jews control the media in Ukraine?”; “Do you think that Jews control the economy in Ukraine?”; “Do you think that Jews control politics in Ukraine?” Responses were scored on a 5-point scale ranging from “not at all” to “definitely yes,”  $\alpha = .90$ .

#### 3.1 Results

Most of the items selected for the model were significantly intercorrelated; however, there was no significant correlation between several items measuring country-level deprivation and the belief in Jewish control. Table 2 presents the correlations between items measuring deprivation, belief in Jewish control, and willingness to discriminate against Jews.

**Table 2: Correlation matrix between latent variables of a study in Ukraine (nationwide representative sample survey, 2002–2003, N = 1,000)**

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Discrimination (prohibit buying Ukrainian land)	2.39	.86	1						
Discrimination (prohibit buying Ukrainian companies)	2.18	.91	.525**	1					
Belief in Jewish control in politics	2.87	1.17	.205**	.196**	1				
Belief in Jewish control in economy	3.15	1.16	.163**	.177**	.717**	1			
Belief in Jewish control in media	2.88	1.15	.171**	.170**	.767**	.748**	1		
Deprivation (family situation)	2.12	.74	.139**	.101**	.064*	.064*	.070*	1	
Deprivation (country situation, last year)	2.11	.77	.150**	.109**	.072*	.057	.079*	.576**	1
Deprivation (country situation, last 5 years)	1.97	.82	.111**	.122**	.025	-.008	.028	.498**	.590**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



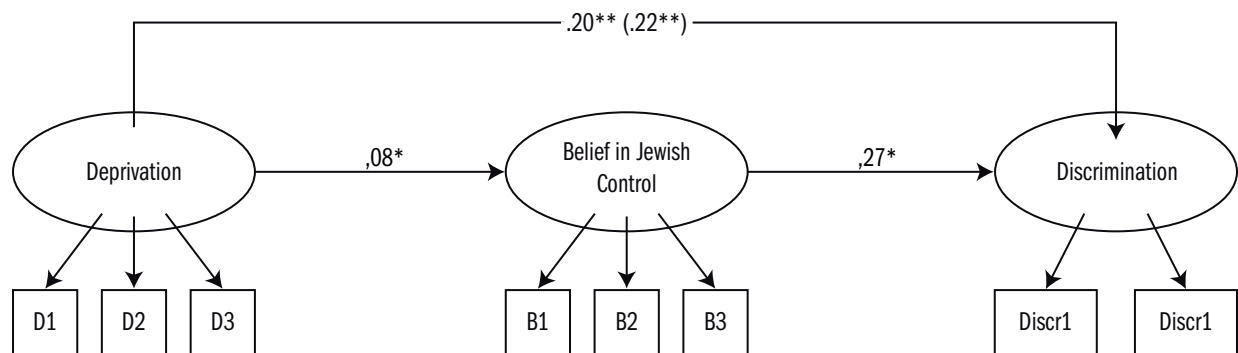
This model was also tested as a structural equation model (SEM). The solution obtained for the whole sample is shown in Figure 3. The fit of the mediational model was very good,  $\chi^2 (17, N = 1000) = 17.69, p = .41$ ; RMSEA = .006, RMR = .015, CFI = 1.000.

Relative deprivation positively predicted willingness to discriminate against Jews ( $\beta = .22, p < .001$ ) and weakly predicted belief in Jewish control ( $\beta = .08, p < .05$ ). When relative deprivation and belief in Jewish control were entered simultaneously into the model, belief in Jewish control significantly predicted willingness to discriminate against Jews ( $\beta = .27, p < .001$ ) and the impact of deprivation on discrimination was significant ( $\beta = .20, p < .001$ ). The indirect effect of deprivation on discrimination was

very small but significant,  $\beta = .02, CI = (.01, .04), p < .05$  (2000 bootstrap samples). After excluding the direct path, the fit of the model became worse, but still acceptable,  $\chi^2 (18, N = 1000) = 41.60, p < .01$ ; RMSEA = .036, RMR = .034, CFI = .99.

Relative deprivation positively predicted willingness to discriminate against Jews, and belief in Jewish control predicted willingness to discriminate against Jews; however, relative deprivation was not related to belief in Jewish control. A very weak direct link between the independent variable and the mediator – as well as very weak indirect effects – suggest that conspiracy theories about Jews do not act as a statistical mediator in this equation (Baron and Kenny 1986).

**Figure 3: Impact of deprivation (perceived negative situation of family/country) on support for discriminatory practices against Jews mediated by perceived Jewish control (of politics/economy/media) in Ukraine (nationwide representative sample survey, 2002-2003)**



Note: \*\*  $p < .001$ , \*  $p < .05$ .

#### 4. Discussion

The ideological model of scapegoating proposes that the belief in Jewish control (and by extension, conspiracy) would mediate the impact of relative deprivation on discrimination: people whose situation deteriorates would seek an explanation and would displace their aggression onto the group that could be accused of causing the deprivation – a group stereotyped as high in competence and low in warmth. Examination of the model's fit with the data gathered in two post-transitional democracies, Poland and Ukraine, only partially supports this claim.

In Poland, participants who felt deprived were more willing to discriminate against Jews. Belief in Jewish control (conspiracy stereotype) was the mechanism partially responsible for the discrimination against Jews among deprived people. Frustration led to the increased commitment to ideology that defined the scapegoat (conspiracy beliefs), and that ideology led to aggression toward the scapegoat (discriminatory intentions). At the same time there was also a direct effect on willingness to discriminate, suggesting that under frustrating conditions people also express discriminatory intentions regardless of ideological beliefs.

The attempt to replicate the model in the Ukrainian setting did not lead to the same conclusions. In Ukraine, participants who were deprived were also more willing to discriminate against Jews; however, this link was not mediated by the conspiracy stereotypes. Discriminatory reactions against Jews in the Ukraine sample were caused by both conspiracy stereotypes of Jews and by economic decline. By contrast with the results in Poland, relative deprivation in this country did not strongly increase belief in Jewish control. Thus, the main point of the ideological model of scapegoating – namely, greater belief in scapegoat-defining ideology under frustrating living conditions – does not seem to explain the phenomenon of anti-Semitism in Ukraine.

It might be also possible that, currently, different groups are being blamed for the economic crises in Ukraine (e.g., Caucasian ethnic groups) and the role of Jews as scapegoats is limited. A similar situation was recently observed by political scientists in post-Soviet Russia (Howard and Gibson 2007). Thus the issue of the choice of the scapegoat group remains

crucial in understanding contemporary reactions to social shared frustration (Zawadzki 1948). The difference might be also attributed to the prevalence of conspiracy-based anti-Semitism in Poland, well described in the psychological and sociological literature (Kofta and Sędek 2005; Krzeminski 2004), that was an important part of prewar nationalist ideology. At the same time, comparisons between the results of the Polish and Ukrainian studies could be limited by measurement differences: it is plausible that the factorial structure of anti-Semitic beliefs, discriminatory intentions, and deprivation is different between Poland and Ukraine.

The ideological model of scapegoating seems to be a good explanation of anti-Semitism only in countries where Jews are still targets of envious stereotypes. Recent research suggests that other groups (e.g., Asian Americans in the United States) may be currently perceived in that manner to an even greater extent than Jews (Fiske et al. 2002). The present study had an important limitation in the way envious stereotypes were measured: participants in our studies were not asked about the perceived warmth and competence of Jews, as in the original studies, but instead were asked to indicate their support for conspiracy theory about Jews (belief in Jewish control over media, politics and economy). Although the study is based on theoretical accounts of the ideological model of scapegoating (Glick 2005), it is not a direct translation of the stereotype content model (Fiske et al. 2002).

There are numerous other theoretical accounts of anti-Semitism (Cohen et al. 2009; Dunbar and Simonova 2003; Frindte, Wammetsberger, and Wettig 2005; Imhoff and Banse 2009). Some of them stress the role of guilt-driven processes among historical perpetrators that drive secondary forms of anti-Semitism (Imhoff and Banse 2009). Other focus broadly on individual differences and authoritarian personality traits as direct causes of anti-Semitic beliefs (Dunbar and Simonova 2003; Frindte, Wammetsberger, and Wettig 2005), or even on the situationally induced fear of death (mortality salience) that leads to support for anti-Jewish and anti-Israeli attitudes (Cohen et al. 2009). All of these explanations seem plausible when it comes to the situation in Eastern Europe. Most of these historically traumatized societies are without doubt prone to mortality salience and different forms of victimhood competition (Krzeminski

2004). Authoritarian attitudes also seem to be quite widespread in East European countries (Korzeniowski 2006).

Scapegoating theory adds another important explanation of anti-Semitism. In the Polish and Ukrainian studies, we presented some correlational evidence for its validity. Studies applying experimental or longitudinal designs, could shed more light on scapegoating processes as a basis

of anti-Semitism. Examination of the perception of Jews on the dimensions of warmth and competence could verify whether conspiracy-based anti-Semitism is another form of envious stereotypes known from the past (Glick 2005). With the development of experimental and survey research in this field, social psychology might contribute to better understanding of the anti-Semitic attitudes that have so often caused violence in this part of the world.

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# Boundaries, Discrimination, and Interethnic Conflict in Xinjiang, China

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# Boundaries, Discrimination, and Interethnic Conflict in Xinjiang, China

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The Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region has been afflicted by Uighur political activism and ethnic violence for the past few decades. Interethnic relations between the Uighurs and Han Chinese have been extremely tense. Why is Xinjiang so vulnerable to interethnic violence? Why are intergroup dynamics between the Uighurs and Han Chinese so volatile? This paper examines Uighur–Han Chinese relations in contemporary Xinjiang and probes conditions that facilitate interethnic violence. Utilizing Fredrik Barth’s approach to ethnicity that emphasizes boundaries, this paper examines in detail how the rigid interethnic boundary between the Uighurs and Han Chinese has been constructed and strengthened in Xinjiang. Perceived differences have generated mutual distrust and discrimination between the two groups that make intergroup communication and understanding difficult and therefore very limited. In situations such as that in Xinjiang, where a rigid intergroup boundary is in place and civic engagements across groups are lacking, intergroup conflict is extremely hard to avoid.

On July 5, 2009, one of the deadliest riots in China in recent years erupted in Urumqi, the capital city of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region.<sup>1</sup> On that day, ethnic Uighur demonstrators clashed with police forces and violently attacked innocent Han Chinese passersby, which led to the deaths of around two hundred people.<sup>2</sup> This incident brought the Uighur issue and China’s ethnic politics into the international media spotlight; it also led to severe repression by the Chinese state against the Uighur people and caused an information lockdown on the whole Xinjiang region for almost a year. Xinjiang is perhaps the region where interethnic relations are the tensest in all of China. Sporadic riots and ethnic violence have occurred during the past few decades, as well as armed uprisings, bombings, and assas-

inations. According to some scholars, Xinjiang is heading toward “Palestinization,” in imminent danger of devolving into protracted ethnic conflict and communal violence (Wang 2007).

This paper looks at two processes that generated the rigid intergroup boundary between the Han Chinese and the Uighurs. First, large scale in-migration of Han Chinese to Xinjiang during the past few decades has brought the Uighurs into direct contact and confrontation with the Han Chinese in daily life. These intensified encounters between the two have highlighted existing linguistic, cultural, and religious differences between the two, resulting in self-imposed segregation between the two groups in Xinjiang,

<sup>1</sup> Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), or East Turkestan as it is called by Uighur nationalists, covers a vast territory in the northwest part of China with a total area of 1,664,900 square km. It comprises one-sixth of China’s total geographic territory and is the size of Britain, France, Germany, and Spain combined (Millward 2010, 4). Xinjiang is traditionally home to various Turkic-speaking and Persian-speaking Muslim oasis dwellers, as

well as Turkic-speaking and Mongolian-speaking nomads who roam the grasslands in the north. There is no standard nomenclature for the Uighurs and East Turkestan: Uighur is sometimes spelled as Uygur or Uyghur; East Turkestan sometimes is known as Eastern Turkestan or Eastern Turkistan. In this paper, I use Uighur and East Turkestan unless in direct quotation.

<sup>2</sup> For a balanced account of the riot, see Millward (2010).

especially in urban areas. To illustrate the development and manifestation of this segregation, a detailed analysis of how the two communities develop their stereotypes and prejudices against each other in daily life is provided. Issues such as language use in the job market, language education, and religious and dietary differences are explored. The second process is the contribution of preferential policies, discriminatory measures in the job market, political repression by the Chinese government, and intergroup violence to the elimination of intragroup differences within the various Uighur communities in Xinjiang. These factors have helped generate a rigid intergroup boundary, which engenders rampant distrust and discrimination between the two groups and makes the intergroup dynamic extremely susceptible to violence.

This analysis of the Xinjiang case aims to make the following contributions: foremost, by utilizing Barth's concept of boundaries, it provides a detailed portrayal of a rigid intergroup relationship at the meso level. It thus offers a glimpse into the mechanisms of how rigid interethnic boundaries are constructed and maintained. In addition, by linking rigid group boundaries and mutual distrust and discrimination, it provides an understanding of how the lack of civic engagements across groups makes violence between them possible and likely. In conclusion, this paper calls for more attention to the social processes of intergroup relations and their impact on communal violence.<sup>3</sup>

Using ethnographic methods, this paper is based on interviews conducted and observations recorded during a field trip to Xinjiang in 2008. The richness of such materials allows readers to gain a vivid understanding of Xinjiang's ethnic problems at the meso level. Materials collected through ethnographic methods are, of course, filtered through the subjective perceptions and opinions of the researcher (Schensul et al. 1999, 273). In this case, the materials are further cross-checked and juxtaposed with existing writings on Xinjiang so as to present a more balanced portrayal of its interethnic dynamics. Yet there are significant limita-

tions to the theoretical conclusions that can be drawn from a single case study. At best, the analysis presented here is an "interpretive case study," whereby "generalization is applied to a specific case with the aim of throwing light on the case rather than of improving the generalization in any way" (Lijphart 1971, 692). Through an engagement with Barth's theoretical framework, it is possible to interpret and probe how rigid group boundaries come into existence and how they manifest in daily life in Xinjiang. However, since it is a single case study, readers should treat this analysis of Xinjiang's interethnic relations as only one interpretation.

My analysis starts with a brief review of the history of Xinjiang and the background of ethnic politics in the region. It discusses the current situation in Xinjiang, and, in particular, the occasional outbursts of violent confrontation between the Uighurs and Han Chinese since the 1990s. Following that, the paper introduces Barth's concept of group boundaries, and shows how it is useful for understanding rigid intergroup boundaries in places such as Xinjiang. Using this theory as a guide, I go on to portray the interethnic dynamic in Xinjiang, and to offer an analysis of how intergroup boundaries are constructed and maintained in daily life. The paper then reflects on the implications of rigid intergroup boundaries, and how they feed mutual distrust and discrimination, which potentially breed violence. My concluding remarks concern ethnic violence in general and policy recommendations for Xinjiang in particular.

### 1. Recent Incidents of Violence in Xinjiang

Located along the Silk Roads linking ancient China to Europe, Xinjiang has historically been a nexus where the East meets the West. China-based dynastic control over Xinjiang should be considered sporadic, corresponding to the ebb and flow of imperial powers. It was the Manchu Qing Dynasty that finally conquered the Zungar Mongols and absorbed Xinjiang into its imperial domain. In 1884, Xinjiang was officially declared a province. After the collapse of the Qing Empire in 1911, Xinjiang was immediately taken over by various warlords (Forbes 1986). Xinjiang

<sup>3</sup> Social Identity Theory uses a psychological approach to address why groups engage in in-group privilege and out-group prejudice. This paper instead

puts the focus squarely on the social processes of the construction and maintenance of ethnic boundaries.



witnessed two short-lived independent governments in the 1930s and 1940s. The first, a Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan, was established in 1933 by Muhammad Amin Bughra (Mehmet Emin Bugra), a prominent Muslim scholar, together with his two younger brothers Abdullah and Nur Ahmad (Forbes 1986, 113). This is considered to be the first East Turkestan Republic (ETR) by many Uighur nationalists today. The regime came to an end in 1934. In the fall of 1944, a rebellion broke out in Ili in northern Xinjiang. This rebellion, backed by the Soviet Union, established the second East Turkestan Republic (Benson 1990; Wang 1999). This ETR was absorbed by the newly independent People's Republic of China, under the pressure of the Soviet Union (Millward and Tursun 2004). In 1955, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region was established, with the Uighurs designated as the titular nationality. Seypidin Ezizi, a Uighur, served as the chairman of XUAR's People's Council. Wang Enmao, a Han general, nevertheless held the top post in the regional military and Chinese Communist Party. This pattern of leadership composition still persists today, with a Uighur as chairman of the XUAR but the real power held by a Han Chinese as the CCP boss.

After the great exodus of ethnic Uighur and Kazakhs into the Soviet Union in 1962, in the aftermath of the Sino-Soviet split and the subsequent closing of borders, little is known about whether any major political mobilization by the Uighurs occurred during the Cultural Revolution years. Partly due to the turbulent and repressive nature of the Chinese state during these years and partly due to the shutting off of Xinjiang from external influences, Uighur opposition to Chinese rule gradually became more overtly nationalistic during the 1980s (Dillon 2004, 59). However, political activism in Xinjiang during the 1980s was quite sporadic and often limited in scale. It was in the 1990s that political movements, which often resorted to violence, gradually spread throughout the region (Dillon 2004). This outbreak of violence began with the Baren Incident in southern Xinjiang. A rebel group, led by Zeydin Yusuf, with the name Islamic Party of East Turkistan planned a series of synchro-

nized attacks on government buildings (Millward 2004, 14). According to some reports, hundreds of people were killed in clashes with the Chinese police force. The scale of the rebellion notwithstanding, rebels during the Baren Incident also seem to have propagated separatist ideologies and organized the rebellion through the channels of local mosques (Dillon 2004, 73). After the Baren Incident, the political activities of Uighur separatists became increasingly violent. The 1990s were a decade of bombings and assassinations throughout Xinjiang. Targets were usually Uighur government officials and cooperative religious clerics, who were considered to be traitors by radical Uighur separatists (Millward 2007, 330). Between 1990 and 1999, according to one estimate, 61 violent incidents occurred in Xinjiang.<sup>4</sup>

One large-scale and deadly riot took place in the city of Yining (Ghulja) in early 1997. Following the Strike Hard Campaign in 1996, which targeted illegal religious activities and private Quranic schools, local police in the city of Yining arrested two Uighur religious students around the time of Ramadan. Several hundred people demonstrated in response, eventually leading to a riot. The Chinese government official figure for casualties of the riot was 198 injured and 7 dead, while Uighur exiles claimed up to 300 dead (Dillon 2004, 93–94).

Since the Yining (Ghulja) Incident in 1997 and up until very recently, there have been no large-scale political mobilizations reported in Xinjiang beyond a few sporadic bombings, assassinations, and small-scale protests. Yet, on July 5, 2009, Xinjiang witnessed a large-scale riot in the capital city of Urumqi with a surprisingly high number of casualties. On that day, hundreds of Uighurs in Urumqi went to protest the death of two Uighur workers in a factory in Southern China, and the demonstration soon turned into a deadly riot. Perhaps frustrated with police forces that tried to stop the demonstration, many protestors violently attacked innocent civilians, specifically targeting Han Chinese. According to official statistics, a total of 197 people died as a result of the riot, the majority of them Han Chinese.<sup>5</sup> Thousands of troops

<sup>4</sup> See the dataset compiled in Hierman (2007).

<sup>5</sup> See the report in Xinhua News, accessible at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/18/content\\_11727782.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/18/content_11727782.htm).

were immediately brought in to impose order through mass arrests. Two days later, frustrated and angered by the loss of so many Han Chinese lives, thousands of Han Chinese vigilantes marched in Urumqi, armed with sticks and iron bars, ready to fight back at the Uighurs (Millward 2010, 354). The relationship between the two groups has become extremely tense, threatening the future peace and stability of Xinjiang.

## 2. Boundary and Ethnic Identity Construction

To make sense of the violent mobilization of the Uighurs in the past few decades, a few questions need to be addressed: (1) Why is Xinjiang so vulnerable to interethnic violence? (2) Why are intergroup dynamics between the Uighurs and Han Chinese so volatile? and (3) How is violence justified and used as a means to address grievances? Here we need to look at how the rigid intergroup boundary between the Uighurs and the Han Chinese is constructed and maintained in everyday life in Xinjiang. That rigid boundary makes intergroup communications between the two groups difficult, leading to mistrust and discrimination. Lack of civic engagement across groups creates conditions that allow indiscriminate interethnic violence. To understand how rigid the intergroup boundary is in Xinjiang and the conditions that made its development possible, we will engage Fredrik Barth's thesis on ethnic boundary construction through social encountering.

Barth's conceptualization of ethnicity emphasizes that it is the ethnic boundary that defines a group, rather than inherent cultural attributes (Barth 1969, 15). While the cultural content or even membership of an ethnic group can change, it is still important to explore how group boundaries are maintained in different contexts. Barth asserts that "categorical ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of mobility, contact and information, but do entail social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discrete categories are maintained despite changing participation and membership in the course of individual life histories" (Barth 1969, 9–10). He is cautioning scholars not to take group differences or conflict for granted; rather, they need to explore empirically how group boundaries are demarcated.

Group boundaries are constructed in two ways. One is through intragroup ascription, and the other is through ex-

ternal designation. Each individual carries certain identity attributes that he or she can draw upon to identify with a certain group. At the same time, the manifestation of the meaning of these attributes depends upon the situational context. In some instances the attribute might be language, in others it might be religion, race, physical differences, customs, or behavior, and so on. Thus, within different situations and with different audiences, one can draw upon certain attributes either to identify with or distance oneself from a group. We can think of each individual as carrying a portfolio of identifiers, or a layering of identifications; "as audiences change, the socially-defined array of ethnic choices open to the individual changes" (Nagel 1994, 154). This is not to say that individuals have total freedom in which group they identify with. There are certain limits in one's identity repertoire. As Kanchan Chandra and Steven Wilkinson point out, all individuals have a repertoire of nominal ethnic identity attributes, which "consist of all the meaningful membership rules that can be fashioned from an individual's given set of descent-based attributes" (Chandra and Wilkinson 2008, 520). Since every individual has a certain set of attributes, the choices are not totally free or random. One's ability to engage a certain level of identity repertoire is deeply shaped and constrained by external mechanisms such as social encountering and categorization.

Social encountering plays a pivotal role. Barth especially emphasizes the interaction aspect of group boundary construction. He states that "ethnic distinctions do not depend on an absence of social interaction and acceptance, but are quite to the contrary often the very foundation on which embracing social systems are built" (Barth 1969, 10). Group boundaries are demarcated only when group members encounter others: during this encounter process group members realize how similar to or how different they are from the people with whom they interact. The external aspect is vital for group boundary construction. Oftentimes, it is the other that defines the self.

External categorization is particularly powerful in rigidifying group boundaries. The power and authority relationship in the categorization of groups leads to the production and reproduction of group identities (Jenkins 1994, 197). Or as

Andreas Wimmer (2008) asserts, external constraints from the structures of the social field, such as institutions, political power, and networks of political alliances, influence how group boundaries are drawn. Political institutions, in particular the modern nation-state, play an extremely powerful role in the construction of ethnic identity by imposing classification and categorization so as to demarcate group boundaries (Laitin 1986; Suny 1993). Thus, various nation-building efforts carried out by modern nation-states are in fact a process of eliminating internal boundaries while creating or maintaining external boundaries (Conversi 1999, 564). Preferential treatments of ethnic groups can also create new boundaries or strengthen existing ones (Nagel 1994, 157). Furthermore, violence can be provoked so as to strengthen the boundaries between the in-group and the out-group (Conversi 1995, 81).

To explain the making and maintenance of intergroup boundaries in a specific context, we need to pay attention to the multiple factors outlined above. First is a detailed analysis of how social encountering and external categorization have generated a rigid boundary between the Uighurs and Han Chinese in Xinjiang.

### 3. Interethnic Boundary Construction and Maintenance

As a frontier region bordering Central Asia, Xinjiang is home to thirteen ethnic groups – the Uighur, Han, Kazak, Hui, Kirghiz, Mongol, Xibe, Russian, Tajik, Uzbek, Tatar, Manchu, and Daur. Of these, the Uighurs are the most numerous, with a population of 9.65 million; Han Chinese come in a close second, at 8.24 million; Kazakh third, at 1.48 million; Hui at 0.94 million; Kirghiz and Mongols at 0.18 million each; with the rest relatively small in number (Table 1). Population distribution of ethnic groups roughly follows north-south and urban-rural divides. Han Chinese are concentrated in urban areas and in the northern part of Xinjiang, while Uighurs are mostly concentrated in southern rural areas. For example, in the capital city of Urumqi, Han Chinese are now about 73 percent of the total population, while Uighurs are about 12 percent. However, in the south in areas such as Kashgar and Khotan, Uighurs make up more than 90 percent of the local population (Table 2).

**Table 1: Ethnic groups in Xinjiang and their population (2007)**

Ethnic group	Population
Uighur	9,650,629
Han	8,239,245
Kazakh	1,483,883
Hui	942,956
Kirghiz	181,862
Mongol	177,120
Tajik	44,824
Xibe	42,444
Manchu	25,626
Uzbek	16,138
Russian	11,609
Daur	6,678
Tatar	4,728
Total	20,951,900

Data from Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook 2008, accessible at China Data Online (<http://china-dataonline.org>).

**Table 2: Uighur/Han distribution in Xinjiang (percentage)**

	Uighur	Han Chinese	Other
Urumqi City	12.3	73	14.7
Karamay City	15.2	75.5	9.3
Turpan	70.5	23	6.5
Kumul (Hami)	20.2	66.7	13.1
Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture	4.6	74.4	21.1
Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture	16.2	43.8	40
Bortala Mongol Autonomous Prefecture	12.7	67.3	20
Bayangol Mongol Autonomous Prefecture	32.7	57.5	9.8
Aksu	78	20.7	1.3
Kizilsu Kirghiz Autonomous Prefecture	63.5	7.4	29.1
Kashgar	91.1	7.3	1.6
Khotan	96.5	3.5	0.2
Total	46.1	39.3	14.6

Data from Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook 2008, accessible at China Data Online (<http://china-dataonline.org>).

Anyone who has travelled or lived in Xinjiang would not have failed to notice the social distance between the Uighurs and Han Chinese. The most striking characteristic of their interethnic group relations is the clearly demarcated boundary between the two groups in social spaces. One can even talk about self-imposed segregation of the two groups, especially in urban areas where the two groups come into direct contact. Very rarely do Uighurs and Han Chinese socialize with each other in Xinjiang, unless it is absolutely unavoidable, such as in workplaces, schools, or other public spaces. In people's private lives, interactions between the two groups are minimal. From interviews and observations, the strong social divisions between the two groups can be identified as mainly occurring in the areas of food, marriage, residence, time zones, and language use.

As a significant ascriptive marker, religion is often associated with divisions among people in various societies. In Xinjiang's case, religious differences between the two groups are often emphasized as a key divider. The overwhelming majority of Uighurs are Muslims, and even less devout Uighurs observe a relatively strict *halal* diet. Pork, which is forbidden in the *halal* diet, is a staple food of the Han Chinese. It is commonly asserted that for this reason it is impossible for Uighurs to visit Han Chinese households, let alone for them to dine together. When I asked people why the Uighurs and Han Chinese do not socialize, often people would cite dietary differences. Restaurants in Xinjiang are distinguished by their *halal* status. Although Han Chinese occasionally dine in *halal* restaurants, Uighurs would never patronize non-*halal* ones. Some Uighurs even avoid patronizing non-Uighur-operated *halal* restaurants because of suspicions that Han Chinese might be involved in their operation and thus the establishments may not maintain appropriate standards. For Han Chinese, whose cultural expressions and socialization often center on eating and drinking, these dietary customs make it hard to make friends with the Uighurs. In return the Uighurs often emphasize being Muslim as a precondition for friendship.<sup>6</sup> Islam, together with its dietary connotations, is thus at

the core of everyday interaction between the two groups (Cesaro 2000, 227). It might be the case in North America or Europe that Muslims and non-Muslims are able to socialize while retaining their *halal* food restrictions. Yet, in Xinjiang, the polemics around food consumption reinforce the strict interethnic boundary between Uighurs and Han Chinese (Cesaro 2000, 225).

Religious differences between the two groups also mean that intermarriage between Han Chinese and Uighurs is almost nonexistent. Local stories indicate that a Uighur marrying a Han Chinese would be disowned by his or her family, and would constantly be harassed and scolded within the Uighur community. During the field trip in Xinjiang, I asked a Uighur man in his early twenties whether he would ever marry a Han Chinese and he abruptly said "No." I asked him why and he said it is just impossible – the cultural differences between the two are just too vast, and his parents would never allow it to happen. Joanne Smith similarly comments that "other than religio-cultural differences per se, it is the threat of disapproval from within the Uighur community that rules out intermarriage at present" (Smith 2002, 163). Similar constraints on intermarriage also exist in the Han Chinese community. This marital preference is not unique to Xinjiang, but it is worth noting as a significant barrier to social integration.

There is also spatial and even temporal segregation between the two groups. During the time when China had a centrally planned economy, housing was often provided and allocated through the work unit. This housing policy allowed some intermixing between Han Chinese and Uighurs in residential complexes. However, since the dismantling of the planned economy in the 1980s, mixing in residential complexes quickly disappeared. With the privatization of the urban housing market, residential areas have become increasingly segregated along ethnic lines. In Urumqi, for example, most of the Uighurs are concentrated in the Erdaoqiao district in the south of the city. In other oasis cities, Uighurs are usually concentrated in the "old town," while

<sup>6</sup> During my field research, I was told more than once by Uighurs that being Muslim is a very important foundation for friendship.

For a discussion of the pervasive influence of Islam on Uighur society from an anthropological perspective, see Dautcher (2009).

Han Chinese live in the “new town,” often constructed on unsettled land adjacent to the old town. Although some Uighurs might live in Han residential areas because the facilities are better, the overall pattern of residential segregation is clear. Furthermore, even in residential areas shared by both groups, children are often discouraged from playing with those from the other group (Bellér-Hann 2002, 65).

The other sign of the clear boundary between the two groups is the different time zones they inhabit in Xinjiang. Because of its distance from the Chinese capital, Xinjiang is two time zones behind Beijing. However, the unity-obsessed Chinese government officially operates on only one time zone for all of China. Thus, for example, 8:00 a.m. in Beijing would be 6:00 a.m. in Xinjiang. As a result, people usually push the time back by two hours, say by going to work at 10:00 instead of 8:00 Beijing time. However, in private life, the choice of time zone is clearly correlated with group identity: Uighurs tend to use the local Xinjiang time, while Han Chinese often stick to official Beijing time. Visitors recently arrived in Xinjiang sometimes find it confusing to figure out exactly what time people are talking about. When people across ethnic boundaries schedule meetings, they need to specify which time zone they are referring to. What is surprising is that many Han Chinese, as well as some Hui, stubbornly stick to the Beijing time despite its inconveniences, to show their loyalty toward the Chinese state and their separation from the Uighurs.<sup>7</sup> One Han Chinese woman told me that “we have our own time, they have theirs, and we do not intermingle with each other.” And for the Uighurs, rejecting Beijing time represents a way to resist the Han Chinese and the Chinese state’s hegemony imposed on Xinjiang. To paraphrase James Scott (1987), this is one way the politically weak Uighur people express their resistance.

Linguistic barriers between the two groups are also substantial. Most Han Chinese in urban areas in Xinjiang cannot speak the Uighur language, and Uighurs from the south

such as Kashgar and Khotan can barely communicate in the Chinese language either. According to a survey carried out in Urumqi in 2000, half of the Han Chinese respondents reported that they cannot speak Uighur at all, and only 3.2 percent reported they were proficient at the language. In the same survey, 14.2 percent of Uighurs reported not being able to speak any Chinese, and fewer than half of the respondents (47.9 percent) reported they were relatively proficient at Chinese (Yee 2003, 436). In southern Xinjiang, where the Uighurs still constitute a numerical majority, some Han Chinese are able to speak the Uighur language relatively well. However, in northern Xinjiang and especially in urban areas where Han Chinese are predominant, few Han Chinese people have the incentive or interest to study the Uighur language.

Uighurs are often under pressure to conform linguistically. Because the urban job market is dominated by the use of Chinese, many younger Uighurs do have command of the language. Yet in private settings they often prefer Uighur. Uighur language skills are often used as to measure how ethnically good or pure a speaker is. In Xinjiang, people talk about two categories of Uighurs, depending on the language environment in which they are educated. *Minkaohan* refers to Uighurs who have gone through the Chinese educational system and whose Chinese language ability is usually much better than that of the *minkaomin*, who are Uighurs educated in the Uighur language. There is arguably a backlash in the Uighur community against the emergence of more and more *minkaohan* Uighurs in Xinjiang, who are more comfortable speaking Chinese than Uighur. Oftentimes these *minkaohan* are looked down upon by their *minkaomin* counterparts, who deem them culturally too similar to Han. Yet ordinary Han Chinese tend to lump the *minkaohan* and *minkaomin* together simply as Uighurs and to treat both with equal suspicion and dislike. Racial differences make it essentially impossible for a Chinese-speaking Uighur to pass as a Han Chinese. There is a satirical Uighur saying that the *minkaohan* Uighurs are the fourteenth eth-

<sup>7</sup> The Hui are a Sinic-language-speaking Muslim group. Smith notes “like the Han Chinese, the Hui consider Beijing time the standard time for Xinjiang as for all regions of

China. This is probably one factor contributing to the mutual mistrust between Uighurs and Hui Muslims in Xinjiang” (Smith 2002, 161).



nic group in Xinjiang, added to the thirteen official ethnic groups (Smith Finley 2007). Thus, linguistic competence and purity are constantly emphasized within the Uighur community in order to maintain the group's distance from the Han Chinese.

The question remains as to why and how these divisions came into existence. Barth's approach to group boundaries proposes that the manifestation of one's ethnic identification is situational: social encounters are crucial in demarcating and maintaining group boundaries. This is particularly the case in Xinjiang, where multiple ethnic groups regularly interact with each other. Xinjiang is not a place where one can draw a single line between dichotomous groups. In addition to Uighurs and Han Chinese, there are also the numerous Hui, as well as the Kazakhs, a Turkic group nomadic in its traditional lifestyle. When a Uighur encounters a Hui, often the emphasis is on linguistic and racial differences despite their common Muslim faith. Hui Muslims can be greatly mistrusted and resented by the Uighurs and are often accused of being the same as the Han Chinese.<sup>8</sup> When Uighurs encounter Kazakhs, by contrast, often the emphasis is on their different lifestyles, with the former being stereotyped as agricultural and the latter as nomadic. The shamanistic tradition among the Kazakhs often leads to their being considered by the Uighurs to be less authentically Muslim.

Nevertheless, the greatest difference is between Uighurs and Han Chinese, whose linguistic, religious, and cultural differences all line up together without "cross-cutting cleavages." Especially during the past few decades, Uighurs have come into direct contact and confrontation with the Han Chinese. One strategy that the Chinese government employs to solidify its control of Xinjiang is through waves of migration of Han Chinese into the region: in 1953, Han Chinese were only about 6 percent of Xinjiang's total population, but by 2000 the number had jumped to 40 percent. In the meantime, the Uighur population dwindled from 75 percent of the total in 1953 to 45 percent in 2000 (Toops

2004, 246–48). These days, Han Chinese migrant workers and peasants have started to penetrate into small towns and rural areas that were usually strongholds of the Uighurs. Such intensified encounters with the other group have made the Uighurs realize and emphasize how different they are from the Han Chinese. Those perceived differences have caused both communities consciously to keep at a distance from each other and maintain segregation.

At the same time, external categorizations have also decreased internal differences among Uighurs originating from different oases, who speak different dialects and have different cultural habits (Rudelson 1997). A more uniform identification among the Uighurs has emerged since the 1980s, superseding their previous oasis-based identities. There are several reasons for this increasing identification with the larger group beyond encounters with Han Chinese. First is the Chinese government's "preferential policies" toward minorities. Second is the role of repression and violence in hardening intergroup differences and smoothing over intragroup variations.

Starting in the 1980s, the Chinese government began to implement a set of preferential policies toward ethnic minorities. In Xinjiang, two policy areas are particularly relevant to the Uighurs: education and family planning. Linda Benson, for example, points out that in the 1990s about 50 percent of admission quotas for Xinjiang University were reserved for ethnic minority students, mainly Uighurs (Benson 2004, 208). Also, university admission scores for Uighurs who went through the Uighur language education system – *minkaomin* – are usually significantly lower than those set for Han Chinese students. On the issue of family planning, the first compulsory family planning laws went into effect in Xinjiang only in 1988, ten years later than for the rest of the country (Clark 2001, 229). According to this law, urban Uighur couples are allowed to have two children while rural ones can have three, a preferential policy deeply resented by the Han Chinese, who are subject to the "one-child" rule. This differential treatment of the

<sup>8</sup> This may have historical reasons. During the Republican period, Hui troops under various warlords at times heavily repressed

the Uighurs. One might even argue that Hui Muslims played a significant role in keeping Xinjiang within China's fold (Forbes 1986).



Uighurs arguably has contributed to the strengthening of the common Uighur identification. Preferential policies can be seen to strengthen group identity elsewhere in the world (Rudolph and Rudolph 1967; De Zwart 2000), and one can certainly argue that the same process occurred among the Uighurs in Xinjiang.

The other important factors are state repression against the Uighurs and interethnic violence between Han Chinese and the Uighurs since the 1990s, which have further hardened intergroup division and strengthened intragroup solidarity. As noted earlier, the Chinese state's response to the growing political activism and radicalization of the Uighurs since the early 1980s was heavy-handed and indiscriminate repression against the Uighurs as a uniform group. At the end of April 1996, the Chinese government launched its first "Strike Hard" campaign. In Xinjiang, the goal of the campaign was not only to crack down on criminal activities in general, but also to target political dissenters and, in particular, Uighur separatists. Michael Dillon writes, "the Xinjiang party committee explicitly linked separatism with what it termed 'unlawful religious activities' and launched a campaign to reduce their effect in schools, in publishing, and throughout the region" (Dillon 2004, 85). As a result, some Uighur pro-independence organizations claimed that between April and June 1996, some four thousand religious students were arrested and sent to prison camps. There were also claims that thousands of people were arrested throughout the region during the campaign, of which the overwhelming majority were Uighur (Dillon 2004, 87–88).

More significantly, after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and the subsequent U.S.-led "war on terror," the Chinese government took the opportunity to start its own anti-terrorism campaign that linked Uighur pro-independence movements and organizations with the Taliban and terrorists. In January 2002, the Chinese State Council Information Office published a document about East Turkestan terrorist forces operating in China (Becquelin 2004, 39). The result was to conflate all Uighur pro-autonomy and independence movements with existing Uighur terrorist movements, for example labeling the East Turkestan Independence Movement and the East Turkestan Islamic Party as terrorist organizations. The Chinese government effectively used the

"war on terror" discourse to brand Uighur political dissents as terrorists, justifying a wave of repression against Uighur dissidents across the region. The indiscriminate nature of this action, which treats all Uighurs as potential separatists or terrorists, has certainly served to alienate even more Uighurs, and has perhaps pushed many moderate Uighurs into the extremist camp, contributing to intragroup solidarity.

In addition to state repression of the Uighurs, intergroup violence between the Uighurs and Han Chinese has also hardened intergroup boundaries. Scholars writing on ethnic conflict have discussed at length the role of violence in strengthening group differences (Conversi 1999; Fearon and Laitin 2000). In certain cases, extremist actors may purposefully instigate violence to prevent moderates from compromising with the other group. In Xinjiang, whenever Uighurs rioted against the Chinese government, the targets of violence were often Han Chinese. In the aftermath of the 2009 Urumqi riot, one could argue that interethnic division will become even more significant, as evidenced by the retaliation of Han Chinese mobs against the Uighurs two days after the initial riot. It seems clear that the series of violent incidents since the 1990s has strengthened interethnic boundaries between the two groups and pushed the Uighur community further away from the Han Chinese community and the Chinese state.

#### **4. Rigid Group Boundaries, Discrimination, and Violence**

The rigidification of the group boundary between the Uighurs and Han Chinese in Xinjiang has two broad implications. First is increased discrimination by the members of each group against the other. Although the Han Chinese are the politically and economically dominant group in China, mutual contempt and distrust between the two groups run both ways.

There are multiple forms of discrimination. One is repression of Uighur culture, language, and religion by the Chinese state. The Uighur language has been increasingly sidelined in the educational systems in Xinjiang, and efforts to increase teaching of Mandarin Chinese with the ultimate goal of achieving linguistic assimilation have been renewed (Dwyer 2005; Schluessel 2007). The Chinese government has also exerted strict control over Islam, cracking down on

“illegal religious activities” by “defrocking suspect clerics, breaking up unauthorized scripture schools (madrasa), and halting the construction of mosques” (Bovingdon 2004, 33). Uighurs also face discrimination in the urban job market. Because Han Chinese are more dominant in the private sector in urban areas, hiring favors Han Chinese or ethnic minorities who can speak the Chinese language well; many job advertisements explicitly state that only Han Chinese can apply. Thus Uighurs who have gone through the Uighur education system have a strong disadvantage in finding jobs in the private sector. As a result, the unemployment rate among Uighurs is reportedly much higher than among Han Chinese.<sup>9</sup> Beyond this job discrimination, many Han Chinese also tend to think of Uighurs as backward, dirty, lazy, and ungrateful for the economic development brought to Xinjiang by the Han Chinese. In addition, oftentimes Han Chinese associate the Uighurs with criminal activities and consciously distance themselves from them (Kaltman 2007). The promotion of the discourse on “war on terror,” has led more and more Han Chinese to treat Uighurs as potential terrorists. Uighurs, for their part, do not hesitate to show disgust and contempt toward Han Chinese whenever possible. Some spit on the ground when they pass Han Chinese people. Some Uighur marketplace vendors refuse to do business with Han Chinese customers, or charge exorbitant prices when they do. This mutual discrimination is cyclical and self-reinforcing.

The second and more important implication of the rigid intergroup boundary in Xinjiang is that it makes communication across groups extremely difficult, which paves the way for eruptions of violence. In an effort to explain interethnic cooperation, James Fearon and David Laitin point out that the breakdown of intergroup peace is often due to the lack of formal or informal institutions to regulate information and prevent opportunistic individuals from taking costly actions – such as the instigation of violence (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 717–18). Social order and interethnic cooperation require institutional mechanisms to provide information across groups. Such cooperation is easier for groups that have dense intergroup networks, which “allow for

cheap and rapid transmission of information about individuals and their past history” (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 718). In contrast, in situations where intergroup social networks are less developed or simply do not exist, “cooperation and trust across groups cannot be supported by punishment strategies that condition individual behavior” (Fearon and Laitin 1996, 719). One unfortunate outcome might be that one group would indiscriminately punish all members of the other group, which would lead to the complete breakdown of intergroup peace. These insights have strong empirical implications. In his study on communal violence in India, Ashutosh Varshney points out that civic engagements between the Muslim and Hindu communities, can often make neighborhood-level peace possible by promoting communications: “prior and sustained contacts between members of different groups allow communication between them to moderate tensions and pre-empt violence” (Varshney 2002, 47). The lack of such sustained engagements across groups creates conditions for intergroup violence. In Xinjiang’s case, where the Uighurs and Han Chinese maintain such strong boundaries against each other, no meaningful civic engagement can occur.

##### 5. Policy Recommendations

This paper has sketched the dynamics of interethnic relations between Uighurs and Han Chinese in Xinjiang at the meso level. Utilizing Barth’s approach to ethnicity, I have shown how social encounters and external categorizations have permitted rigid interethnic group boundaries to be constructed and maintained in everyday life in Xinjiang. Because of this rigid boundary between the two groups, Uighurs and Han Chinese are segregated in their own social spaces without much mutual communication. Accordingly, mistrust and discrimination run rampant. Furthermore, a rigid group boundary hampers intergroup civic engagements, defeating efforts to dispel mutual distrust and discrimination and also making the intergroup dynamic extremely susceptible to violence.

This analysis of the Xinjiang case thus sheds light on the social conditions for communal violence. Of course, the

<sup>9</sup> For example, see “Why the Uighurs Fear China’s Boom,” *Time*, July 14, 2009.

actual immediate causes of each incident of violent outbursts vary, from a little brawl on the street to a rumor of mistreatment and injustice committed by the other group. In the wake of these incidents, the rigid intergroup social boundary blocks opportunities and defeats efforts to lessen their impact. Scholars who are interested in discrimination, prejudice, and violence will find it worthwhile to pay attention to the social processes that create discrimination and prejudice, and to how they are perpetuated through intergroup dynamics in various social contexts.

This analysis also illuminates some policy recommendations for intergroup peace in Xinjiang. Setting aside dramatic measures such as partition or secession, one logical policy recommendation for preventing or reducing the chances for future violence in Xinjiang would be to encourage mutual communication and civic engagement.<sup>10</sup> In addition, the Chinese government needs to rethink its current policies in Xinjiang to show more respect for Uighur culture, language, and religion, and to provide more space for cultural expressions. The government also needs to take legal action to prevent blatant discrimination against Uighurs, especially in the job market. Most importantly, as our discussion of the implications of rigid group boundar-

ies shows, serious efforts should be made to foster civic engagement across group lines at the meso level. NGOs that aim to facilitate dialogue between the Uighur and Han Chinese communities should be encouraged. In particular, civic associations that include members from both groups should be promoted (Varshney 2002, 292). Currently, most efforts from the international community are aimed at support of Uighurs' political and cultural rights in Xinjiang. These are certainly noble goals. However, if the international community has genuine humanitarian concern about preventing the future eruption of violence, it needs to invest in a civil society in Xinjiang that includes both Uighurs and Han Chinese. Educational programs that facilitate dialogue and reconciliation across group lines should be emphasized. Moderate people from each group should be identified and encouraged, with an emphasis on how to build more cross-cutting cleavages between the two groups. These are certainly no easy tasks to achieve, as the authoritarian state of China puts more constraints on the development of such civic life. However the Chinese state as well as the international community must realize that only through efforts to foster mutual communication and engagements across these two groups will peace and stability be achieved in Xinjiang.

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<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of more drastic measures to prevent interethnic violence, see Kaufmann (1996).

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# Ethnicised Politics: Patterns of Interpretation of Rwandans and Burundians

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# Ethnicised Politics: Patterns of Interpretation of Rwandans and Burundians

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Following Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1991) this study focuses on taken-for-granted notions, i.e. knowledge (defining ethnicised politics as exclusion *interpreted* with reference to ethnic categories). This represents a departure from the conventional academic discussion of ethnicised politics, which focuses on exclusion inherent to the structures of political systems when seeking to explain violent conflict aligned along ethnic cleavages. The study compares two neighbouring countries, Rwanda and Burundi, where different institutional models have been introduced to overcome ethnicised politics following comparable episodes of ethnic violence. Whereas the Rwandan system avoids political representation based on ethnic categories, the Burundian system prescribes ethnic quotas. Semi-standardised interviews with twenty-two Rwandans and twenty Burundians conducted between September 2007 and May 2008 investigated ethnicised politics as patterns of interpretation (i.e. knowledge). The study found that notwithstanding the different political institutional systems in Rwanda and Burundi (both aiming to overcome ethnicised politics), exclusion in both systems is interpreted with reference to ethnic categories, i.e. politics are ethnicised in both countries. This result points to the importance of conceiving ethnicised politics as historically produced knowledge, i.e. patterns of interpretation.

Violent political conflict is often assumed to be caused by ethnicised politics, while ethnicised politics, in turn, is thought to be caused by discrimination or elite rivalry (or both).<sup>1</sup> The argument goes that social and political discrimination along ethnic cleavages or struggles over national resources along ethnic cleavages organised by elites contribute to the salience of ethnicity in politics, which is widely acknowledged to increase the propensity of further (violent) ethnic conflicts (Hechter 2004; Snyder 2000; Gurr 2002, 1993; Wimmer 2002; Wimmer 1997; Brass 1985; Hechter 1999; Horowitz 1985; Kandeh 1992; Ali and Matthews 1999). Simply speaking about ethnic cleavages implies that ethnicity not only structures the society, but has been subject to coherent and organised political expression (Kriesi

1998, 167), i.e. has been politicised. In short, ethnicised politics – widely assumed to entail ethnic conflict – are seen to be induced by exclusion *inherent* to the structure (i.e. actors or institutions) of the political system.<sup>2</sup>

In a departure from these common approaches, my line of reasoning highlights the importance of conceptualising ethnicised politics as *patterns interpreting exclusion with reference to ethnic categories*. In doing so, it follows analyses which focus on the symbolic and semantic dimensions of “ethnicisation of politics” (Büschges and Pfaff-Czarnecka 2007). Understanding ethnicised politics as a pattern of interpretation places emphasis on what “those living in that world” (Schütz 1972, 9) take for granted and real. This

The article is based on lines of reasoning developed and interviews conducted within the scope of a PhD project entitled “The Dilemma of Recognition: On the ‘Experienced Reality’ of Ethnicised Politics of Rwandans and Burundians.”

<sup>1</sup> The contributions to this discussion are diversely labelled, either as “politicisation of

ethnicity” (Kandeh 1992; Wimmer 2002) or “ethnic politics” (Chazan 1982; Chazan, Lewis, Rothchild, Stedman, and Mortimer 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Basically, structure is understood as pattern or arrangement as opposed to randomness or chaos. Such patterns are predominantly thought of as being constituted either by social relations between agents (i.e. by agency itself

or by institutional structures that are external to the agents (López and Scott 2009). These structures (thought of as either being created by agency or being external to agency) are often held to be external to a specific historical context. On the contrary, it is crucial to my argument that specific patterns of interpretation that are induced by a specific historical context are taken into account.



is what Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1991) call knowledge, which is seen to constitute social reality (1991, 15). This knowledge is produced by historical processes that are, consequently, relevant for understanding the knowledge (Berger and Luckmann 1991, 72). Accordingly, any analysis of institutional order has to take the knowledge of its members into account (Berger and Luckmann 1991, 82). Following Pierre Bourdieu, I work with the coexisting, and sometimes directly competing, supra-individual points of views reflecting social divisions in society (Bourdieu 1999, 125). In other words, the study reveals diverging, even, contradictory realities. Illustrating how Rwandans and Burundians conceive their realities, i.e. how they take notions for granted, required qualitative interviews: I conducted semi-standardised interviews with twenty-two Rwandans and twenty Burundians between September 2007 and May 2008. The focus on taken-for-granted notions and, hence, (diverging) social realities has clear implications for my understanding of the interview material. I take my interview material as “a form to talk – a ‘discourse’, ‘account’ or ‘repertoire’ – which represents a *culturally available* way of packaging experience” (Kitzinger 2004, cited in Silverman 2006, 129, emphasis added). The interview material is not assumed to give answers to questions concerning facts and events. Rather, the material is understood as a representation or account of the experiences of the interviewee (Silverman 2006, 117).

But why is it that ethnicised politics, i.e. political and social exclusion along ethnic cleavages, is seen as particularly political and conflict-prone?<sup>3</sup> In modern nation states, it is taken for granted that social political and legal closure, i.e. exclusion and inclusion, is structured by the modern nation state (Wimmer 2002, 57; Bös 1993). Nation states are

themselves ethnic (Bös 2008, 69).<sup>4</sup> Legitimate rule as it is taken-for-granted in the modern nation state is “rule by our people, that is, rule by people who are *like us*, people of our nationality” (Ringmar 1998, 534, emphasis added). Being part of an ethnic category (i.e. having a certain ethnic affiliation) entitles to (political, social and legal) rights (Wimmer 2002, 1). In this sense, inclusion (and, hence, exclusion) is structured along ethnic categories.

Given that nation states are ethnic, ethnic categories *that do not coincide with the nation state* necessarily involve exclusion. In other words, ethnic categories are symbolically unequal and thus imply exclusion (Sutterlüty 2006). Consequently, social and political exclusion interpreted in terms of ethnic categories is especially exclusive since it does not correspond to the taken-for-granted, i.e. legitimate form of exclusion structured along ethnic categories *coinciding* with the nation state. So exclusion interpreted in terms of ethnic categories (i.e. ethnicised politics) challenges the legitimate modern form of political organisation and representation (i.e. nation state) and, in this sense, is political and conflict prone.

To study ethnicised politics as patterns of interpretation, the present study looks at Rwanda and Burundi. In both countries, political institutional models have been introduced to end a very violent political history. In Burundi the constitution introduced in 2005 provides ethnic quotas of Tutsi and Hutu in all governmental and administrative institutions (usually 40:60) and in the army (50:50). By contrast, after the military victory of the FPR (Front Patriotique Rwandaïse) in 1994, Rwanda decided to avoid ethnic representation in political institutions.<sup>5</sup> Yet the two countries are similar in many aspects: The ethnic categories, and numerous relationships attributed to these categories, are comparable.

<sup>3</sup> This discussion analysing ethnicity in politics, which is said to lead to instable democracy and “ethnic political conflict” (Rabushka and Shepsle 1971, 461), refers mostly to non-Western, post-imperial societies still in the process of nation-state-building (Wimmer 1997) and democratisation (Snyder 2000). Correspondingly, I focus on societies in which the political history (including large-scale massacres) is ethnicised in the sense that it is interpreted with heavy reference to ethnic categories. Of course, in general poverty, economic underdevelopment and

lack of democracy (e.g. political and civil rights, mechanisms for peaceful adjudication of disputes) (Sambanis 2001, 266–7) play a major role in fostering further violent ethnic conflict. All these criteria have to be taken into account in order to assess the propensity of violent ethnic conflict.

<sup>4</sup> Of course, nation states follow different ideas about in- and exclusion and apply different practices to organise in- and exclusion (Thomas 2002). Usually, the academic discussion distinguishes between ethnic and political conceptions (Kohn

1944; Eley and Suny 1996; Thomas 2002; Smith 2003). Moreover, ethnic boundary markers are socially contested. Accordingly, ethnic boundaries can be challenged, changed and become meaningless (Eder, Rauer, and Schmidtke 2004, 35).

<sup>5</sup> New constitutions were approved in 2003 in Rwanda and in 2005 in Burundi, with elections held later the same year in each case. Burundi’s transitional constitution of 2003 also featured ethnic quotas. In Rwanda ethnic quotas were abandoned in 1994 after the FPR seized political power.

Both are composed of 85 percent Hutu, 14 percent Tutsi and 1 percent Twa.<sup>6</sup> In both countries, these categories are referred to as “Hutu” and “Tutsi”. In post-independence political history, the ethnic cleavages have played a major role in very violent conflicts as well as in their interpretation. The current political systems in Rwanda and Burundi both aim at overcoming ethnicised politics. The Burundian Constitution prohibits the exclusion of any Burundian due to his ethnic affiliation (Article 13, Burundian Constitution) while the Rwandan Constitution states that all Rwandans are “free and equal in rights and duties”, which includes the non-discrimination of Rwandans on the basis of their ethnic origin (Article 11, Rwandan Constitution).

By means of qualitative interviews, the present analysis aims to construct an ethnic interpretation of political power in the political institutional models of Rwanda and Burundi. The analysis of the interviews looks at similar ethnicised patterns of interpretation by Rwandans and Burundians describing opposing institutional models. I focus on assessments about who is in power and, hence, which “ethnic group” exactly is excluded, which follow contradictory (ethnicised) lines in each country.<sup>7</sup>

These conflicting assessments of the same political institutional system and even more the occurrence of ethnicised patterns of interpretation concerning totally opposed systems (both designed to overcome ethnicised politics) point to the necessity of rethinking ethnicised politics and, accordingly, the prevention of ethnic conflict. This line of reasoning suggests taking into account the knowledge of members of the institutional order in order to discuss political and social exclusion and, hence, the prevention of ethnic conflict.

### 1. Ethnicised Politics within the Context of the Modern Nation State

Whereas many authors regard ethnic conflict as inherently modern (Snyder 2000; Gurr 2002, 1993; Mann 2005),

*implicitly* relating it to ideas of democracy and political representation of ethnicity, Andreas Wimmer’s understanding (2002; 1997) is special in that he *explicitly* takes the *notion* of the modern nation state and the resulting ideas of *legitimate* in- and exclusion into account. The idea of nation state is relevant for ethnic conflict since: “the formation of the nation state and the rise of nationalism and ethnicity are the products of the fundamental reorganisation of the main modes of inclusion and exclusion, of a reordering of the basic principles of membership and identity along national and ethnic lines” (Wimmer 2002, 42).

All legal, political, military and social rights are reserved for the citizens of the respective nation state in what Wimmer calls “ethno-political closure” (2002, 70). The idea of nation state comes with a specific idea of political legitimacy that is the rule of those who are both alike and equal. In this sense, being part of an ethnic category (i.e. having a certain ethnic affiliation) entitles to (political, social and legal) rights (Wimmer 2002, 1). To illustrate this point, under current U.S. law, exclusively “natural born citizens” are eligible to become President, excluding those who have become citizens by naturalisation (Article 2, U.S. Constitution). The law reflects how ethnicity (i.e. common descent) is understood as a relevant criterion for representing the U.S. political community. Even in a nation state which is comparatively inclusive in terms of the possibilities for naturalisation, these laws clearly reflect the idea of a political community defined (amongst other things) by descent. Being part of this community defined by ethnicity entitles to rights and, hence, structures in- and exclusion.

Given that nation states are ethnic, ethnic categories *that do not coincide with the nation state* must involve exclusion. In other words, ethnic categories are symbolically unequal and, in this sense, imply exclusion (Suttermöller 2006). Consequently, social and political exclusion interpreted in terms of ethnic categories is especially exclusive since

<sup>6</sup> The percentages are based on censuses conducted during colonial times (Lemarchand 1994, 6).

<sup>7</sup> Following Rogers Brubaker, who pleads against “groupism” and reification in research about ethnicity, I avoid speaking about “ethnic groups” since the term evokes the idea of “internally homogeneous,

externally-bounded groups, even unitary collective actors with common purposes” (Brubaker 2004, 8). The same is true for the notions of “the Hutu” and “the Tutsi”. By using these terms I intend to highlight this very notion of “ethnic groups”, “the Tutsi” and “the Hutu”, which are assumed to

have common purposes and, hence, to be collective actors. These assumptions have far-reaching implications, e.g. that political exclusion necessarily implies the social exclusion of an “ethnic group”.

it does not correspond to the taken-for-granted, i.e. legitimate form of exclusion structured along ethnic categories coinciding with the nation state. It questions both ideas, the “community of likes” and the “community of equals”, that basically constitute the national principles (Wimmer 2002, 53). So ethnicised politics challenge the legitimate modern form of political organisation and representation (i.e. nation state) and are, hence, very political and conflict-prone. Put differently, unequal distribution of resources, services and costs leads to a struggle over “who owns the state” (Wimmer 1997)?

The criteria related to the idea of the modern nation state characterised by equality and likeness are “idealizations that are rarely, if ever, fully actualized” (Riggs 1998, 272). Nonetheless these dimensions bear the potential to generate ethnic conflict if they are not fully actualized (Riggs 1998, 272). I hold that the gap between – as Riggs puts it – the ideal and its actualisation creates a potential for political claims that are ethnically framed. Ethnicised politics has the potential to challenge the actual distribution of power and is an especially plausible, legitimate and powerful claim.

Within the predominant academic discussion about ethnicised politics two different strands can be broadly distinguished. Both build on the finding that ethnicity is particularly salient and relevant within the context of the modern nation state either when exclusion (i.e. discrimination) occurs along ethnic cleavages or when ethnic cleavages are instrumentalised for competition for resources (especially by the political elite) – or both. They are closely interrelated and both are inherently related to the notions of ethnicity and nation state.

To begin with, the academic discussion often refers to the finding that ethnic cleavages are (empirically) important in organising competition for resources in the modern nation state and to the high conflict potential that is implied (Brass 1991; Wimmer 2002; Mann 2005; Chazan, Lewis, Rothchild, Stedman, and Mortimer 1999; Geertz 1973). The nation state is discussed as a newly introduced political organisation where accumulated and centralised resources are allocated. Ethnicity is a form to organise competition for resources (Williams 2003, 105), leading to what Susan Olzak calls

“ethnic mobilization” (1983, 355). Such a focus on the role of ethnicity in its mobilising function for political ends has been very important in the instrumentalist approach. This approach understands the salience of ethnicity as being the result of political rivalry (Williams 2003). Here, the role of the elite gains particular relevance (Chazan 1999, 112; Brass 1985; Kandeh 1992; Ali and Matthews 1999).

The second strand of the discussion about ethnicised politics assumes that inequalities between ethnic groups and discrimination of ethnic groups foster their political relevance (Mann 2005; Chazan 1982; Hechter 1999; Horowitz 1985). In this respect, Michael Hechter’s thesis of “Internal Colonialism” (1999) is very prominent. Hechter starts from unequal development and industrialisation within a nation state leading to unequal distribution of power and resources between core and the periphery. He then goes on to propose that the peripheral group would come to regard itself as the superior culture and might eventually seek independence. Similarly, Donald Horowitz describes the juxtaposition of backward and advanced ethnic groups, largely a legacy of colonial policy, as the source of many conflicts in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (1985, 167). The idea of political and economic oppression of ethnic groups causing ethnic conflict is also implied in the prominent academic discussion about “greed” and “grievances” (Nathan 2005; Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Wimmer, Cedermann, and Min 2009). While “greed” alludes to the ability to finance wars, “grievances” implies exclusion along ethnic cleavages (Wimmer, Cedermann, and Min 2009). Understanding ethnicised politics as patterns of interpretation as I do places emphasis on what “those living in that world” take for granted and real, i.e. their knowledge, which is historically produced. Focusing on the historically produced taken-for-granted and self-evident notions, i.e. knowledge of “those living in that world” by conceiving of ethnicised politics, I come close to Andreas Wimmer’s definition of nationalism as the main cultural compromise of modern societies (involving the nation state as the main social closure) (Wimmer 2002, 52). He understands cultural compromise as acceptance by all actors in a communicative arena, a “consensus over the validity of norms, classifications and patterns of interpretation that lasts beyond the open process of its production” (Wimmer

2002, 29). The cultural compromise ultimately depends on patterns of interpretation and power positions of strategically competent individuals. In contrast to Wimmer and following Berger and Luckmann, I do not consider the strategic aspect as a factor creating specific patterns of interpretation. Yet, power positions were crucial for the selection of the interviewees because I consider knowledge to be influenced by social divisions.<sup>8</sup> I understand the coexisting, and sometimes directly competing, supra-individual points of views to reflect social divisions in society (Bourdieu 1999, 125). Accordingly, ethnicised politics are conceived as a pattern of interpretation “that lasts beyond the open process of its production”. Neglecting the strategic intention of the speaker, ethnicised politics constitute an important resource for accomplishing and legitimising political ends (Büschges and Pfaff-Czarnecka 2007, 8). In the analysis of the interviews I understand the quotes as taken-for-granted notions, which constitute social reality. Following Berger and Luckmann (1991), I conceive ethnicised politics as legitimate, i.e. taken-for-granted, notions, according to which ethnic categories make up the basis for in- and exclusion. In this sense, notions are legitimate where they are taken-for-granted and self-evident (Berger and Luckmann 1991, 12).

This focus on taken-for-granted and self-evident notions, i.e. conceiving ethnicised politics as patterns interpreting exclusion in terms of ethnic categories reconciles, on the one hand, the strand conceiving ethnicised politics as a strategically deployable instrument in that it accepts it as a powerful resource for achieving political ends (without, though, considering the strategic intention of the speaker) and the one considering the reality of exclusion as a relevant aspect for its understanding.

## 2. Two Options, One Intention: Political Institutional Systems in Rwanda and Burundi

The declared objective in Rwanda and Burundi is the promotion of peace and development (Vandeginste 2006, 27).

In order to achieve their respective aims they introduced different political institutional models: Whereas Burundi opted for a consociationalist model in 2005, the system Rwanda introduced in 2003 corresponds to the model of majoritarian democracy. In terms of the way they deal with ethnic cleavages, I label Rwanda and Burundi respectively “denial of” and “power sharing along” ethnic cleavages.

Since its seizure of power by military force the Front Patriotique Rwandais (FPR) has pursued the objective of establishing a “true democracy” understood as “political majority rule based on a genuine program uniting all Rwandans” (ICG 2001, 3). The official main aim is the eradication of ethnicity from public life (ICG 2001, 3). Rwanda seeks to establish a Rwandan identity based on a legalistic understanding of citizenship emphasising equal rights (Buckley-Zistel 2006, 102).

In order to overcome ethnic division and promote national unity Rwanda implemented majoritarian, liberal democracy. The model focuses on individuals (as opposed to collectives) as the bearers of rights and accepts the government-versus-opposition-pattern and winner-takes-all character of majority rule. Concerning the concrete institutional implementation, Rwanda is a presidential parliamentary system whose legislature is composed of an elected eighty-member Chamber of Deputies and a Senate whose twenty-six members are partly elected and partly appointed (Article 76 and 82, Rwandan Constitution). These political institutions involve “censorship and self-censorship” concerning issues related to the violent past (Buckley-Zistel 2006, 112), which of course strongly implies ethnicity. Discussing ethnicity has become a “taboo” (Burnet 2007, 11) enforced by very broad definitions of “divisionism” and “genocide ideology” that basically cover ethnicity and the history of the genocide (HRW 2008, 36). Ethnic identities are officially denied and “denying their non-existence involves severe penal sanctions” (Lemarchand 2006b, 7).

<sup>8</sup> In order to capture competing knowledge I treated social divisions between “political elite” and “citizens” and between being “oppositional” and “conforming to the regime in power” as relevant.

In Burundi the option of resolving the conflict by negotiation emerged because neither party believed it could win the conflict by force (Nimubona 2007, 502). The Burundian constitution adopted in 2006 is described as “markedly” and “largely consociational” (Vandeginste 2006, 4; Reyntjens 2006, 119) since “classical instruments, such as minority over-representation, quota, and minority veto” are applied (Reyntjens 2006, 119). The peace negotiations that started officially in 1998 were based on ethnicity and the representation of ethnicity, as the political parties regrouped themselves along ethnic lines (Nimubona 2007, 497). The Arusha agreement signed in 2000 and the Pretoria power-sharing agreement of 2004 produced a draft constitution that was approved by referendum on 28 February 2005. It takes into consideration the ethnic composition of the government, parliament, senate, military and police. Ministerial portfolios and places in the national assembly are shared 60:40 between Hutu and Tutsi whereas in the senate Hutu and Tutsi hold equal numbers of seats. Three Batwa are co-opted. Thirty percent of the members of government have to be women. In the defence and security forces there is parity. The two vice-presidents are a Hutu from a predominately Hutu party and a Tutsi from a predominately Tutsi party. On the local level no more than 67 percent of mayors may be from one ethnic group (Lemarchand 2006a).

So Rwanda pursues a strategy of “denial of” ethnic cleavages while Burundi seeks “power sharing” along them.

### 3. Ethnicised Patterns of Interpretation of Politics in Rwanda and Burundi

I conducted qualitative semi-standardised interviews with twenty-two Rwandans and twenty Burundians between September 2007 and May 2008.<sup>9</sup> To select interviewees I used “selective sampling” designed to include maximum variation of cases (Kluge and Kelle 1999, 47, 51), since the project primarily seeks *competing* knowledge, in particular

with respect to the question “Which ‘ethnic group’ is excluded?” In order to capture competing knowledge I treated social divisions between “political elite” and “citizens” and between being “oppositional” and “conforming to the regime in power” as relevant. In making the selection, ethnic and regional criteria were used to define citizens as being “oppositional” and “conforming to the regime in power”. When selecting members of the political elite, party affiliation was taken into account.

I understand ethnicised politics as the interpretation of exclusion in terms of ethnic categories. In this sense, political power interpreted along ethnic cleavages (implying the exclusion of the other “ethnic group”) ethnicises politics. To discover how Rwandans and Burundians interpret exclusion in ethnic terms, I developed – following the method of content analysis introduced by Philipp Mayring (2000) – categories based on the interview material.<sup>10</sup> In the following I present two of these categories, which exemplify ethnicised politics *independently* of the structures inherent to the political institutional models, since the quotes included in the categories *Ethnic Interpretation of Formal Power* and *Ethnic Interpretation of Informal Power* directly refer to exclusion implied in the political institutional models.

#### 3.1 Ethnic Interpretation of Formal Power

The category *Ethnic Interpretation of Formal Power* comprises statements that interpret the regime in ethnic terms, generally equating the government with an “ethnic group”, either Hutu or Tutsi. This likening can be found in statements from citizens of both countries, notwithstanding their different institutional models. Despite the ethnic quotas in Burundi, the regime is described as a Hutu regime, while the regime in Rwanda is referred to as a Tutsi regime.<sup>11</sup>

The Rwandan interviewee quoted in the following is a genocide survivor who works as a car mechanic in Gisenyi, a town in the north of Rwanda. He clearly sees “the Tutsi”

<sup>9</sup> Most of the interviews were conducted, recorded and written down in French, and translated by the author for the present article.

<sup>10</sup> For my PhD project I developed about forty categories, some of which identify ethnicised politics.

<sup>11</sup> Being Hutu or Tutsi was a relevant criterion for selecting interviewees. Yet, as will be emphasised later on, the present analysis does not aim to analyse whether “the Hutu” or “the

Tutsi” are oppositional or conform with their current governments in Rwanda and Burundi. Hence, the ethnic affiliations of the interviewees who are quoted are not mentioned.



in power. In the course of the interview I ask him what he understands by an “ethnic group”. He does not directly reply to my question and refers to the political system:

They are there: the one who is Hutu is Hutu. He knows his limits and he accepts them. And then the Tutsi, ... you have to see who is the head of these things ..., hence, the main principles: who is in power? The Tutsi are in power and the Hutu did not accept it. If you are normal, and you see that the other is in power, you have to accept it.

The interviewee equates the present political regime in Rwanda with “the Tutsi” who according to him are in power. Saying that it is important to see who constitutes the head, he is suggesting that there might be some Hutu in political positions as well. However, the crucial political position(s) (the head) are held by “the Tutsi” so “the Tutsi” are in power. To him, it seems self-evident that “the Hutu” could not accept that. He describes a strong dichotomy between Hutu and Tutsi with respect to political power: Either Tutsi or Hutu can be in power. He even refers to them as “the other” as if Hutu and Tutsi were two collective actors struggling for power. Assuming that there might even be some (powerless) Hutu in the government, points to the ethnic interpretation of informal power discussed in the next section.

Burundians also interpret political power distribution and exclusion in ethnic terms. In the following, a Burundian *bashingantahe* (a traditional mediating authority) answers my question about the most important social cleavages in Burundi today. He does not really refer to the question, and instead expresses his lack of understanding for the continuing existence of the FNL-PALIPHEHUTU, which was still fighting at the time of the interviews in spring 2008:<sup>12</sup>

I am saying that I do not understand why the FNL is fighting against an entirely Hutu government, a quasi-Hutu parliament, a quasi-Hutu administration. And PALIPHEHUTU, that is a movement that aims to liberate the Hutu. I am asking: Are the Hutu liberating the Hutu from the Hutu? That is absurd; totally absurd. ... The rebellion of the Hutu was once directed against

the Tutsi. ... Today the rebellion is directed against the Hutu government, a Hutu senate, a Hutu parliament, a Hutu administration, ... Hutu power.

Speaking of a “Hutu government”, a “Hutu senate” and a “Hutu administration” he establishes a strong relationship between “ethnic groups” (understood as collective actors with common purposes) and political power. In the case of Burundi, these patterns of interpretation are even more striking since there are clear formal regulations requiring all political institutions to be composed of 60 percent Hutu and 40 percent Tutsi. Note the interesting juxtaposition with the first statement in the next section, which is made by a member of the FNL-PALIPHEHUTU rebel movement that according to the *bashingantahe* has no “raison d’être”.

Despite the explicit aim of both institutional systems to overcome an ethnic interpretation of political power, these interpretations persist. The quoted statements establish a direct relationship between a regime and an “ethnic group”, interpreting the regime in Burundi as a Hutu regime and the regime in Rwanda as a Tutsi regime, and conversely implying the exclusion of “the Tutsi” and “the Hutu” respectively. If we consider statements that refer to informal political power, the interpretations of power distribution, exclusion and the question “Which ‘ethnic group’ exactly is excluded” become more complex.

### 3.2 Ethnic Interpretation of Informal Power

Instead of simply equating Hutu and Tutsi with a regime, statements included in the category *Ethnic Interpretation of Informal Power* (implicitly) affirm the formal presence of Hutu and Tutsi in the political systems but deny the relevance of that merely formal presence. The interviewees insist that the informal power lies elsewhere (with either Hutu or Tutsi).

The first interviewee is an active member of the rebel movement FNL-PALIPHEHUTU. In contrast to the *bashingantahe*, who described the rebel movement as having no “raison d’être” since “the Hutu” were now in power in Burundi,

<sup>12</sup> Initially the armed wing of the rebel movement PALIPHEHUTU (Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu) was called “FNL” (Forces Nationales de

Libération). In January 2009, the PALIPHEHUTU-FNL changed its name to FNL (HRW 2010, 1).



he interprets the political situation very differently. After I have described my research project and the purpose of the interviews, he starts talking:<sup>13</sup>

The CNDD-FDD is infiltrated by the Tutsi. When they could, they joined the movement and they still hold the positions in the upper echelons of power. The Hutu might drive a big car. He is very satisfied that he is the president, but does he really have power? The most important positions are held by Tutsi. For instance, the Minister of Defence is Tutsi.

Although referring to the same political system as the *bashingantahe*, which is formally composed of 60 percent Hutu and 40 percent Tutsi the FNL-PALIPHEHUTU fighter's interpretation of the power structure of Burundi is the exact opposite: "the Tutsi" still hold the political power. He acknowledges that Hutu are present in the government and that a Hutu (Pierre Nkurunziza) is president. But he strongly doubts that "the Hutu" really have power since the most important positions are held by Tutsi. He refers to informal power in acknowledging that Hutu are present in the government, but asserting that they do not have power.

The next interviewee is a medical doctor in Bujumbura whose views about the power structures in Burundi are fairly close to those of the *bashingantahe*. Asked if there are also Tutsi in the present Burundian government, he responds:

Yes, that is because they want to demonstrate ... in order to be accepted as political party, you need to meet a certain quota ... that is all! They are obliged to proceed like this. But they do not have any power. They are told that they have to include a certain number of Tutsi ... they are there, but they are never the president of the party, they do not have the big ministries. This is the problem.

The doctor admits that there are Tutsi holding positions in the present political institutions but insists that they are only there in order to fulfil the ethnic quotas. According to him, Tutsi do not have any (informal) power, although he acknowledges their presence and representation. The reference to informal power echoes that of the FLN fighter (both

interpret political power and, hence, exclusion in ethnic terms, and both refer to informal power in order to underpin their assessment), yet their interpretations of the power distribution are exactly opposite. These patterns of interpretation appear in both countries. The following Rwandan interviewee is an NGO employee living in Butare. He has just been speaking about the privileged situation of "the Tutsi" and especially "the Tutsi from Uganda" when I ask him if the Hutu do not feel well represented at the political level. He answers:

I acknowledge that in the political, administrative system in Rwanda the Hutu occupy as many places as the others. But does it allow the people who are categorized in this category, Hutu I want to say, access in the same manner as the others? I do not think so, ... besides there are certain persons who say that it is simply a representation, in fact, abstract. ... It is there, but it cannot influence anything, cannot decide anything, simply in order to bluff.

The interviewee acknowledges the equal representation of Hutu in the administrative and political system but believes that formal representation does not necessarily guarantee representation of interests. According to him, formal power does not necessarily mean real informal power. In this respect, he sees Hutu as unprivileged because their representation does not have any real impact: in terms of informal power they cannot influence anything. In this sense, Hutu are excluded.

The next interviewee challenges these interpretations of informal power (exemplified by the quote of the NGO employee) as not corresponding to reality. He is a genocide survivor and priest living in Kigali. Asked about social cleavages in Rwanda he speaks about ethnic cleavages that the regime aims to overcome. Although the regime was making a real effort, "the Hutu" were not willing to acknowledge it:

But for the Hutu who lost, they say no, it is useless what you are doing, you will privilege your own. That is clear. They say it in the newspapers, in the print media, there are no places anymore for Hutu. In the government there are almost eleven ... more than the majority of ministers are Hutu. ... One does this

<sup>13</sup> I was not allowed to record, but took notes in German.

explicitly to be able to say we are trying to overcome the ethnic cleavage.

The interviewee explicitly accuses “the Hutu” of saying that they are excluded when they are not. He interprets the power configurations in ethnic terms: Since “the Hutu” lost power they say that they are politically not represented. Their assumption is that the government (presumably composed of Tutsi) is going to benefit its own group (that is to say “the Tutsi”). The interviewee believes these accusations to be false since “the Hutu” make up more than the majority in the government. Hence, he opposes his interpretation (referring to formal power) to an interpretation that assumes the distribution of *informal* power to be relevant. His specific interpretation of Rwandan power structures diverges from those quoted above. He does not believe “the Hutu” to be politically excluded, even though “they” claim to be. Two Burundian interviewees and one Rwandan stated that persons of one ethnic group hold merely formal political positions in order to show that all Rwandans (or Burundians) are integrated into the government. Thus, the power distribution and, hence, exclusion is interpreted in ethnic terms. These interviewees refer to informal power to underpin their argument. In contrast, the priest refers to formal power in order to contradict the ethnic interpretation of informal power.

Although different political institutional models have been introduced in Rwanda and Burundi, similar ethnicised patterns of interpretation concerning the political and, consequently, social exclusion are found. The quotes imply contradictory interpretations of the power structures and the implied question “Which ‘ethnic group’ exactly is excluded?” The Rwandan regime is described as a Tutsi regime in which “the Hutu” hold political positions but have no political power. This interpretation is opposed by one asserting that despite the political positions “the Hutu” hold, they insist on claiming that all political power lies with “the Tutsi”. Interpretations of formal and informal power structures and, thus, exclusion are even more contradictory in Burundi where “the Hutu” are described as puppets acting in the interest of “the Tutsi”, whereas, on the other hand, “the Tutsi” in the regime are believed to hold no power (occupying only formal positions).

#### 4. Conclusion

The academic discussion considers exclusion (discrimination) to be a relevant aspect for explaining (violent) ethnic conflict. Ethnicised politics – widely assumed to entail ethnic conflict – are held to be induced by exclusion inherent to the structure of the political system (i.e. actors or institutions). In contrast to the focus placed on the structures *inherent* to the political institutional systems, which predominates in the academic debate, the present article emphasises the taken-for-granted notions that constitute social reality. Accordingly, ethnicised politics are to be understood as political and social exclusion interpreted in terms of ethnic categories. And ethnicised politics constitute an important resource for accomplishing and legitimising political ends (Büsches and Pfaff-Czarnecka 2007, 8).

Despite different political institutional models, formal and informal political power and, hence, exclusion are interpreted in *both* countries in terms of ethnic categories of Hutu and Tutsi. Furthermore, the power distribution within the country and the answer to the question “Which ‘ethnic group’ is seen to be excluded?” is interpreted in diverging ethnic terms: “the Hutu” or “the Tutsi” are seen to be excluded.

The present analysis does not, however, aim to analyse whether “the Hutu” or “the Tutsi” are oppositional or conform with their current governments in Rwanda and Burundi. Nor did I intend to discover whether the Rwandan or Burundian government is predominantly seen as Tutsi-dominated or Hutu-dominated by its respective citizens. On the contrary, I intended to show that political and, thus, social in- and exclusion are self-evidently interpreted in terms of ethnic categories. In this sense, ethnicised politics are taken for granted.

Up to a point I agree that ethnicised politics entails violent ethnic conflict. But in a discussion that bases its arguments predominantly on the assumption that there are structures inherent to the political institutional model, I place emphasis on the knowledge of “those living in that world”. According to this argument, the intention to overcome ethnicised politics and, hence, ethnic (violent) conflict implies overcoming the patterns of interpretation of political and,

thus, social exclusion referring to ethnic categories. Following the argument that reality is constituted by knowledge, which is constituted by taken-for-granted notions points to the necessity to challenge the taken-for-grantedness of these notions. Challenging this knowledge can be done by

stress on different (not ethnicised) patterns of interpretation. In doing so, however, it is most crucial that these interpretations relate to the knowledge that “those living in that world” already have.

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# Picturing the Other: Targets of Delegitimization across Time

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## Picturing the Other: Targets of Delegitimization across Time

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Italian Fascist propaganda was compared with contemporary right-wing material to explore how political propaganda depicts specific target groups in different historical periods. Taking the theory of delegitimization as the theoretical framework, we analyzed visual images concerning despised social groups used by the Fascist regime and current images of contemporary targets of social resentment used by Lega Nord (currently part of the governing coalition). Images of Jewish and Black people published in the Fascist magazine *La Difesa della Razza* were classified according to eight delegitimizing strategies, as were images of immigrants used on Lega Nord propaganda posters. Although the target group has changed, six of the eight strategies of delegitimization were used in both periods. In most cases, overlap was found in the way target groups were portrayed in the past and in the present.

Prejudice is a dynamic phenomenon that varies across cultures and societies, and across time within the same society. One group may be a target of prejudice during a given historical moment, while becoming the object of benevolent attitudes at another. In most Western societies, for example, intergroup attitudes became more positive during the second half of the twentieth century. However, the social advancement of some discriminated minorities (e.g., Jews) did not extend to others, which still experience severe inequalities (e.g., Gypsies). In fact, although overt prejudice is now socially and sometimes legally punished, blatant forms of discrimination are still directed towards some groups. Old targets of prejudice may be replaced by new ones.

For instance, prejudice against immigrants, especially Muslims, has increased over recent decades, peaking after September 11, 2001. In Italy, pre-existing prejudice against Muslims has been boosted since that event “by the frequent generalizations and the associations made in public debate and the media between Muslims and fundamentalism or terrorism” (ECRI 2006, 22; see also Cere 2002). In 2001 Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi claimed the superiority of Western civilization: “We must be aware of the superiority of our civilization, a system that has guaranteed well-being,

respect for human rights and – in contrast with Islamic countries – respect for religious and political rights.” Such a civilization is superior because “has at its core – as its greatest value – freedom, which is not the heritage of Islamic culture” (Di Caro, *Il Corriere della Sera*, September 27, 2001; Maltese, *La Repubblica*, October 3, 2001). As ECRI points out, surveys indicate a widespread perception among the Italian population that Islam and Muslims represent a threat to security and to the preservation of culture and traditions (Liguori 2006). This is worrying in the light of Staub’s observation that ideologies are always involved in the generation of collective violence (1999): “When dominant groups engage in increasingly harsh acts to defend their dominance, ... they usually are guided by such ideologies” (182). Even in the case of real conflicts of interests, Staub argues that they have crucial psychological and cultural components (e.g., mistrust and fear of the other). Furthermore, when a conflict occurs between dominant and subordinate groups it can lead to violence, especially because the subordinate group has little or no access to resources and power.

In particular in the last two decades, Italy has also been characterized by a sort of “involution” in terms of anti-



racism and egalitarian norms (International Labor Organization 2009). The rhetoric of populism, often based upon old prejudices and stereotypes, has returned to typify public debate. This phenomenon is unfortunately not restricted to extremist groups, but shared by many people and endorsed by some political leaders, upon which their success has been built (see Liguori 2006). Dal Lago (1999), for instance, refers to the strategies implemented against immigrants in Italy as a “fear-machine,” while according to Asor Rosa (2009), representations and concepts typical of the Fascist ideology are coming back, along with conformism on the part of the Italian intelligentsia. Similarly, Mammone (2006) points out that a confused revisionist development is taking place in Italy, aiming sometimes to rehabilitate aspects of the Fascist regime, sometimes to remove the period from the collective memory. Finally, Hassner (2008) argues that in Italy – and in Europe in general – Fascism is resurfacing “under different forms” (see also *Independent*, May 6, 2008; *Guardian*, March 30, 2009).

Our present work investigates how Italian Fascist propaganda spread the belief that particular target groups deserved to be marginalized and excluded, and to discover whether contemporary Italian political propaganda deploys analogous strategies of spreading similar beliefs directed against “new” target groups. We focused specifically on the way visual images are used to communicate prejudiced beliefs.

### 1. Visual Images and Prejudice

Mendelberg observes that “visual images are a more effective way to communicate implicitly ... Stereotypical or threatening images can communicate derogatory racial meaning in a more subtle way than an equivalent verbal statement” (2001, 9), while Greenwood shows that “the combination of elements captured in the image ... suggests whether the viewer should adopt a sympathetic, respectful, disdainful or some other attitude toward the subject” (2005, 1). Thus, it is not surprising that some of the many, many studies of images have addressed issues of prejudice and stereotyping.

Chavez (2001), for instance, investigates the role played by images in the U.S. discourse about immigrants and immigration over the period 1965 to 1999. Analyzing the covers of ten magazines (e.g., *National Review*, *Nation*, *Time*), he

provides a historical account of depictions of immigration, using the covers as a tool to identify common media messages about immigration. He found interesting historical patterns: for instance, during the 1970s positive portrayals of refugees emerged, while in the 1980s the number of refugees became a concern. Chavez argues that the way the immigration issue was constructed and debated on magazine covers reflected the ambivalent attitude of U.S. society toward immigration. An analogous investigation by Gilbert and Viswanathan (2007) examined covers and articles published in two Canadian magazines (from 1960 to 2006) to find out how immigration and multiculturalism were depicted and what was conveyed about national politics concerning the issue. Their work revealed a dualistic pattern, depicting immigrants as a cultural enrichment on one side, and as a threat on the other. Mullen (2004) analyzes the portrayal of ethnic immigrant groups in American children’s books from the beginning of the last century, finding a simplified and negative cognitive representation where the fictional children were described more in physical than in personal terms, with smaller heads and lower verbal complexity. These results “suggest a means whereby the cognitive representations of some ethnic immigrant groups would be particularly resistant to change” (258). The simplified and negative portrayals would make it difficult to challenge unfavorable cognitive representations popular in the culture at the time.

Going further into the past, Cooks (2007) investigates caricatures of African-American fairgoers at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, an event that served to solidify America’s national identity. Analyzed racist images addressing issues relating to the roles of race, class and social hierarchy in turn-of-the-century America, Cooks finds that the portrayals of African Americans reveal that they were an unwanted presence at the exposition, disclosing social anxieties of white Americans that their national identity would be tainted by including African Americans in the nation.

Images are also interesting material for investigating changes in social representation of groups. Peng (2004) analyzes how U.S. newspapers (*New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times*) portrayed China over time (1992–2002),

finding a significant increase in the total number of photographs, especially relating to economic and human-interest issues, more portrayals of ordinary people, and a positive overall tone. According to Peng, several factors could have contributed to such an increase, including China's growing international influence and the consequent increase in international media exposure, increased contact and understanding between the United States and China, and the growing openness and accessibility of Chinese society.

So visual images and mass media play an important role in conveying group social representations, stereotypes, and prejudices. Investigating how a group is visually portrayed in a given historical period can provide us with important clues to its social status and intergroup relations, helping us to understand whether it is a target of delegitimization (Bar-Tal 1989), moral exclusion (Opatow 1990), or dehumanization (Haslam 2006). For instance, in his famous book *Le juif médiéval au miroir de l'art chrétien* (1966), Bernhard Blumenkranz analyzes the images of Jews in medieval Christian art to trace the history of Western anti-Semitic sentiment. Religious and political power systems have often used images to inoculate people with particular ideologies. One only needs to think of the role played by pictorial representations during and since the Middle Ages to convey the Roman Catholic Church's precepts in order to control a mostly illiterate population. In the twentieth century, thanks to the development of mass media, the use of visual images became fundamental, especially for political propaganda.

As already mentioned, old targets of prejudice may be replaced by new ones, but the way these targets are portrayed might remain the same, at least within the same society. Therefore, exploring similarities in the way minority groups are represented visually in two different historical periods offers an opportunity to identify recurring mechanisms of derogation. In this study we first investigate images published during the Fascist era, in order to identify the processes responsible for the severe moral exclusion of certain groups. Then we compare these with images used by the Lega Nord in order to investigate whether similar processes are at work today, addressed to contemporary targets of social resentment. The Lega Nord was founded during the 1980s and is currently part of the governing co-

alition. At the last general election (April 2008) it gathered around the 8 percent of the consensus (that is, around three millions votes), the majority of which came from the richest Northern regions, such as Veneto and Lombardia, where Lega Nord won up to around the 27 percent of the vote (see Ministero dell'Interno, Archivio storico delle elezioni). Recent regional elections (March 2010) brought Lega Nord up to 35 percent of the vote in the Veneto region (see section 5 for further information).

## 2. The Historical Archive

To investigate the visual images of Fascist propaganda we used *La Difesa della Razza* (The Defense of the Race), a bimonthly magazine that was one of the most important vehicles of Fascist propaganda (Cassata 2008). The magazine first appeared on August 5, 1938, while the last of its 118 issues came out on June 20, 1943 – on the eve of the fall of the Fascist regime. Initially, circulation was high by the standards of the time (150,000 copies per issue), although from November 1940 the number of copies printed fell due to wartime restrictions on the use of paper. *La Difesa della Razza* addressed topics concerning anti-Semitism and racism, racial stereotyping, eugenics, and racial politics. It was characterized by aggressive graphics and sensationalist headlines, and crucially for us, it was full of photographs, cartoons, and photomontages, often accompanied by offensive and vulgar captions. A considerable number of articles were written by important scientists of the time and were based on biological racism (Raspanti 1994). *La Difesa della Razza* was highly regarded by the regime and was distributed in schools (Cassata 2008).

## 3. Theoretical Background

Delegitimization theory (Bar-Tal 1989, 2000) is particularly suitable for the aims of the present research: exploring similarities in the way minority groups are visually represented in two historical periods to identify recurring mechanisms of derogation. Examining beliefs shared within a group or society, Bar-Tal proposes an analysis of the process of delegitimization that prepares and accompanies outbreaks of more extreme forms of discrimination and collective violence. The process of delegitimization is a categorization of groups into extreme negative social categories, which are ultimately excluded from society and even human-

ity. This process results in the permanent exclusion of the delegitimized group, which is thus placed outside the circle of groups with which contact is allowed. Bar-Tal argues that the origins of delegitimization lie in the desire to elevate or differentiate the ingroup or exploit the outgroup, or in situations of violent intergroup conflict (1989). A sense of being threatened and the existence of sharp differences between the groups are conditions which facilitate the process of delegitimization. This process is an extreme case of stereotyping and prejudice, and “leads to an array of behaviors including malevolent treatment and preventive steps to avert potential danger to the ingroup. Delegitimization is also a consequence of brutal and cruel behavior because it serves as a justification mechanism” (Bar-Tal 1990, 78).

Besides a clear definition of the delegitimization process, Bar-Tal’s theory offers a straightforward list of delegitimization strategies and functions that are useful for empirical investigations. Delegitimization may involve: *dehumanizing* the outgroup, labeling its members as inhuman, subhuman (e.g., animals), or negative superhuman creatures (e.g., demons, monsters); categorizing the outgroup into groups considered violators of central social norms (e.g., murders, maniacs), i.e., *outcasting*; *trait characterization* attributing negative physical and personality traits (e.g., stupidity); using *political labels* where the outgroup is categorized into political groups which are totally rejected by the ingroup (e.g., capitalists, communists); and through *group comparison*, which occurs when the outgroup is categorized into groups that symbolize the most undesirable groups for the delegitimizing society (e.g., vandals), or when the comparison positively differentiates the delegitimizing group. According to Bar-Tal the process of delegitimization serves several functions, such as providing the ingroup with a justification for negative behaviors toward others, reinforcing and emphasizing intergroup boundaries, experiencing a sense of superiority, and maintaining ingroup uniformity (1989, 2000).

Bar-Tal’s theory has so far been applied to texts published in *La Difesa della Razza*, but not to images (Volpato and

Cantone 2005; Volpato and Durante 2003; Volpato, Durante, and Cantone 2007). Three new ways of delegitimization have emerged from that research, namely: *outgroup numerosness*, emphasizing the numerousness of the outgroup in order to increase the perception of threat; *segregation*, accusing the outgroup of refusing to assimilate (and therefore being the first racists) and pursuing discriminatory behaviors aimed at isolating it; and *using the delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups*, where groups are delegitimized by association with a despised group.

Volpato and Durante (2003) use all the aforementioned strategies to classify 421 articles relating to the Jewish group. Their findings show that delegitimizing strategies unfolded coherently over time: the delegitimization enacted in the magazine’s early years aimed at the inoculation of beliefs designed to produce an oppressive sense of threat in the ingroup (which demanded adequate solutions). The strategies associated with later years (e.g., *trait characterization*) reinforce the stereotyping of the minority, and introduce *group comparisons* and (in the final year of publication) *using the delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups*. Volpato and Durante argue that first it was asserted that the outgroup was undesirably different, and that the group then became separated, appearing as threatening aliens, overwhelming in numbers. Then, other groups could be smeared and delegitimized by their association with the delegitimized group. However, no dehumanizing content was found in the analyzed texts, diverging from the later finding of Volpato and Cantone (2005) in their classification of articles concerning Africans and half-castes ( $N = 232$ ). In fact, dehumanization was used by *La Difesa della Razza* to delegitimize the colonized people: Africans were “animalized,” while half-castes were described as negative superhuman creatures (e.g., monsters or devils) and accused of corrupting the precious good of “racial purity.”<sup>1</sup> Interestingly, in some of the articles focused on Africans and half-castes, the Jewish group was also mentioned and similarly dehumanized in a sort of “guilt by association.” Volpato and Cantone (2005) did not, however, find any pattern in

<sup>1</sup> The Fascist and Nazi ideologies regarded all racial “cross-breeding” as acts against nature (Raspanti 1994)

the way delegitimization of Africans and half-castes was expressed through the six years of the magazine's publication. According to historians, Italians did not have strong anti-Semitic feelings (Arendt 1963; Sarfatti 2000). Thus, while the Fascist regime had to introduce Italians to anti-Semitism gradually, this was not necessary for Africans and half-castes, which had been delegitimized for centuries by the European culture (Jahoda 1999). Finally, "reversing" Bar-Tal's model, Volpato, Durante, and Cantone (2007) investigate ingroup "hyper-legitimization" strategies glorifying the Italian ingroup and classify 325 articles concerning Italians published in the Fascist magazine.

The present study goes a step further, examining the role played by the visual images published in *La Difesa della Razza* in delegitimizing Jewish and Black populations.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. The Analysis of the Fascist Images

Three independent judges classified images of Jews and Blacks which appeared in *La Difesa della Razza* during its six years of publication. All photographs, cartoons, and photomontages depicting individuals belonging to the aforementioned groups were classified according to delegitimizing strategy and year of publication. Eight strategies of delegitimization were used as categories of classification: five proposed by Bar-Tal (*dehumanization, outcasting, political labels, trait characterization, group comparison*) and three that emerged from previous studies (*outgroup numerosness, segregation, using the delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups*). When images were accompanied by captions, these were taken into consideration for coding. Images with no delegitimizing content were classified as neutral.

A considerable number of images were found: 835 concerning Jews, 478 concerning Blacks. Thirty-five images depicting Jews and fifteen depicting Black people were classified as neutral. The results for the remaining images are presented in Table 1. All eight strategies were found for the images of Jews (eight strategies x six years of publication); 64 percent

emphasized the physical and personal features stereotypically attributed to Jews, and were therefore classified as *trait characterization*. This finding is not surprising given that the Fascist regime endorsed biological racism, using pseudo-scientific notions supposedly showing a close relationship between physical and psychological data and thus legitimizing the claimed inferiority of the "colored race" and the supposed differentness of the Jewish "race" (Raspanti 1994). This is why *trait characterization* was also the most frequently used strategy of delegitimization for Black people (70 percent) (see Table 1). Examples of images classified in this category are shown in Figure 1 (all figures in the Appendix).

Figure 2 shows examples of images classified as *group comparison*: intergroup comparisons that favor the delegitimizing group. Examples of using the *delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups* are reported in Figure 3: here we see how the enemy democracies (France, England, United States) were delegitimized by association with the Jewish group. Jews were also delegitimized using *political labels*: the examples shown in Figure 4 emphasize the link between Judaism and communism, socialism, and terrorism. For Jews, *outcasting* (see Figure 5) and *outgroup numerosness* (see Figure 6) were also found. For Blacks, these latter two strategies were not found, while only two images were classified as *political labels* (see Table 1).

Finally, images of *segregation* and *dehumanization* were found for both groups. *Segregation* was also frequently used in articles about Jews in *La Difesa della Razza* (see Volpato and Durante 2003). These texts discussed the racial laws which came into force in Italy in 1938, along with the "fantasy" of segregating all the Jews outside Europe (i.e., Madagascar). The image shown in Figure 7 is the visual representations of such topics. Those illustrated in Figure 8 refer to segregation into concentration camps and were published after 1940. Interestingly, this latter content was not found in the texts concerning Jews.

<sup>2</sup> The label "Blacks" refers to the following groups: negroes (the term used by *La Difesa della Razza* for Africans), dark-skinned people, and African Americans. The way the authors and editors of the

Fascist magazine described these groups undoubtedly reveals a homogeneity bias (Voci 2000), which characterized the Italian social sciences of the day (Volpato 2000). See Faloppa (2004)

for similarities in the use of the words "negro" and "indigenous" in *La Difesa della Razza*.

**Table 1. Images of Jews and Blacks classified by delegitimizing strategy and year of publication**

Strategy	Images of Jews								Images of Blacks							
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total	%	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total	%
Dehumanization	2	15	4	5	5	0	31	4%	1	2	1	4	1	1	10	2%
Trait characterization	42	170	87	96	56	62	513	64%	48	66	70	70	55	15	324	70%
Political labels	6	10	7	17	2	1	43	5%	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	0.4%
Group comparison	4	4	2	1	2	1	14	2%	7	12	10	11	2	4	46	10%
Segregation	4	19	2	16	16	1	58	7%	3	14	1	1	5	15	39	8%
Using the delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups	3	17	2	20	11	11	64	8%	3	15	4	4	12	4	42	9%
Outgroup numerousness	12	8	5	10	11	0	46	6%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Outcasting	4	11	3	10	2	1	31	4%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	77	254	112	175	105	77	800	100%	62	110	86	91	75	39	463	100%

While *dehumanization* was used marginally in articles referring to Jews, it was often found in the visual images. These were very vivid and “creative”: Jews were portrayed as spiders, vipers, apes, vultures, parasites, microbes, ogres, and devils (see Figure 9 for examples). Again, we found in images what was left unsaid in words. Blacks were dehumanized by animalization (apes) or objectification (pictures of parts of the body, such as hands and feet) (see Haslam et al. 2008).

The classification of visual images was submitted to correspondence analysis separately for Jews and Blacks in order to investigate patterns of delegitimizing strategies over the years (Benzécri 1980; Clausen 1998; Greenacre and Blasius 1994). The correspondence analysis carried out on the classification of the images of Jews shows that the first two dimensions account for 69,5 percent of the total inertia. The first dimension (43,5 percent of total inertia) shows the contrast between the first year (1938) ( $\cos^2 = .44$ ;  $\text{contr} = .23$ ) and the sixth year of publication (1942–43) ( $\cos^2 = .66$ ;  $\text{contr} = .33$ ).<sup>3</sup> The first year is associated with *outgroup numerousness* ( $\cos^2 = .79$ ;  $\text{contr} = .44$ ) and *segregation* ( $\cos^2 = .52$ ;  $\text{contr} = .26$ ), the sixth with *trait characterization* ( $\cos^2 = .89$ ;  $\text{contr} = .25$ ). The former seems to reflect the presence of Jews within Italian

society and the desire to segregate them, while the latter suggests an obsessive stereotyping representation of the “enemy”: in the face of imminent defeat Fascist propaganda had no other “weapon” than to distance the ingroup from the outgroup through stereotypes. The second dimension (26.1 percent of total inertia) shows the opposition of the first ( $\cos^2 = .48$ ;  $\text{contr} = .41$ ) and third (1939–40) ( $\cos^2 = .54$ ;  $\text{contr} = .29$ ) years versus the fourth (1940–41) ( $\cos^2 = .17$ ;  $\text{contr} = .10$ ) and the fifth years ( $\cos^2 = .20$ ;  $\text{contr} = .15$ ). The first and third years are associated with *group comparison* ( $\cos^2 = .53$ ;  $\text{contr} = .14$ ), while the fourth and fifth years are associated with *using the Jewish group to delegitimize other groups* ( $\cos^2 = .72$ ;  $\text{contr} = .40$ ). This is clearly connected with the beginning of the war, which for Italy started in 1940 and according to historians was not universally welcomed (Cordova 2010; De Felice 1990). Associating the Allies with the Jews served to justify the war. As with the texts, the results show a pattern of delegitimization that varies according to the year of publication.

Concerning the images of Blacks, our results did not show any pattern of delegitimization developing over the years: only one dimension emerged (accounting for 77,3 percent of total inertia), and the same strategies were associated

<sup>3</sup> The Fascist regime came to power in October 1922 with the March on Rome and imposed a

parallel calendar beginning then. The Fascist year began on November 1 and ended on October 31.



with early and later years of publication.<sup>4</sup> The same kind of result was also found for articles concerning Africans and half-castes (Volpato and Cantone 2005). With reference to the Blacks, *La Difesa della Razza* merely conveyed the delegitimization that characterized European racism against colonized populations, which were considered wild and impervious to civilization (Jahoda 1999).

Although the results concerning images published in *La Difesa della Razza* are consistent with those which emerged from the magazine's articles, delegitimizing strategies were used differently in texts and images. This is probably due to the nature of these means of communication: some strategies are more suitable to be used in images (e.g., *trait characterization*), others in words (e.g., *political label*, *outcasting*). Results relating to *dehumanization* are particularly interesting: *dehumanization* of Blacks appeared consistently – though not frequently – in texts and images over the six years of publication. Instead, given the weakness of Italian anti-Semitism (Arendt 1963; Sarfatti 2000), it is plausible that *dehumanization* of the Jewish group could not be accomplished explicitly with words. Images, on the other hand, could subtly convey dehumanizing content, showing what cannot be said. Future research is required on this issue.

In line with previous results, in the images we found a progressive pattern of delegitimization for Jews, but not for Blacks. The former were a small successful minority, so the Fascist regime needed to create and spread resentment to remove them from Italian society: the perception of threat had to be increased progressively. For the latter delegitimization was repeated and reinforced, but not extended: the naturalization of Black inferiority was taken for granted.

### 5. Comparing the Old with the New

So are the strategies of delegitimization used by *La Difesa della Razza* still present in current Italian political propaganda? Over the past two decades the zeitgeist in Italy

has changed, with a significant portion of the population renouncing anti-racism norms. As also noted by Zick and Küpper with reference to modern anti-Semitism in Germany, “people are not motivated to be perceived as tolerant and friendly” (2005, 55), because they perceive that certain racist opinions and stereotypes do not contradict norms, and are accepted by the majority. The Italian specific is that this phenomenon is spread and promoted by politicians who are currently in power.

As a consequence, “political correctness” is widely rejected both in everyday speech and in the mass media, which are instead permeated with prejudice. Immigrants (especially Muslims) are most heavily targeted but also Southern Italians, political adversaries, and women also suffer attacks. For instance, the newspaper *Il Giornale* (whose owner is the Prime Minister's brother), recently used the word “negri,” the most derogatory term to address black people, both in headlines and articles.<sup>5</sup> On April 21, 2009, the newspaper *Libero* published an article entitled “Siamo razzisti” (We are racists) on its front page, where being racist was treated as a positive feature. The explicit reference to the Fascist ideology, which was heavily built around the concept of race and racial purity, is clear.

So there is an obvious case for investigating whether the delegitimization strategies used in *La Difesa della Razza* are still used today in visual images of immigrants. We chose to focus on the political propaganda of the Lega Nord. The Lega Nord built its success on social worries and insecurity, appealing to the xenophobia of a society unready for immigration and using it as a means to gain power (Diamanti, *La Repubblica*, March 31, 2010). It is one of the major allies of the Popolo della Libertà (PdL) led by Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and plays a prominent role in the government, supplying three current ministers including the Secretary of the Interior, who is responsible for immigration. In a country that has always been uncertain about its own identity, Lega Nord proposes an identity model based on tradition,

<sup>4</sup> As suggested by an anonymous reviewer, we checked for the association between target groups and years of publication in the use of each delegitimization strategy. Chi-square

tests revealed significant results for *trait characterization*,  $\chi^2(5) = 40.2, p < .001$ , and *segregation*,  $\chi^2(5) = 29.9, p < .001$  (see Table 1).

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, *Il Giornale*, January 9, 2010, front page, or January 19, 2010, front page.



for the most part invented (see Hobsbawm et al. 1983), and on the familiar Us/Them dichotomy, where “them” refers to foreigners (see Liguori 2006). Lega Nord members are always talking about the issues of “land” and “blood,” calling for defense of the “roots,” in terms closely resembling the Fascist ideology (Mosse 1978). In 2002 and 2006 ECRI expressed concern about the widespread use of racist and xenophobic discourses particularly by members of the Lega Nord and reported that racist and xenophobic discourses have gone as far as presenting Rom, Sinti, Muslims, and members of other minority groups “as a threat to public health and the preservation of national or local identity, resulting in some cases in incitement to discrimination, violence or hatred towards them” (ECRI 2006, 26; see also Liguori 2006).

We considered visual images concerning immigrants which appeared on propaganda posters used by Lega Nord. To our knowledge there is no systematically archived material, so we examined the posters accessible on local and national Lega Nord websites. We found twenty-five posters relating to the period 1999–2009. Three independent, trained judges classified them according to the aforementioned eight delegitimizing strategies. Twenty-one out of twenty-five images were coded, while the remaining four images were not classified because they were either too ambiguous or the textual part was predominant.

Six out of the eight strategies were found in the selected material. Seven images were classified as *outgroup numerosness* (see Figure 10 for examples; all figures in the Appendix), five as *trait characterization* (Figure 11). Images coded as *group comparison* (2) are shown in Figure 12, while examples of *segregation* (2) are given in Figure 13. Three images were classified as *political labels* (Figure 14), and the remaining two as *using the delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups* (Figure 15).

The Lega Nord images strikingly resemble those published in *La Difesa della Razza*. The target group has changed, but not the strategies. In most cases, even the way the strategy is visually represented seems the same. Consider, for instance, the posters coded as *segregation*: here, immigrants are banned from voting just like the Jews were banned

from the Italian schools, institutions, and society during fascism (compare Figure 7 to Figure 13). Likewise, in both “old” and “new” images classified in the category *using the delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups*, symbols of the “enemy” are superimposed on maps to stress the enemy’s power, and most likely to increase threat perception (compare Figure 3 to Figure 15). The perception of threat is also increased by emphasizing the *outgroup numerosness* (compare Figure 6 to Figure 10). No matter the actual size of the delegitimized group, both the Fascist regime and the Lega Nord stress that “there are many of them”, that “we are being invaded” by outgroup members. This is consistent with recent surveys showing that although the percentage of Muslims in Italy is just 2 percent (according to official statistics), 50 percent of Italians believe there are too many Muslims (Zick and Küpper 2009). According to intergroup threat theory (Stephan and Stephan 2000), group size may elicit realistic threat. Perceptions of larger outgroup size leads to greater perceptions of threatened ingroup interest: outgroup members are perceived as able to inflict harm or control valued resources.

Interestingly, economic crisis is a common denominator then and now. Especially under these circumstances, emphasizing outgroup size increases the perception of threat, leading to behavioral consequences (along with negative emotional reactions) such as opposing policies that favor the outgroup (Renfro et al. 2006; Sawires and Peacock 2000), which seems particularly relevant for the inclusion of the immigrants in the host society. As also noted by Bar-Tal (1989), delegitimization serves several functions, including providing the ingroup with a justification for negative behaviors toward others and reinforcing intergroup boundaries. The strategies of delegitimization found in the visual images used by both the Lega Nord and the Fascist regime seem designed to serve these aims.

Both kinds of propaganda seem to offer the public a scapegoat for social tensions, thus diverting ingroup members’ attention from pressing problems which are difficult to solve (i.e., the economic crisis). Thus, the delegitimized group becomes the direct cause of complex and distressing events in a given society: on the basis of the spread of such perverse beliefs, it is considered to be the cause of the event,

and at the same time, an explanation for everything that took place during the event (Tajfel 1981). To quote Bar-Tal on the delegitimization of the Jews in Nazi Germany: “there is little doubt that the distance between delegitimization of this intensity and behavioral harm is very small” (1990, 78).

## 6. Conclusions

We believe that the reason why the Lega Nord images do not make Italians indignant is partly because a deeper reflection of the Fascist past never took place in Italy. Consider, for instance, recently events in Bologna, where the local council (ruled by a left-wing party) advertised a self-defense course for women using an image dating from 1944 of a black man sexually assaulting a white woman (*La Repubblica*, April 16, 2009). The image was originally used in Fascist propaganda during the period of the “Salò Republic” (1943–45) to warn Italians that the African troops in the Allied armies would rape Italian women. The way the Bologna council used such an image is, in our opinion, a clear sign of historical revisionism: the current zeitgeist in Italy is permeated with words and images emanating from a past that has never been properly discussed. As Staub notes in his exploration of the origins of evil, “once devaluation becomes part of a culture, its literature, art, and media are perpetuated in social institutions, and, especially once it gives rise to discrimination or other institutionalized forms of antagonism, it becomes highly resistant to change. Even when its public expression is relatively quiescent for a period of time, ... it often remains part of the deep structure of the culture and can re-emerge when instigating conditions for violence are present” (1999, 183–84).

We think that this is the case. As Gentile argues (2009), postwar Italy never properly confronted its own Fascist legacy, and the self-comforting assumption that fascism was a “soft totalitarianism” led Italians to forget instead of critically analyzing it (Asor Rosa 2009). The result is that as soon as a political vacuum occurs, old or new forms of fascism arrive to fill it. After the end of World War II, fascism was considered a period to be parenthesized and forgotten. For more than forty years the Fascist experience has been removed from the collective memory and conscience, along with the crimes committed, especially those perpetrated in the African colonies (Mari et al. 2010). This probably

led many Italians to interpret the phenomenon of migration according to old beliefs. The old-fashioned stereotypes have been applied, without criticism, to the new migrants (Blanchard and Bancel 1998). In other words, the negative attitude targeting Blacks and Jews spread by the Fascist regime has been redirected toward immigrants (Volpato and Durante 2010).

We found that although old targets of prejudice have been replaced by new ones, the delegitimizing strategies are mostly the same. One limitation was the disproportionality of the two image collections, which limits the reach of our conclusions. The number of images available for the political propaganda of a single party cannot even come close to the number of images coming from a propaganda magazine published twice a month for six years during a dictatorship. These are preliminary results and further research, also focusing on the textual parts of this kind of material, is needed. However, the way immigrants are portrayed by a governing party, and the fact that these depictions resemble those of Fascism, does tell us something. First of all, Fascist content is back in the Italian political arena; secondly, public opinion seems to be unaware of the origins and meanings of certain images, suggesting that a process of historical revisionism is currently taking place.

Finally, we believe that the use of these kinds of depictions by a political party that is in power and in charge of immigration policy is unhelpful for the process of integration, for both immigrants and Italians. The over-simplified and extremely negative portrayals of immigrants are likely to reinforce already unfavorable cognitive representations held by Italians. Liguori’s survey of 2,200 Italian teenagers aged 14–18 in 110 different places (2006), found that racism and stereotypes towards strangers were increasing. Echoing the imagery of Lega Nord’s posters, 56 percent of participants said that Muslims have “cruel and barbarous laws”, 66 percent that “women are not respected, they have no rights,” and 52 percent that Muslims “support terrorism” (303, footnote 476). In our opinion, the portrayals of immigrants analyzed for the present work are likely to exacerbate the sense of being threatened and the sharp differences between groups, which are among the conditions that might lead to intergroup conflict.

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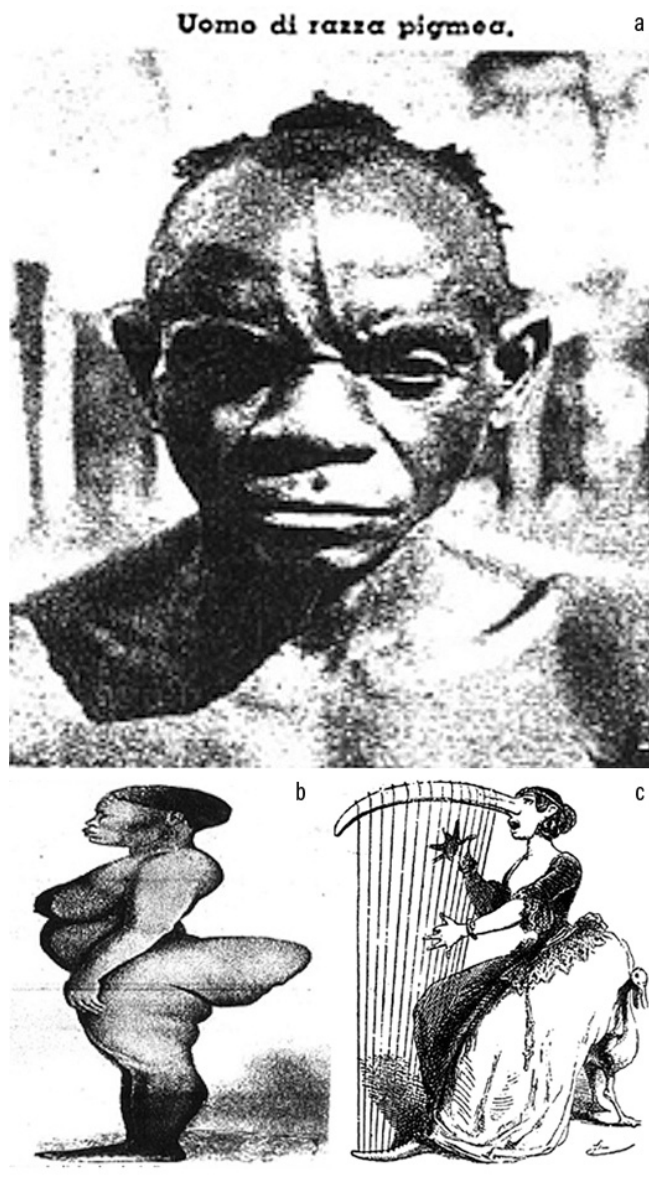
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Appendix: Fascist and Lega Nord propaganda images

Figure 1: Fascist propaganda classified as “trait characterization.”



Source: a. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year I - 1938), issue 3, 10.  
b. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year I - 1938), issue 1, 17.  
c. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year I - 1938), issue 1, 133.

Figure 2: Fascist propaganda classified as “group comparison.”



Source: a. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year I - 1938), issue 2, 28.  
b. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year V - 1941/1942), issue 5, 28.  
c. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year I - 1938), issue 1, front cover.

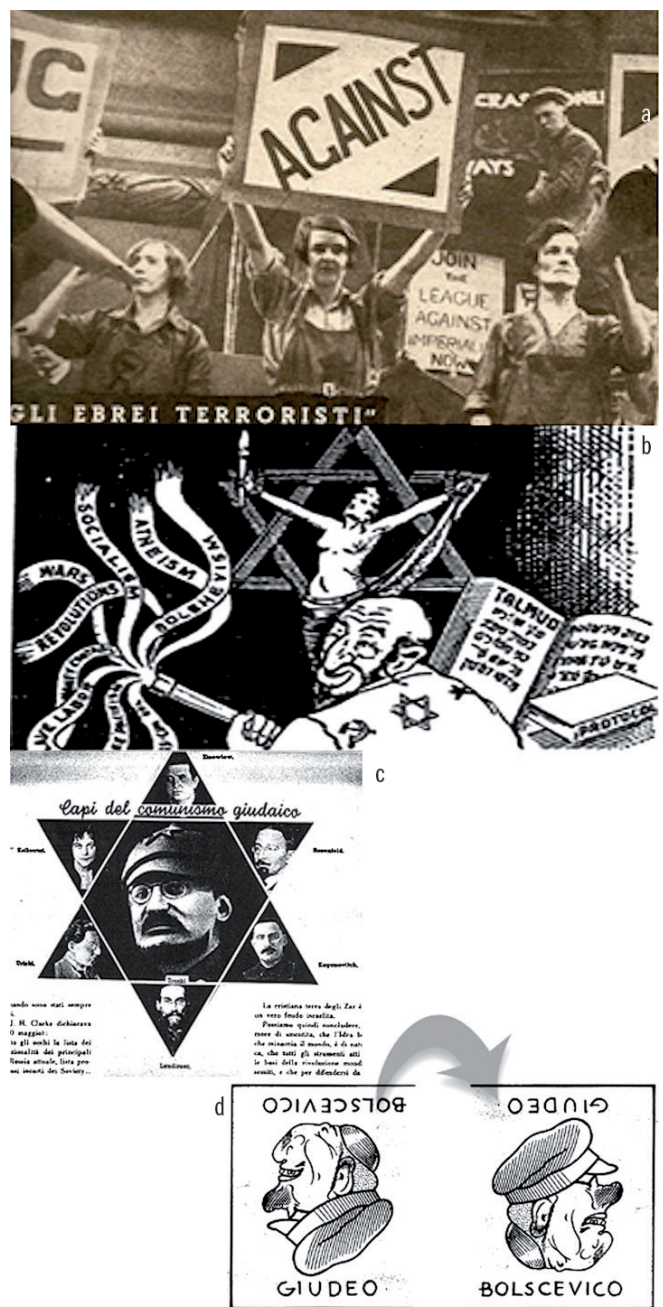


Figure 3: Fascist propaganda classified as “using the delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups.”



Source: a. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year IV – 1940/1941), issue 18, 16–17.  
 b. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year IV – 1940/1941), issue 13, front cover.  
 c. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year IV – 1940/1941), issue 20, 13.

Figure 4: Fascist propaganda classified as “political labels.”

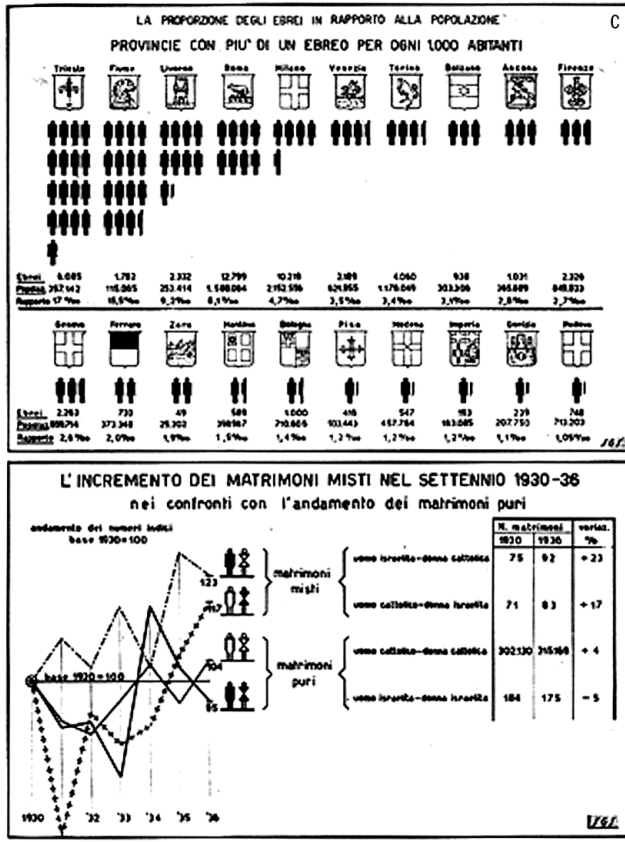


Source: a. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year IV – 1940/1941), issue 19, 29.  
 b. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year II – 1938/1939), issue 14, 23.  
 c. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year I – 1938), issue 6, 53.  
 d. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year I – 1938), issue 6, 52.





Figure 6: Fascist propaganda classified as “outgroup numerousness.”



Source: c. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year I - 1938), issue 6, 25.

Figure 7: Fascist propaganda classified as “segregation.”



Source: *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year II - 1938/1939), issue 2, 24-25.

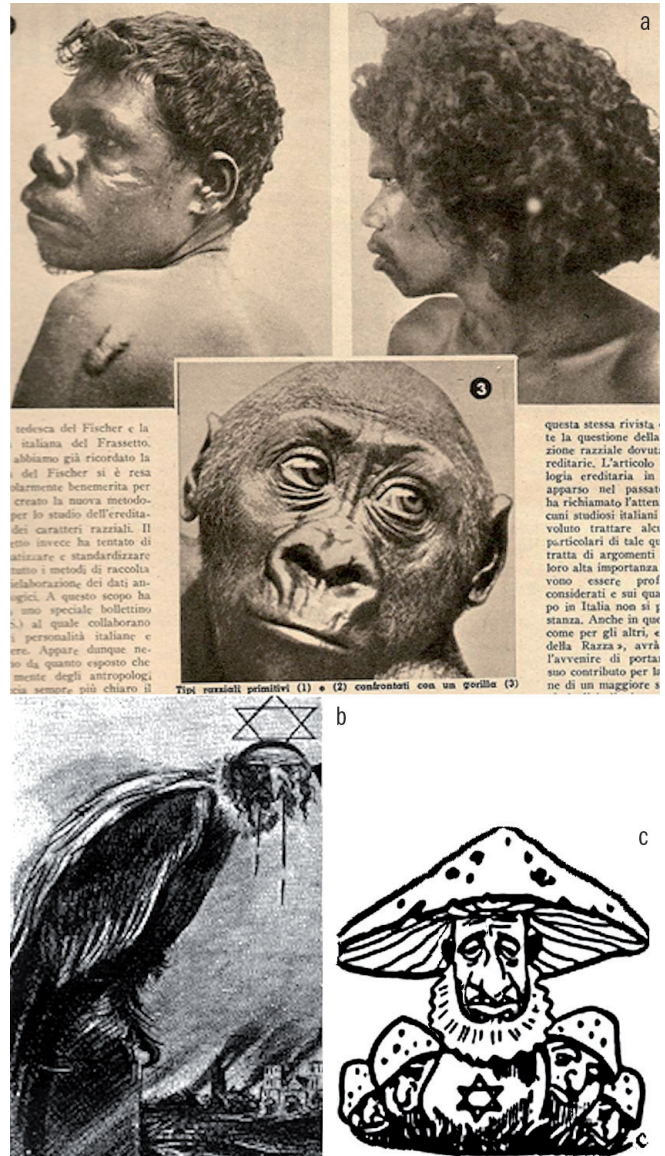


Figure 8: Fascist propaganda classified as “segregation.”



Source: a. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year IV - 1940/1941), issue 16, 8.  
 b. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year IV - 1940/1941), issue 17, 29.

Figure 9: Fascist propaganda classified as “dehumanization.”



Source: a. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year III - 1939/1940), issue 18, 15.  
 b. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year II - 1938/1939), issue 8, 32.  
 c. *La Difesa della Razza* (Rome: Editrice Tumminelli, year II - 1938/1939), issue 9, 34.



Figure 10: Lega Nord propaganda classified as “outgroup numerosness.”



Source: a. <http://www.leganordmestre.org/> (accessed February 20, 2010).  
 b. <http://www.giovaniorobici.org/categoria.asp?s=28&c=29> (accessed March 20, 2009).

Figure 11: Lega Nord propaganda classified as “trait characterization.”



Source: a. <http://leganordbasilicatamanifestievoltantini.blogspot.com/> (accessed March 20, 2009).  
 b. <http://leganordbasilicatamanifestievoltantini.blogspot.com/> (accessed April 20, 2010).

Figure 12: Lega Nord propaganda classified as “group comparison.”



Source: a. <http://www.leganordromagna.org/manifesti/campagne.php> (accessed March 27, 2010).  
 b. <http://www.leganordromagna.org/manifesti/campagne.php> (accessed March 27, 2010).

Figure 13: Lega Nord propaganda classified as “segregation.”



Source: a. [http://www.mgpvenexia.org/MGP\\_Nolam%20%20copia.jpg](http://www.mgpvenexia.org/MGP_Nolam%20%20copia.jpg) (accessed March 20, 2009).  
 b. <http://www.leganordromagna.org/manifesti/campagne.php> (accessed March 27, 2010).

Figure 15: Lega Nord propaganda classified as “using the delegitimized group to delegitimize other groups.”



Source: a. <http://www.claudiobottari.org/images> (accessed April 20, 2010).  
 b. <http://leganordbasilicatamanifestievoltantini.blogspot.com/> (accessed March 20, 2010).

Figure 14: Lega Nord propaganda classified as “political labels.”



Source: a. <http://www.robertocota.it/index.php> (accessed February 20, 2010).  
 b. [http://www.lega-lombarda.org/pag\\_01.htm](http://www.lega-lombarda.org/pag_01.htm) (accessed March 27, 2010).

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# Us versus Them in Context: Meta-Analysis as a Tool for Geotemporal Trends in Intergroup Relations

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# Us versus Them in Context: Meta-Analysis as a Tool for Geotemporal Trends in Intergroup Relations

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The increasing availability of studies from many nations offers important potential insights into group-based psychology and behavior, conflict, and violence. Nonetheless, to date, few cross-national or cultural comparisons of study findings have been made, representing a gap in our understanding of the historical causes and courses of intergroup conflict in current comparative approaches. Meta-analytic methods offer researchers the ability to combine data from studies with groups as well as across time. Our review of statistical methods available for comparative analyses in intergroup research found strengths and limitations for understanding group differences, conflict, and violence, and meta-analytic methods address these limitations by exploring potential structural-level moderators and by identifying how temporal and geographical variations may relate directly to group-based variables. Such methods can contribute to our understanding of broad structural effects on group-based variables by elucidating the mechanisms underlying them.

Decades of intergroup research have amassed an extensive knowledge base from which prominent theories in intergroup relations and processes emerged. Numerous studies have tested long-standing perspectives in intergroup relations, such as the scapegoat hypothesis (Hovland and Sears 1940) and the authoritarian personality (Adorno et al. 1950). These studies were conducted in particular regions and at particular points of time. However, there is overwhelming data suggesting that attitudes, values, and behaviors are temporally and geographically clustered (e.g., Krug and Kulhavy 1973; Park and Peterson 2010; Plaut, Markus, and Lachman 2002; Rentfrow 2010). Yet little is known about how these temporal and geographical variations relate directly to group-based discrimination and conflict. Comparative analyses using data from various sources, time periods, and geographical regions have the power to elucidate mechanisms underlying group-based conflict and violence. Meta-analysis is a powerful comparative method that meets these goals yet is at present under-utilized.

The purpose of the current paper is to discuss major methodological issues involved in comparative analysis and to

offer meta-analysis as a viable and practical solution in the study of intergroup relations. We begin by discussing the various methodological solutions and statistical tools for multi-level and longitudinal data, before presenting practical applications of meta-analytic methods to common methodological issues. We focus on issues of particular interest to intergroup comparative research: (a) whether group-based differences change over time, and (b) geographical area studied, (c) whether structural-level factors impact these patterns, and (d) how meta-analytic methods can be used to address these factors. Finally, we discuss the implications of such methods for structural-level theory and interventions. In order to understand how meta-analytic methods can enhance intergroup comparative analyses, it is first necessary to characterize the most sophisticated methods that are currently brought to bear on them.

## 1. Primary-Level Structural Comparative Analyses

Large-scale data on intergroup behavior and conflict are often multi-level or nested (e.g., groups within regions, regions within nation-states), and several advanced methods are uniquely suited to examine such data structures. For example, when intergroup differences in prejudicial attitudes

and discriminatory behavior are found, researchers may have conceptual interests in discovering whether structural-level factors explain such differences. Various analytic strategies are available using either a causal or correlational approach depending on how the independent variable is operationalized, the data structure, and research questions. For example, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) or multi-level modeling (MLM) are appropriate methods for examining changes in, say, xenophobia in relation to the emergence of conservative political parties within different nations and across separate times, when it is longitudinal (Rydgren 2003). Various statistical software programs, including HLM, Stata, SAS, and MPlus are commonly used for multi-level data analyses; the public-domain software R is increasingly used. Temporal effects add another level of complexity to structural-level analyses. In cases where there is more than one time point measured, repeated measures analysis can be conducted, considering time as another level.

Longitudinal structural equation modeling (SEM) has been extended to model intra- and intergroup variability over time and also allows estimation of causal relations among key variables and to test model fit. This strategy derives parsimonious theoretical models of causal relationships, a method useful for theory-building with temporal data. Two estimation models are available for longitudinal structural equation modeling: latent variable modeling of changes over time (McArdle 2009) and multi-group mixed-effects analyses (Ram and Grimm 2009). Such strategies could potentially be employed to examine how temporal *changes* (i.e., slope) in subordinate group members' level of prejudice predict *changes* in dominant group members' prejudicial attitudes. Finally, one of the advantages of using longitudinal structural equation modeling is its ability to deal with unbalanced or incomplete data, a common problem in longitudinal data (Judd, Kenny, and McClelland 2001).

These advanced statistical techniques allow us to fit complex causal or correlational models to available data and provide powerful ways for addressing problems arising from large quantities of longitudinal data, which are sometimes available from archives as secondary data. The main limitation of these methods that is directly relevant

for cross-group comparisons is their reliance on longitudinal study designs. Such techniques also yield findings that are limited to specific participants at particular points in time and place. Because cultures are known to change along with intergroup relations, research would benefit from data gathered across a greater span of time and place. Yet, longitudinal designs are costly and suffer threats to validity, such as those due to history (Campbell and Stanley 1963). Given these limitations, alternative models of comparative analysis should be considered, such as meta-analysis.

The wealth of available studies on many group-comparison topics may seem like a good thing. Yet, beyond a certain point, very large numbers of studies can create an “evidence monster,” too large to tame with intuitive strategies (Johnson and Boynton 2008). Meta-analyses have been conducted to synthesize a wide array of social psychological topics (Richard, Bond, and Stokes-Zoota 2003), yet, to date, relatively few have been performed to compare groups. The lack of meta-analyses in this area means that the resources that have been deployed to compare groups have been underutilized and highlights a potential knowledge gap.

## 2. Meta-Analytic Methods

Meta-analysis organizes and integrates new findings into the currently existing information, identifies consistencies and inconsistencies within the data, determines if findings are generalizable, eliminates redundancies, and improves the “reliability and accuracy of conclusions” (Mulrow 1994, 597). By integrating findings from primary-level studies, meta-analytic methods allow us to compare results across decades, cohorts, and locales. They show whether intergroup attitudes and discrimination, behavior, and conflict operate the same way at different points in history, for example. Results from primary-level studies may also relate to structural-level factors as measured by social inequality indices. With true experiments, the effect sizes in a meta-analysis gauge a causal difference – the difference between experimental conditions – across multiple studies (see Betencourt and Miller 1996; West and Thoemmes 2010). Yet, meta-analysis does not have to rely on experimental designs (Shadish 2010). Instead of creating experimental designs, meta-analytic techniques rely on past studies that have instantiated such designs to create experimental and control

groups. Moreover, in some cases, temporal meta-analyses allow researchers to determine the temporal direction of causation, thus providing a solution to the correlation-or-causation dilemmas that often plague comparative research.

*Meta-analysis for basic scientific questions.* Meta-analysis is a powerful method for combining the aforementioned statistical techniques for analyzing data across time and at various levels (Johnson and Eagly 2000; Johnson and Boynton 2008) so that direct comparisons of study effects across different studies and populations can be made (see Cohen et al. 1999). Moreover, like other analytical techniques, meta-analytic methods can answer questions about the data across multiple studies (Johnson and Eagly 2000): (1) What are the statistically significant relationships among the data? (2) What is the level of variability in the data? And (3) what are the potential moderators that explain the variability? Meta-analysis answers these questions by comparing study results on a common metric adjusted for study sample size and other biases.

Several general steps should be followed for conducting a meta-analysis (Johnson and Boynton 2008; Johnson and Eagly, 2000; see Cooper, Hedges and Valentine 2009 and Lipsey and Wilson 2001 for detailed techniques and considerations). First, the researcher should articulate a research question and well-defined hypotheses of the relationships among variables of interest. These questions and hypotheses aid the process of searching for relevant articles. Once primary studies have been retrieved and coded, effect sizes should be calculated using the appropriate statistical technique(s). At this point, the researcher fits models to the effect sizes. In meta-analysis, the average effect size is a model that gauges a comparison across a set of studies. Goodness-of-fit statistics allow us to determine whether the mean is a good depiction of the underlying effect sizes. If there is more variability than one would expect by sampling error alone, then the mean effect size is not a good description of the studies' effects and more complex models are necessary.

Meta-analysis formulates statistical models in which it is possible to explain such heterogeneity as a function of substantive and methodological characteristics of the pri-

mary studies, otherwise known as moderators (Hunter and Schmidt 2004; Johnson and Boynton 2008; Lipsey 1994). The general linear model for predicting effect sizes from moderator variables is the usual strategy for analyzing their possible association. Hedges and Olkin (1985) proposed an approach based on weighted least squares multiple regression models, a practice that has become known as "meta-regression." Primary study characteristics such as experimental design, recruitment method, age of the sample, and intervention and control group characteristics can moderate or mediate the variability sample effect sizes. Structural variables such as social inequality indices can moderate study effects, and may be included as moderators of the final effect size. Researchers should take care to correctly report meta-analytic results according to formal guidelines (e.g., QUOROM Statement, Quality Of Reporting of Meta-analyses, Moher et al. 1994); the revision of the guidelines, renamed PRISMA, or Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses, Moher et al. 2009).

Let us consider a concrete example of intergroup contact and its effects on intergroup prejudice. Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) conducted a meta-analysis to test a basic scientific question pertinent to intergroup research: Does intergroup contact reduce intergroup prejudice (Allport 1954)? Using 515 independent studies conducted across 38 countries over the past three decades, the meta-analysis tested the association between intergroup contact and prejudice, alternative explanations for effects of intergroup contact on prejudice, and effect-moderators (e.g., optimal context specified by Allport's conditions for positive contact). As predicted, intergroup contact generally resulted in prejudice reduction across various types of samples and contact settings, and effects were not attributable to alternative explanations. Contact-prejudice effects were not significantly moderated by any single contextual condition alone; rather, effects were moderated by a global indicator of optimal contact, suggesting the importance of considering Allport's optimal contact conditions altogether rather than independently. Pettigrew and Tropp's analyses (2006) provided a seminal test of an influential hypothesis in intergroup research by using accumulated data from across time and geography to advance scientific knowledge in this area.

In order to estimate the most accurate mean effect sizes and examine effects of the other moderating variables, the effect sizes derived from the primary studies must be adjusted or weighted accordingly (Lipsey and Wilson 2001). A pooled effect size across studies or a regression model needs to be weighted by the appropriate variance. Two basic models based on fixed- or random-effects assumptions may be employed to determine the weights. Fixed-effects models assume that differences between studies are due only to sampling error. In general, studies with larger sample sizes are weighted more than those with smaller samples. Fixed-effects models should be employed when researchers expect that no more than sampling error will remain after the model is applied, whether overall or in combination with moderators (Hedges and Vevea 1998; Overton 1998); strictly speaking, the results may be generalized only to conditions very similar to those observed in the underlying studies. Random-effects models, on the other hand, incorporate a source of variability in addition to sampling error, derived from the distribution of the observed phenomenon. In other words, the main assumption under random-effects model is that every individual effect size is estimating a parametric effect size with a conditional variance produced by random sampling. Findings from such models may generalize to conditions that differ from the underlying studies. When studies exhibit no more than sampling error, random effects models reduce to fixed effects models because the population variance is zero. Fixed-effects models tend to be relatively more likely to produce statistically significant results, whereas models that incorporate random effects tend to be relatively conservative, especially when studies lack homogeneity (Overton 1998).

In conducting secondary and archival data analyses, issues that arise and decisions that need to be made can affect how the data is treated (e.g., using random- versus fixed-effects model). Because meta-analysis uses secondary and/or archival data, the statistical assumptions applied to each type of data require careful consideration of the research question(s). Secondary data analysis uses data that other researchers have collected in multiple studies, while archival data analysis is based on data continuously collected over time to identify trends in a single source. Researchers must weigh the different assumptions associated with each

analysis method and decide the appropriate approach for the research questions at hand (see Hedges and Vevea 1998 for discussion). The existence of archival data in meta-analysis permits researchers to incorporate important indicators into meta-analytical data.

### **3. Applications of Meta-Analytic Methods in Intergroup Comparative Analyses**

Meta-analytic methods may be used to model explanatory mechanisms underlying changes in intergroup conflict, prejudice, and discrimination across time, space, and cultures. In the United States, population-based databases such as American National Election Studies, the General Social Survey, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reports and Hate Crime Statistics, as well as various survey polls (e.g., Gallup) can be used to examine conflict between groups geographically and historically. An added advantage of meta-analysis is that it allows structural-level moderators such as social inequality indices to be included in the model. Moderation by structural-level factors is often invaluablely informative in accounting for group differences across time and space. For moderation analyses, researchers may consider structural features derived from the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Reports, the World Bank's World Development Indicators, the Schwartz Values Survey, and the Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset (<http://ciri.binghamton.edu/index.asp>). The Schwartz Values Survey dataset provides an overview of basic intercultural values from over 60,000 individuals in 64 nations across the world in samples taken as early as 1988, with further samples routinely added to the database. The CIRI database contains yearly measures of fifteen internationally recognized human rights from 195 nations, commencing with 1981 and updated annually. Coupled with comparative analyses of regional effects, meta-analytic methods offer important insights into how prejudicial attitudes are created and sustained.

#### **3.1. Temporal Trends and Cohort Effects**

In temporal analysis of prejudicial attitudes, researchers should test whether significant trends in the data over time reflect true change in prejudice or cohort differences. Differences between birth cohorts are driven by historical events, and by differences in cultural values and



worldviews, formal education, and peer-group socialization (Ryder 1965; Stewart and Healy 1989; Twenge 2008). Reductions in prejudice with increasing age are related to changes in individuals, while reductions in prejudice with increasing time (or cohorts) are related to societal or cultural changes.

Both longitudinal and cross-sectional studies have been used to examine temporal trends (Woodruff and Birren 1972). Longitudinal studies identify changes due to maturation, while cross-sectional studies identify changes due to both maturation and generational differences (Costa and McCrae 1982; Schaie 1965). Thus, cross-sectional studies often confound age and cohort effects (Costa and McCrae 1982; Schaie 1965; Twenge and Campbell 2001; Woodruff and Birren 1972), making it difficult to determine the specific effects of age and cohort. Studies that find age differences in group-based prejudice and discrimination cannot be generalized if the studies were conducted at a particular time and did not examine potential cohort differences (Twenge 2001).

Tracking temporal trends is a key component for understanding intergroup conflict. In a meta-analysis that examined the association between intergroup contact and conflict, Hall, Matz, and Wood (2010) found that the relationship between religiosity and racism decreased over time between 1964 and 2008. In this case, tracking trends over time helped identify a variable that contributed to racism. Furthermore, numerous studies (e.g., Avery et al. 2007; Hicks and Lee 2006; Loftus 2001) have shown that attitudes toward gays and lesbians have become more positive since the 1970s. Tracking temporal trends is a key component for understanding intergroup conflict as it can serve as a clue that relations are improving or degrading and can aid in identifying factors that drive these trends.

To examine cohort differences more rigorously, researchers should compare the same age group at more than one time (Donnellan and Trzesniewski 2009), a challenge that cross-temporal meta-analyses can address (Twenge 2001, 2008; Twenge et al. 2008). Cross-temporal meta-analyses examine birth cohort differences by comparing individuals of the same age at different time points and reporting the

relation between mean scores of a measured characteristic (such as ingroup and outgroup attitudes) and the year of measurement. Cross-temporal analyses should include examinations of individual-level and aggregated data to determine if age, cohort, or an interaction of age and cohort are associated with changes in prejudicial attitudes (Trzesniewski and Donnellan 2010). For example, Malahy and colleagues (2009) predicted that increasing levels of income inequality disparities would cause undergraduate students to maintain (and even strengthen) their belief in a just world (Rubin and Peplau 1975). The results of the cross-temporal meta-analysis support the authors' hypothesis. Over the 34-year period of analysis, increases in income inequalities were associated with an increase in the number of individuals who reported a strong belief that the world was just and that people received the outcomes that they deserved (Malahy et al. 2009).

### 3.2. Regional Comparisons

An array of nationally representative data is available to examine intergroup conflict. Several researchers have used this approach to understand how attitudes toward gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals are related to hate crimes (Alden and Parker 2005; Avery et al. 2007; Hicks and Lee 2006; Loftus 2001). For example, individuals who live in the South Central region of the United States are more likely to hold negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians (Loftus 2001), which may be related to the incidence of hate crime. Meta-analysis could discover whether or this trend remains valid across studies and in other regions of the United States, or if the finding is unique to a few studies.

Different geographical regions foster different political, cultural, and social climates that may affect intergroup conflict. For example, political ideology is a major force behind social dominance orientation (SDO; Pratto et al. 1994) and right-wing authoritarianism (RWA, Altemeyer 1981, 1988, 1998), which contribute to racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination (Sibley, Robertson, and Wilson 2006). Also, group-based conflict may differ depending which region of a country is being examined. In Sri Lanka, Schaller and Abeyesinghe (2006) found that the Sinhalese are less willing to engage in conflict resolution

and more likely to stereotype the Tamils in regions where the Sinhalese comprises the majority group than where they are the minority group.

One problem in regional comparative studies is non-random missing data from regions where frequent intergroup conflicts and violence occur. Data from countries with high risks and greater violence are less likely to appear in data archives and may therefore be inadvertently omitted from studies that focus on these sources. However, their risk and violence are assessed in international datasets such as CIRI with representative measures suggest possible reasons for missing data. Thus, they need not be completely omitted from such research.

#### 4. Limitations of Meta-Analysis

Meta-analysis is a method to synthesize extant research, and as such, suffers from much the same limitations as primary studies. First, the results of a meta-analysis depend entirely on the quality of available primary studies (Coyne et al. 2009; Eysenck 1978, Wilson and Rachman 1983). As such, it is important to evaluate methodological quality when selecting studies, and to include any estimation of selection criteria in order to gauge its possible impact on the final results. Second, although meta-analysis may be employed in hypothesis-testing, we caution researchers against making causal statements on the basis of meta-analysis. If the meta-analysis includes only primary studies employing true experiments, then the effect size is gauging a causal difference (Bettencourt and Miller 1996; Johnson and Eagly 2000); even here, moderator values are likely to be correlational, qualifying any findings.

Often, limitations to meta-analysis are related to misapplication of the method or its basic assumptions (Ioannidis and Lau 2001). Although meta-analytic methods are often criticized as combining “apples and oranges,” or comparing phenomena from qualitatively different studies, a meta-analytic perspective would turn the question into a moderator (e.g., Cooper et al. 2009; Johnson et al. 2007). For example, do studies assessing social dominance orientation (Pratto et al. 1994) with various ethnic groups obtain the same results when one ethnic group is compared to another?

#### 5. Conclusion

Human societies comprise various components that interact over time at multiple levels of organization. As such, a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to understanding intergroup conflict may include modeling of multi-level factors and interrelations that underlie human group-based processes (Diez-Roux 2007). Such an approach may consider incorporating qualitative reviews to inform or explicate meta-analytic findings; qualitative methods offer a richer and more comprehensive understanding of quantitative findings. Longitudinal designs are not the only designs by which researchers may examine temporal changes. Cumulative sources of data are available today, including, for example, indices of inequality and development (e.g., Gini coefficient, Human Development Index), prejudicial attitudes (e.g., the Eurobarometer), and frequency of war and violence (e.g., from the World Health Organization) from regions all over the world across various time points. Meta-analysis of these data provides an alternative approximation to longitudinal designs.

There are several important methodological issues associated with analyzing trends using archival and secondary data, the most obvious being temporal dependency. Statistical models must be correctly specified in order to account for data dependency (Kenny and Judd 1986). Multi-level data structures, which provide insights into the level at which changes occur, also require specialized methods for treating nested data (Bryk and Raudenbush 1987; Kenny, Kashy, and Bolger 1998). Methodological advances in analytical strategies such as multi-level modeling and time-series analyses allow researchers to answer questions pertaining to time effects and higher-level socio-structural factors. Meta-analytic methods offer similar solutions. Their strength over other quantitative methods lies in their routine ability to examine whether group comparisons vary across decades, cohorts, and generations, something that is extremely difficult using primary-data-collection strategies. In other words, meta-analysis allows moderator analyses of temporal data. The use of this strategy allows researchers to examine broader, higher-level moderators of intergroup phenomena such as social inequality indices. This feature is critically important for advancing knowledge and informing structural interventions and policies.

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# Are Moral Disengagement, Neutralization Techniques, and Self-Serving Cognitive Distortions the Same? Developing a Unified Scale of Moral Neutralization of Aggression

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# Are Moral Disengagement, Neutralization Techniques, and Self-Serving Cognitive Distortions the Same? Developing a Unified Scale of Moral Neutralization of Aggression

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Can the three concepts of *Neutralization Techniques*, *Moral Disengagement*, and *Secondary Self-Serving Cognitive Distortions* be conceived theoretically and empirically as capturing the same cognitive processes and thus be measured with one single scale of *Moral Neutralization*? First, we show how the different approaches overlap conceptually. Second, in Study 1, we verify that four scales derived from the three conceptions of *Moral Neutralization* are correlated in such a way that they can be conceived as measuring the same phenomenon. Third, building on the results of Study 1, we derive a unified scale of *Moral Neutralization* which specifically focuses on the neutralization of aggression and test it in a large general population sample of preadolescents (Study 2). Confirmatory factor analyses suggest a good internal consistency and acceptable cross-gender factorial invariance. Correlation analyses with related behavioral and cognitive constructs corroborate the scale's criterion and convergent validity. In the final section we present a possible integration of *Moral Neutralization* in a broader framework of crime causation.

In the past decade the concept of moral disengagement has received increased attention, notably in the field of child and youth development (Hyde, Shaw, and Moilanen 2010; Hymel, Rocke-Henderson, and Bonanno 2005; Paciello et al. 2008). In particular, moral disengagement has been examined as a possible predictor of aggression and delinquency and turns out to be consistently associated with both (Bandura, Barbaranelli, and Caprara 1996; Pelton et al. 2004). Alongside moral disengagement, which was developed relatively recently within the framework of social learning theory (Bandura, 1986; Bandura et al., 1996), other similar concepts were introduced independently in related fields of research. Both the criminological theory of neutralization techniques, formulated back in 1957 by Sykes and Matza, and the notion of self-serving cognitive distortions introduced by Gibbs and colleagues (e.g. Barriga and Gibbs, 1996; Gibbs, Potter, and Goldstein, 1995) appear to describe cognitive processes that are comparable to moral disengagement. These processes assist to self-justify acts that are in conflict with a person's moral beliefs and self-concept and are thus key mechanisms for understanding aggressive and more generally deviant behavior of subjects that view themselves as generally rule-abiding and complying with common moral standards.

Demonstrating conceptual and empirical convergence among concepts developed in related fields of research serves to eliminate unnecessary duplication and to reduce complexity by unifying concepts and terminology. The present research has three interrelated aims in that direction: First, to investigate whether moral disengagement, neutralization techniques, and self-serving cognitive distortions conceptually and empirically capture the same cognitive processes. Should this be the case, the second aim is to develop a unified measure suited for preadolescents and youth that builds on all three concepts and specifically focuses on the neutralization of aggression and violence, and to examine this measure's scale reliability and validity. The third aim is to explore to what extent the new unified concept – labeled *moral neutralization* – can be integrated into a broader framework of crime and violence causation that specifically conceives violence as moral action, i.e., Situational Action Theory (Wikström and Treiber 2009).

We begin by describing and comparing the three theoretical concepts and examining to what extent they converge *conceptually*. Then we review four selected scales derived from moral disengagement, neutralization techniques, and self-

servicing cognitive distortions and test whether they intersect *empirically* in such a way that they can be regarded as essentially measuring the same. For that purpose we use data from a sample of preadolescents surveyed to pilot and refine a moral neutralization questionnaire in German (Study 1). Next, on the basis of these data, we construct a composite scale derived from the four scales. Finally, in Study 2, we examine the reliability and validity of the scale developed in Study 1 using a large sample of 11-year olds within the prospective longitudinal study *z-proso* (Eisner, Malti, and Ribeaud forthcoming; Eisner and Ribeaud 2005). Validity tests include correlations with well-established behavioral and cognitive outcomes in the domain of aggression and antisocial behavior and also with constructs related to core propositions of Situational Action Theory (Wikström and Treiber 2009).

### 1. Conceptual Convergence of Neutralization Techniques, Moral Disengagement, and Secondary Self-Serving Biases?

In essence, the three concepts of neutralization techniques, moral disengagement, and self-serving cognitive distortions, which are, in the following, generically grouped under the term moral neutralization, address the same key theoretical question: Through which cognitive processes can an individual who is generally rule-abiding and compliant with moral standards minimize cognitive dissonance, threats to self-concept, and experiences of moral self-sanction when he or she transgresses those standards?

The first authors who tried to answer this question were two American sociologists, Sykes and Matza (1957). Their theoretical effort was driven by their disagreement with Cohen's subculture theory (1955), which understands delinquency as a working-class youth reaction to perceived deprivation. Sykes and Matza's starting point was the simple observation that many delinquents have a middle-class background and moral beliefs as well as basic normative orientations no different to those of non-delinquents. This led them to seek the cognitive processes necessary to overcome the incongruence between internalized norms and beliefs and delinquent behavior. Such processes are viewed as *preceding* a particular delinquent act (Sykes and Matza 1957, 666) and are therefore conceived as being proximally involved in the causation of crime and violence. These

processes correspond to the five techniques of neutralization (Table 1):

*Denial of responsibility* denotes a technique by which "the delinquent can define himself as lacking responsibility for his deviant actions" (667), i.e., the delinquent externalizes the locus of control. For example, a violent interaction might be framed as an accident, as provoked by the victim, or as the product of peer pressure.

Through *denial of injury* perpetrators rationalize the consequences of their acts as not really harmful to the victim. For example, the psychological consequences of verbal bullying might be discounted.

*Denial of the victim* occurs when "the delinquent accepts the responsibility for his deviant actions and is willing to admit that his actions involve injury" (668). Here, the role of the victim is redefined, for example conceiving the victim as a wrongdoer who deserved a lesson.

*Condemnation of the condemners* involves shifting attention from the delinquent act to the motives and behavior of those who disapprove such acts (668), for example, portraying authorities as hypocritical or corrupt.

Finally, Sykes and Matza describe the *appeal to higher loyalties* as follows. "Fifth and last, internal and external social controls may be neutralized by sacrificing the demands of the larger society for the demands of the smaller social groups to which the delinquent belongs such as the sibling pair, the gang, or the friendship clique" (669).

More than three decades after the first formulation of a moral neutralization framework by Sykes and Matza "no less a figure than Albert Bandura ... developed an important cognitive theory of 'moral disengagement'" (Maruna and Copes 2005, 6). Like Sykes and Matza, Bandura starts from the observation that "people do not ordinarily engage in reprehensible conduct until they have justified to themselves the rightness of their actions" (Bandura et al. 1996, 365), stressing that mechanisms of moral disengagement *precede* immoral acts, and are thus involved in their immediate causation.

**Table 1: Overview of concepts of moral neutralization**

Cognitive Mechanism	Neutralization Techniques (Sykes and Matza 1957)	Moral Disengagement (Bandura et al. 1996)	Secondary Self-Serving Cognitive Distortions (Barriga and Gibbs 1996)
Cognitive restructuring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Appeal to higher loyalties</li> <li>· Euphemistic language (implied)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Moral justification</li> <li>· Euphemistic language</li> <li>· Advantageous comparison</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Minimizing/mislabeling (partially overlap)</li> </ul>
Minimizing own agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Denial of responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Displacement of responsibility</li> <li>· Diffusion of responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Blaming others (partially overlap)</li> </ul>
Disregarding/distorting negative impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Denial of injury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Disregarding consequences</li> <li>· Distorting consequences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Minimizing/mislabeling</li> </ul>
Blaming/dehumanizing the victim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Denial of the victim</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Dehumanization</li> <li>· Attribution of blame</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Minimizing/mislabeling (partially overlap)</li> <li>· Blaming others (partially overlap)</li> <li>· Assuming the worst (partially overlap)</li> </ul>
Condemnation of condemner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Condemnation of condemner</li> </ul>		
Assuming the worst			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Assuming the worst</li> </ul>

Comparison of the mechanisms of moral disengagement (Bandura et al. 1996) with Sykes and Matza’s categories shows a high degree of overlap (Table 1). The first set of disengagement practices labeled *cognitive restructuring* aims to reframe reprehensible conduct as socially acceptable behavior. Bandura and colleagues (1996, 365) differentiate three mechanisms of restructuring: By “*moral justification* detrimental conduct is made personally and socially acceptable by portraying it in the service of valued social or moral purposes” (365). This definition obviously encompasses the *appeal to higher loyalties* described by Sykes and Matza. The second mechanism, *euphemistic language*, is viewed as a “tool masking reprehensible activities or even conferring a respectable status upon them” (365). Although Sykes and Matza fail to mention this mechanism explicitly, euphemization is implicit in their theory. The many terms placed in quotes in their original paper suggest that neutralization is implemented through euphemization.<sup>1</sup> The third mechanism of cognitive restructuring consists in “exploiting *advantageous comparisons* with more repre-

hensible activities” (365) to neutralize injurious conduct or make it to appear of little consequence.<sup>2</sup>

The second set of disengagement practices encompasses techniques that aim to *displace or diffuse responsibility* for reprehensible acts. In perfect congruence with Sykes and Matza’s notion of *denial of responsibility* this implies externalizing the locus of control for socially sanctioned behavior. Typically, people will “view their actions as springing from social pressures or dictates of others” (365) or group decision-making will be used as a means to cognitively diffuse personal responsibility. A third set of disengagement techniques is aimed at *disregarding or distorting the consequences* of antisocial behavior. Note the striking congruence with Sykes and Matza’s notion of *denial of injury*.

The last set of disengagement practices relates to a biased perception of the victim. Bandura and colleagues (1996) mention two types of victim-related mechanisms of disengagement. *Dehumanization of the victim* “divests people of

<sup>1</sup> E.g., “...deviant acts are ‘accidents’ ... Vandalism ... may be defined ... as ‘mischievous’ ...” (Sykes and Matza 1957, 667).

<sup>2</sup> Producing conceptual overlap with the mechanism of *distorting consequences* (see next paragraph).

human qualities or attributes bestial qualities to them. Once dehumanized, they are no longer viewed as persons with feelings, hopes, and concerns” (366), while “by *attribution of blame*, people view themselves as faultless victims driven to injurious conduct by forcible provocation [by the victim]” (366).<sup>3</sup> Obviously, these two mechanisms largely coincide with the neutralization technique of *denial of the victim*.

Overall, moral disengagement and neutralization techniques appear to be broadly congruent. The main differences are the more elaborate concept of *moral justification* compared to the narrower concept of the *appeal to higher loyalties*, the lack of a counterpart to *advantageous comparisons* in neutralization theory, and *condemnation of the condemners* in the moral disengagement framework.

The third framework of moral neutralization is rooted in the concept of cognitive distortions or thinking errors (Ellis 1962; Beck 1963) and was developed in the context of young offender rehabilitation by Gibbs and colleagues (Barriga and Gibbs 1996; Barriga et al. 2000; Gibbs et al. 1995). In contrast to Ellis’s and Beck’s focus on *self-debasing* distortions, Gibbs and colleagues are interested in *self-serving* distortions. They distinguish between primary and secondary distortions: “Primary cognitive distortions are self-centered attitudes, thoughts, and beliefs” (Barriga and Gibbs 1996, 334) and involve “according status to one’s views, expectations, needs, rights, immediate feelings and desires to such a degree that the legitimate views, etc. of others (or even one’s own long-term best interest) are scarcely considered or are disregarded altogether” (334).<sup>4</sup> Secondary distortions serve to support the primary distortions and “have been characterized as pre- or post-transgression rationalizations that serve to ‘neutralize’ conscience or guilt” (334). Like neutralization techniques and moral disengagement, Gibbs and colleagues conceive cognitive distortions as potentially

preceding antisocial action. As shown below, their account of secondary cognitive distortions (Table 1) shows strong similarities with the other two moral neutralization frameworks.

*Blaming others* comprises “misattributing blame to outside sources, especially: another person, a group, or a momentary aberration (...); or misattributing blame for one’s victimization or other misfortune to innocent others” (Barriga and Gibbs 1996, 334). This distortion overlaps with disengagement mechanisms such as *diffusion and displacement of responsibility* and *attribution of blame*.

The second type of distortion, *minimizing/mislabeling*, consists in “depicting antisocial behavior as causing no real harm, or as being acceptable or even admirable; or referring to others with a belittling or dehumanizing label” (334). Obviously, this concept shares much in common with Bandura’s notions of *moral justification*, *euphemistic language*, *advantageous comparisons*, *disregarding or distorting consequences*, and *dehumanization*.

Finally, the notion of *assuming the worst*, which consists in “gratuitously attributing hostile intentions to others, considering a worst-case scenario for a social situation as if it were inevitable; or assuming that improvement is impossible in one’s own or others’ behavior” (334) partly overlaps with Bandura’s concept of *attribution of blame*, but also extends the set of possible neutralization mechanisms.<sup>5</sup>

Overall, our review shows a high degree of congruence among the processes of moral neutralization described in the three frameworks of moral disengagement, neutralization techniques, and self-serving cognitive distortions, thus justifying further enquiry into the empirical overlap between measures derived from them (for a further discus-

<sup>3</sup> This mechanism consists in externalizing the locus of control by locating it in the victim. Accordingly, it represents a special case of displacement of responsibility. Note also that Bandura conceives the construct of hostile attribution of intent (Crick and Dodge 1994) as a possible mechanism of attribution of blame (366). The problem of conceiving hostile attribution as a mechanism of moral disengagement is discussed in the last section of the present paper.

<sup>4</sup> Criminologists will notice the striking similarity between the definition of primary cognitive distortions and Gottfredson and Hirschi’s concept of self-control (1990, 89), and particularly with the two constituting dimensions of self-centeredness and impulsivity (i.e., a “here and now” orientation and the inability to defer gratification).

<sup>5</sup> The closeness of this notion to hostile attribution of intent (Crick and Dodge 1994) is not unproblematic in our view, since it tends to conflate moral rationalization with biased information processing.



sion of theoretical approaches in the field of moral neutralization, see Maruna and Copes 2005).

## 2. Measurement Instruments for Neutralization Techniques, Moral Disengagement, and Self-Serving Cognitive Distortions

All three moral neutralization frameworks have been empirically tested. Some instruments were designed to measure post-hoc neutralization of offences committed by research subjects (e.g., Rogers and Buffalo 1974) while others assess endorsement of neutralizations for selected scenarios of antisocial behavior (e.g., Ball 1966). Most instruments in this field, however, consist of conventional item batteries designed to capture different mechanisms of moral neutralization using Likert scales. Such instruments have the advantage that they are not limited to post-hoc justifications and thus allow offenders to be compared with non-offenders and measurements to be used to predict later offending. Given appropriate wording, these instruments are easier to understand than a scenario-based approach (e.g., Shields and Whitehall 1994) which is an important issue in studies with children.

The preselection of scales for the *z-proso* study was guided by three requirements. First, the scales of interest had to be related to one of the three moral neutralization frameworks presented above. Second, they should measure neutralization of aggressive behavior. Third, they needed to be suited for a preadolescent sample, and later a youth sample. Four scales were selected using these criteria: techniques of neutralization of violence were measured with a brief instrument used for all age groups in the Denver Youth Study (i.e., from age 7 to at least age 20) (Huizinga et al. 2003). In the following, this scale is referred to as NT1. Moral disengagement was assessed with two scales: Scale MD1 is the original 32-item scale designed by Bandura and colleagues (1996, 374) and first used in a general population sample of 10- to 15-year-old Italian adolescent ( $M=11.8$ ) of which an abbreviated version was used by Pelton and colleagues (2004) in an African-American community sample aged between 9 and 14 years ( $M=11.4$ ). Both versions suggest a one-dimensional factor structure of moral disengagement, i.e., the mecha-

nisms of moral disengagement tend to come together in the same persons (Bandura et al. 1996, 367; Pelton et al. 2004, 36), and accordingly both yield high internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha=.82$ ). The second moral disengagement measure (MD2) specifically examines moral disengagement related to school bullying (Hymel, Rocke-Henderson, and Bonanno 2005) and was tested in a Canadian upper and middle class sample of 8th-, 9th-, and 10th-graders. Out of 51 items, 13 were identified as indicators of the four main mechanisms of moral disengagement (Table 1, column 1, rows 1–4). Factor analysis showed a single factor of moral disengagement, again suggesting that the different mechanisms of moral disengagement tend to converge. The resulting scale yielded a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .81. Self-serving cognitive distortions were measured with an adapted version of the "How I think" questionnaire (HIT). Unlike the original questionnaire by Gibbs and colleagues (2001), which also encompasses non-violent problem behavior, the adapted Dutch version (van der Velden 2008) specifically focuses on aggression and bullying among children and adolescents of both genders ( $M=11.4$  years). Whereas van der Velden (2008) does not report pertinent analyses, two studies (one American by Barriga and Gibbs 1996, 339; the other Dutch by Nas, Brugman, and Koops 2008, 186) that use the original HIT scale in mixed samples of incarcerated and general population male youth ( $16 < M < 17$  years) report strong correlations among the three secondary self-serving cognitive distortions (between .71 and .78), again suggesting a one-dimensional latent construct of moral neutralization.

Generally, measures of moral neutralization correlate with aggressive and delinquent behavior. For example, a study using a neutralization techniques scale similar to the one used in the Denver study reports correlations of  $r=.40^{**}$  and  $r=.41^{**6}$  between neutralization techniques and violence in the American National Youth Survey (Agnew 1994, 580). Bandura and colleagues (1996, 369) report correlations between  $.13^{***7}$  and  $.56^{***}$  between moral disengagement and aggression, and  $.20^*$  and  $.45^{***}$  for delinquency. Pelton and colleagues (2004, 36) report similar patterns in their

6  $^{***}p < .001$ ;  $^{**}p < .01$ ;  $^*p < .05$ ;  $^{\#}p > .05$ ;  $^{\#}$  not available  
7 The correlation of  $r=.06^{***}$  reported for teacher-rated aggression in Table 1 is erroneous

and should read  $.13^{***}$  (personal communication from Claudio Barbarenelli, 2 July 2010).

sample while Hymel and colleagues (2005, 38) report a highly significant association between bullying and moral disengagement ( $F(2, 459)=69.57^{***}$ ). Regarding secondary self-serving cognitive distortions, Barriga and Gibbs (1996, 339) report correlations between  $.23^{**}$  and  $.38^{***}$  with the Nye Short Self-Report Delinquency Questionnaire and between  $.43^{***}$  and  $.55^{***}$  with the Externalizing Scale of the Youth Self-Report. Similarly, Nas and colleagues (2008, 186) report coefficients between  $.20^*$  and  $.29^{**}$  for correlations among self-serving cognitive distortions and the Teacher Report Form and of  $.20^{n.a.}$  and  $.37^{n.a.}$  between self-serving cognitive distortions and the Reactive-Proactive Aggression Questionnaire.

### 3. Study 1: Empirical Overlap and Composite Measure

Study 1 set out to explore the empirical overlap of the different measures of moral neutralization of aggression and violence and, if possible, to derive a composite measure based on the best-fitting items of the different scales.

#### 3.1. Participants and Data Collection

The 142 participants were recruited in seven 4th- and 5th-grade classes in middle-class suburbs near the city of Zurich. Parental consent was obtained for all participants in advance. All contacted parents and children consented to participate. The mean age of the participants was  $M=10.5$  years ( $SD=0.68$ ), 52.5 percent were male. The surveys were conducted during regular school hours. Participants were guided through the written questionnaire by two researchers. All questionnaires were completed within 45 minutes.

#### 3.2. Measures

First, the 67 items of the four scales of interest (NT1, MD1, MD2, HIT) were screened and preselected for the goals of the study. The items retained for Study 1 are shown in

Table 2. Ten items of the MD1 scale were eliminated: As suggested by Pelton and colleagues (2004), the four *euphemistic language* items were removed because they are inappropriate for children. The other items were removed either because they related to behavioral domains other than violence and aggression or because they turned out to (almost) duplicate items in other scales.<sup>8</sup> Three items were removed from the MD2 scale because of inverse wording or translation problems.

The HIT scale used for the present study is a Dutch adaptation of the original scale that focuses on aggression and verbal bullying (van der Velden 2008). From this 28-item scale we discarded items related to *primary* self-serving cognitive distortions and social desirability as well as five filler items. Two items in the *blaming others* subscale were removed because they presumably measure hostile attribution of intent (Crick and Dodge 1994).<sup>9</sup> Three other items were removed because they strongly overlapped with items from other scales or because of translation problems.

Finally, one item in the NT1 scale was deleted because it overlapped with another.

The 31 items retained from preselection were translated into German (see Table 2 for the English wordings) and used in a paper-and-pencil questionnaire in the Study 1 sample.

#### 3.3. Analysis

Correlational and exploratory factor analyses (EFA) were used.<sup>10</sup> First, all items of a given scale were forced to load on one single factor (Table 2, column 7). To improve the measurement quality of the scale, items with standardized loadings above  $.4$  were selected and their standardized scores were averaged.<sup>11</sup> Then the four scales were correlated with each other and factor analyzed to test the empirical overlap

<sup>8</sup> This implies that the correlations between the scales reported below would likely have been stronger if overlapping items had been retained. Hence, the coefficients presented in the following can be viewed as conservative estimates of the correlations that would have resulted between the full-length original scales.

<sup>9</sup> E.g., “People are always trying to start fights with me.” Some authors even explicitly use these items as indicators of hostile attribution bias (Pornari and Woods 2010).

<sup>10</sup> Although confirmatory factor analyses would have been the method of choice, preliminary tests suggested that both the overall sample size and the ratio of the number of parameter estimates to the number of cases were too small to allow proper pa-

rameter estimation (see e.g., Bentler and Chou 1987; Hair et al. 2006; Jackson 2003).

<sup>11</sup> The criterion of  $.4$  is somewhat stricter than the one of  $.3$  typically recommended (Bryant and Yarnold 1995) to reduce the number of items for the final scale.

(Table 3). Finally, all preselected indicators of the four scales were forced to load on a single factor (Table 2, column 8). Only items with a loading above .4 were selected for the final integrated moral neutralization scale used in Study 2.

To prevent case deletions in the factor analyses and in the computation of the sum scores all missing values in the items were imputed using the EM imputation algorithm (SPSS 2009). The number of missing cases varied between 0 and 14 per indicator (Table 2).

### 3.4. Results

First, we examine the properties of each individual scale. The first factor extracted from the ten MD1 items accounts for 21.2 percent of total variance (eigenvalue 2.12). With eigenvalues of 1.54, and 1.17 respectively, the next two factors also account for a substantial share of the total variance. However, the loading structure in the three-factor solution (not shown) does not suggest meaningful factors. Since all items in the one-factor solution load positively and significantly on the single factor, the hypothesis of one-dimensionality is supported by the data. However, only four items meet the strict criterion of a loading above .4 (Table 2, Item ID 1–4) and were kept for scale construction. The

resulting scale yields an internal consistency of Cronbach's  $\alpha=.61$  (Table 3).

Factor analysis of the ten MD2 items shows a clearer scree pattern (Cattell and Vogelmann 1977). The first factor accounts for 32.1 percent of the variance, the corresponding eigenvalue of 3.21 being much higher than the eigenvalue of the next two factors (1.18, 1.04). Moreover, all items of the scale load with at least .4 on the single-factor solution, thus clearly suggesting monodimensionality. The resulting scale yields a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .76. Similarly, the first factor extracted from the HIT items accounts for 32.7 percent of total variance, and the corresponding eigenvalue of 2.62 is again much higher than the eigenvalue of the next two factors (1.12, 1.02), again evidencing a clear scree pattern. All items of this scale also load positively on the single-factor solution. One item had a loading below .4 (ID 28) and was consequently excluded. The derived 7-item scale yields a reliability of .71. Finally, the first factor extracted from the three NT1 items explains 51.4 percent of the variance (eigenvalue 1.54) while the other two factors have eigenvalues below 1 (0.85, 0.61). All three items load with at least .6 on the first factor. The derived scale yields a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .52.

**Table 2: Item wordings, descriptive statistics, and factor loadings in Study 1**

Item wording	Generic domain	Scale	N	M	S.D.	Single-factor loading on original scale	Single-factor loading of selected items on total scale	Item ID
It is alright to fight to protect your friends.	Cog. Restruct.	MD1	138	2.51	1.03	.742	.578	1
It is alright to fight when your group's honour is threatened.	Cog. Restruct.	MD1	128	1.75	0.91	.724	.630	2
If someone acts like a jerk, it is ok to treat them badly.	Victim	MD1	141	1.52	0.75	.663	.612	3
It is unfair to blame a child who had only a small part in the harm caused by a group.	Minim. Agency	MD1	136	2.93	1.29	.410	.137	4
A kid who only suggests breaking rules should not be blamed if other kids go ahead and do it.	Minim. Agency	MD1	137	1.88	1.03	.350	--	5
If a group decides together to do something harmful it is unfair to blame any kid in the group for it.	Minim. Agency	MD1	140	3.07	1.28	.332	--	6
Insults among children do not hurt anyone.	Neg. Impact	MD1	137	1.55	0.85	.254	--	7
Teasing someone does not really hurt them.	Neg. Impact	MD1	137	1.54	0.87	.234	--	8
A kid in a gang should not be blamed for the trouble the gang causes.	Minim. Agency	MD1	135	2.84	1.14	.230	--	9
Children do not mind being teased because it shows interest in them.	Neg. Impact	MD1	135	1.54	0.84	.170	--	10
Bullying can be a good way to solve problems.	Neg. Impact	MD2	142	1.34	0.68	.702	.574	11
It's okay to join in when someone you don't like is being bullied.	Cog. Restruct.	MD2	138	1.51	0.78	.656	.599	12
Sometimes it's okay to bully other people.	Cog. Restruct.	MD2	141	1.74	0.88	.649	.622	13
Some kids get bullied because they deserve it.	Victim	MD2	136	1.92	1.02	.634	.570	14
Bullying is just a normal part of being a kid.	Cog. Restruct.	MD2	137	1.89	0.86	.556	.471	15
Some kids need to be picked on just to teach them a lesson.	Neg. Impact	MD2	139	1.65	0.83	.550	.564	16
In my group of friends, bullying is okay.	Cog. Restruct.	MD2	140	1.34	0.59	.483	.471	17
It's okay to pick on losers.	Victim	MD2	142	1.18	0.53	.482	.294	18
Most students who get bullied bring it on themselves.	Victim	MD2	138	2.02	0.86	.475	.458	19
Getting bullied helps to make people tougher.	Neg. Impact	MD2	140	1.81	1.05	.402	.427	20
You should hurt people first, before they hurt you.	Assuming Worst	HIT	138	1.58	0.93	.720	.686	21
People sometimes need to be bashed.	Cog. Restruct.	HIT	139	1.65	0.93	.706	.663	22
Sometimes you have to hurt people if you have a problem with them.	Minim. Agency	HIT	141	1.73	0.82	.667	.605	23
Only a coward would ever walk away from a fight.	Cog. Restruct.	HIT	139	1.91	1.08	.662	.592	24
It's ok to slag other people off, they slag you off too.	Assuming Worst	HIT	141	1.72	0.87	.574	.568	25
It's ok to slag other people off. It doesn't really hurt anybody.	Cog. Restruct.	HIT	142	1.38	0.72	.464	.388	26
If people don't cooperate with me, it's not my fault if someone gets hurt.	Minim. Agency	HIT	131	2.05	1.17	.404	.381	27
If you don't push people around, you will always get picked on.	Assuming Worst	HIT	136	1.71	0.84	.111	--	28
It's ok to get in a physical fight with someone if you have to stand up to protect your rights.	Cog. Restruct.	NT	137	1.82	0.94	.803	.668	29
It's ok to get in a physical fight with someone if they hit you first.	Minim. Agency	NT	137	2.08	1.04	.711	.508	30
It's ok to hurt someone if you didn't mean to or it was an accident.	Minim. Agency	NT	139	2.12	1.01	.627	.418	31

Note: Standardized factor loadings below .4 are shaded in grey. Item IDs of items omitted from the final scale are also shaded in grey.

**Table 3: Correlations between different scales of moral neutralization (Study 1)**

	Correlations			Factor loading	M	S.D.	Alpha
	1	2	3				
1 MD1				.79	0.00	0.68	.61
2 MD2	.51			.84	0.00	0.56	.76
3 HIT	.56	.77		.90	0.00	0.60	.71
4 NT1	.59	.53	.64	.82	0.00	0.72	.52

As Table 3 shows, the four mean scales derived from the MD1, MD2, HIT, and NT scales are strongly correlated with each other ( $.51^{***} \leq r \leq .77^{***}$ ). Accordingly, factorial analysis of these mean scales suggests a one-factor solution, the first factor explaining 70.1 percent of the variance (eigenvalue 2.8) while the other three factors have eigenvalues below 0.6. Similarly, when all items constituting the four moral neutralization scales are factor-analyzed together (Table 2), a clear scree pattern emerges suggesting a one-dimensional factor structure. The first factor accounts for 23.2 percent of the total variance (eigenvalue 7.19) while all other factors have eigenvalues of 2.0 and below. All items load significantly on the first factor. Overall, these results strongly support the hypothesis that neutralization techniques, moral disengagement, and secondary self-serving cognitive distortions converge not only theoretically but also empirically.

For the final version of the instrument the number of items was reduced yet again,<sup>12</sup> and the item wordings were refined, unified, and simplified to better meet the needs of the study population. The resulting 18-item moral neutralization instrument was tested in a second pretest sample of 118 fourth- and fifth-graders (mean age  $M=11.4$  ( $SD=0.48$ ); 50.0 percent male). As a result of this analysis, one item with a loading below .4 was removed from the scale (ID 31). After this, only one item reflecting agency minimization

remained in the scale (ID 30). This item was also omitted to further shorten and simplify the scale. The final 16-item version of the scale yields an excellent consistency of  $\alpha=.87$  (first pretest sample) and  $\alpha=.88$  (second pretest sample).

#### 4. Study 2: Testing the Composite Scale

Study 2 assessed the internal consistency, cross-gender structural invariance, and criterion validity of the moral neutralization scale developed in Study 1 in a large sample of preadolescents and also includes correlational analyses with two constructs relevant to Situational Action Theory (Wikström and Treiber 2009) to explore possible integration of the moral neutralization concept within this broader criminological framework.

##### 4.1. Participants and Data Collection

Data for this study were collected as part of *z-proso*, a large-scale prospective longitudinal study (Eisner and Ribeaud 2005). Participants were recruited from a stratified random sample of 56 public primary schools in the city of Zurich when they entered grade 1 in 2004. Initial recruitment involved letters to the parents in their native language (nine languages) followed by telephone appointments for personal interviews, again in the parents' native language. Parental consent for the child's participation was obtained at the beginning of the parent interview at the parent's home, as a part of the informed consent procedure (for details on sampling and recruitment see Eisner et al. 2009; Eisner and Ribeaud 2005; Eisner and Ribeaud 2007).<sup>13</sup> At the time of the fourth data collection wave used for the present study, a valid set of moral neutralization data was available for 1,109 participants. This corresponds to a participation rate of 66.2 percent of the gross sample and a retention rate of 81.5 percent of the wave 1 sample.<sup>14</sup> At wave 4, participants were aged  $M=11.33$  on average ( $SD=0.37$ ), 50.9 percent were male, 44.4 percent were from migrant families (both parents born abroad). Of the participants 87.5 percent were in fifth grade, 10.3 percent in fourth grade, and 2.2 percent in

<sup>12</sup> Four items with loadings below .4 on the total scale were removed (ID 4, 18, 26, 27). One item was deleted because of its difficult (German) wording (ID 23) and another because it could potentially reflect facts rather than rationalizations (ID 17).

<sup>13</sup> Parental consent for child participation was also obtained for an additional 8.6 percent of the raw sample from parents who refused to participate themselves. Overall, the child participation rate at wave 1 was 82.6 percent.

<sup>14</sup> The considerable drop in participation between wave 1 and 4 is a consequence of the legal necessity to renew parental consent for all participants at wave 4. At this time, many parents refused continuing participation of their children in the study.



another grade, in special education without specified grade, or respective data were missing. Overall, 3.1 percent of the children attended a special education class.

The surveys were conducted during regular school hours in classrooms of public schools. Participants at a given school were pooled across classes to form groups of 5 to 20 children. Participating children were guided through the written questionnaire by two or three researchers. The surveys lasted 90 minutes. The 13.8 percent of the children who had moved out of the city or who were the only project participant in their school were surveyed individually at their home.

Selected behavioral outcomes were also measured at the parent and teacher levels. Among the 1,109 cases with a valid moral neutralization measure, there were 994 cases with a completed parent questionnaire and 1,009 with a completed teacher questionnaire. Parents, usually the mothers, were surveyed at home with standardized computer-assisted face-to-face interviews which lasted about an hour. Participants were offered an incentive worth approximately €25 per interview. Since 57 percent of the parents in the gross sample belonged to migrant communities, interviews were also conducted in the most important minority languages (Albanian, English, Italian, Portuguese, Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian, Spanish, Tamil, and Turkish). Details of the multilingual survey procedure are described in Eisner and Ribeaud (2007). Teacher assessments consisted of one-page paper-and-pencil questionnaires that included questions on the child's behavior, on the child's social role in the class, and his/her academic achievement.

#### 4.2. Measures

Moral neutralization was measured with the 16-item scale developed in Study 1. Eight items refer to mechanisms involving *cognitive restructuring*, three are related to *distortion/disregard of negative consequences*, three relate to *blaming the victim*, and two involve *assuming the worst*. As to behavioral domains, eight items relate to bullying and verbal aggression, five relate to physical aggression, and two relate to aggression in general.

Only questionnaires with a valid entry for at least 10 of the 16 items were retained for further analysis. The 59 cases

with one to six missing values were imputed using the EM algorithm (SPSS 2009). Scale properties are presented in the results section.

A first set of behavioral outcomes used to assess the criterion validity of the moral neutralization instrument was measured with the *Social Behavior Questionnaire* developed by Tremblay and colleagues (1991). The *Social Behavior Questionnaire* is similar to the *Child Behavior Checklist* (Achenbach and Ruffle 2000) and is adapted from the *Preschool Behavior Questionnaire* (Behar and Stringfield 1974) and the *Prosocial Behavior Questionnaire* (Weir and Duveen 1981). For the present study we used an age-adapted written version for the child survey while parents were administered the face-to-face adult version and teachers completed an abbreviated written version (for more details see Ribeaud and Eisner 2010). All versions are based on 5-point Likert scales. The *prosociality* subscale elicits altruistic and empathic behavior (child version (C): 8 items, Cronbach's  $\alpha=.79$ ; parent version (P): 10 items,  $\alpha=.83$ ; teacher version (T): 7 items,  $\alpha=.92$ ). Moreover, the *Social Behavior Questionnaire* also differentiates between two basic types of aggression, namely, *indirect/covert aggression* (C: 3,  $\alpha=.76$ ; P: 5,  $\alpha=.82$ ; T: n.a.) and *direct/overt aggression* (C: 9,  $\alpha=.76$ ; P: 12,  $\alpha=.82$ ; T: 11,  $\alpha=.93$ ).

Further behavioral outcomes include a bullying scale covering four types of bullying (verbal, physical, exclusion, hiding/destroying property) measured at the child level (4,  $\alpha=.75$ ) and three indices of *delinquency and serious problem behavior* encompassing truancy, substance use (alcohol, tobacco, cannabis), theft, vandalism, carrying a weapon, and assault (C: 11,  $\alpha=.67$ ; P: 9,  $\alpha=.37$ ; T: 8,  $\alpha=.48$ ).

Two indicators are related to social skills. To assess *aggressive conflict resolution schemata* participants were asked what they usually do in a conflict with other children. Answers were recorded on 5-point Likert scales (4 items,  $\alpha=.70$ ). Within the same instrument we also assessed *socially competent conflict resolution schemata* (4 items,  $\alpha=.65$ ).

Finally, two indicators related to cognitive predispositions were included because of their specific relevance to Situational Action Theory (Wikström and Treiber 2009). *Low self-control* was assessed using a scale derived from Gras-

mick and colleagues (1993), with two items for each of the five domains of *risk-seeking*, *impulsivity*, *self-centeredness*, *preference for physical activities*, and *low frustration tolerance* (10 items,  $\alpha=.74$ ). *Intrinsic benefits* and *discounting of moral costs of offending* were measured with a scenario-based instrument assessing decision-making. Participants were presented three scenarios depicting the following situations: reacting violently to a provocation, threatening a schoolmate to get his mobile phone, and shoplifting chewing gum. For each situation respondents answered questions about the perceived internal and external (i.e., social) costs and benefits. The *intrinsic benefits* of offending were assessed by asking how good the respondents would feel in the depicted situation, with high values corresponding to feeling very good. *Discounting of moral costs* was assessed by asking respondents how bad they would find it to act as depicted, with low values indicating feeling very bad about offending. All responses were recorded on 4-point Likert scales (6 items,  $\alpha=.73$ ).

**4.3. Analysis**

The internal consistency of the moral neutralization measure developed in Study 1 was assessed with confirmatory factor analysis and the invariance of the factor structure tested across gender groups with AMOS 6.0 software (Arbuckle, 2005). Then convergent and divergent validity of the derived moral neutralization scale was assessed using Pearson correlations with selected behavioral and cognitive constructs.

**4.4. Results**

**4.4.1. Internal Consistency**

The moral neutralization construct’s internal consistency was assessed in a one-factor structure in which all 16 items of the scale were forced to load on a single factor. This initial solution yields a near-acceptable fit of CFI=.926, RMSEA=.055 ( $\chi^2=452.1$ ;  $df=104$ ;  $N=1109$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Modification indices suggested that freeing-up six covariances among error terms could significantly improve model fit ( $\chi^2=194.0$ ;  $df=6$ ).<sup>15</sup> This increases the fit indices of the adapted model to CFI=.966, RMSEA=.038.

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics and standardized loadings on the Moral Neutralization factor (N=1209)**

Item <sup>a</sup>	Item wording <sup>b</sup>	Domain	M	S.D.	Standardized factor loadings		
					All	Boys	Girls
1	It is alright to fight to protect your friends.	Cog. Restruct.	2.23	0.99	.48	.44	.53
2	It is alright to beat somebody who doesn't respect your friends.	Cog. Restruct.	1.40	0.68	.69	.71	.57
12	It's okay to join in when someone you don't like is being bullied.	Cog. Restruct.	1.47	0.71	.56	.57	.49
13	Sometimes it's okay to bully other people.	Cog. Restruct.	1.56	0.75	.61	.63	.61
15	Bullying is just a normal part of being a kid.	Cog. Restruct.	1.91	0.92	.45	.45	.46
22	People sometimes need to be bashed.	Cog. Restruct.	1.56	0.84	.65	.68	.50
24	Only a coward would ever walk away from a fight.	Cog. Restruct.	1.80	1.04	.51	.51	.42
29	It's ok to get in a physical fight with someone if you have to stand up to protect your rights.	Cog. Restruct.	1.67	0.85	.60	.62	.47
11	Many problems can be solved with violence.	Neg. Impact	1.27	0.66	.46	.48	.31
16	Some kids need to be picked on just to teach them a lesson.	Neg. Impact	1.50	0.77	.68	.70	.63
20	Getting bullied helps to make people tougher.	Neg. Impact	1.77	0.89	.38	.39	.37
3	If someone acts like a jerk, it is ok to treat them badly.	Victim	1.50	0.69	.67	.69	.60
14	Some kids get bullied because they deserve it.	Victim	1.85	0.91	.58	.59	.54
19	Most students who get bullied bring it on themselves.	Victim	2.14	0.90	.38	.38	.35
21	You should hurt people first, before they hurt you.	Assum. Worst	1.51	0.81	.60	.62	.47
25	It's ok to slag other people off, they slag you off too.	Assum. Worst	1.79	0.90	.53	.53	.54

<sup>a</sup> see Table 2; <sup>b</sup> wordings may slightly differ from those in Study 1 due to refinements.

<sup>15</sup> The six covariances relate to items with identical keywords and/or similar meaning.

As shown in Table 4, the standardized loadings range between .38 and .67 in the full sample. Both the level of model fit and the loading structure confirm one-dimensionality. Overall, the 16-item scale of moral neutralization ( $M=1.78$ ,  $SD=0.49$ ) used for further analysis yields a consistency coefficient of  $\alpha=.87$ . Tests of structural invariance (Table 5) provide limited confirmation of invariance across genders. Although standardized factor loadings are within similar ranges for boys (.38 to .71, see Table 4) and girls (.31 to .63), constraining

the factor loadings to equality across genders yields a highly significant decrease in model fit ( $\chi^2=119.5$ ;  $df=16$ ; see Table 5). The decrease is further exacerbated when error terms ( $\chi^2=320.0$ ;  $df=32$ ) and error covariances ( $\chi^2=345.0$ ;  $df=38$ ) are also constrained to equality. However, the less strict tests of model fit based on fit indices suggest that constraining factor loadings to equality is acceptable ( $CFI=.942$ ;  $RMSEA=.033$ ; see Table 5), while imposing further restrictions (equal error terms, equal error covariances) results in poor CFI values.

**Table 5: Tests of factorial invariance across gender groups**

Model	CFI	RMSEA	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	Diff. in $\chi^2$	Diff. in DF	p
Unconstrained across groups	.966	.026	343.4	196	1.75			
Equal (unstandardized) loadings	.942	.033	462.9	212	2.18	119.5	16	<.001
Equal loadings and equal error terms	.900	.041	663.4	228	2.91	320.0	32	<.001
Equal loadings, equal error terms and equal error covariances	.896	.042	688.4	234	2.94	345.0	38	<.001

**4.4.2. Criterion Validity**

Table 6 displays the correlations between the moral neutralization scale and selected constructs for the entire sample and for both genders separately. The first row shows a marked correlation with gender ( $r=-.25^{***16}$ ), moral neutralization being more prevalent among boys than among girls. With one exception, all correlations with behavioral outcomes are highly significantly correlated in the expected direction in the entire sample. While prosociality is consistently and significantly negatively correlated with moral neutralization across informants (child measure (C):  $r=-.27^{***}$ ; parent (P):  $r=-.10^{***}$ ; teacher (T):  $r=-.15^{***}$ ), both direct (C:  $r=.59^{***}$ ; P:  $r=.10^{**}$ ; T:  $r=.27^{***}$ ) and indirect aggression (C:  $r=.46^{***}$ ; P:  $r=.04^{ns}$ ; T: n.a.) are significantly positively associated with moral neutralization (except parent-reported indirect aggression). Moreover, self-reported bullying ( $r=.42^{***}$ ) and delinquency and problem behavior as reported by all three informant groups are also highly significantly correlated with moral neutralization (C:  $r=.31^{***}$ ; P:  $r=.11^{**}$ ; T:  $r=.21^{***}$ ). The children's behavioral self-ratings correlate much better with (self-rated) moral neutralization than the teachers' and the parents' ratings.

The scale's specific focus on aggressive outcomes is reflected in stronger correlations with the aggression and bullying scales compared – for a specific type of informant – to general delinquency/problem behavior.

These results corroborate the predictive validity of the moral neutralization scales in the domain of aggressive and, more generally, antisocial behavior, the latter as a consequence of the strong association between aggressive outcomes and other forms of deviance (not shown).

Construct validity is also corroborated by the positive correlations of moral neutralization with aggressive conflict resolution schemata ( $r=.55^{***}$ ) and by the less pronounced negative correlation with competent conflict resolution schemata ( $r=-.22^{***}$ ). Finally, low self-control is strongly correlated with moral neutralization ( $r=.51^{***}$ ). Also, a favorable perception of the costs and benefits of offending is similarly highly correlated with moral neutralization ( $r=.48^{***}$ ) which likely reflects that moral neutralization affects the cost-benefit assessment of offending.

16 \*\*\* $p<.001$ ; \*\* $p<.01$ ; \* $p<.05$ ; <sup>ns</sup> $p>.05$

Gender-specific results show that the correlations found for the entire sample can, by and large, be reproduced in both genders, so it would not appear that moral neutralization mediates gender-effects. These results also suggest that

moral neutralization is similarly correlated with behavioral and cognitive outcomes in girls and in boys, providing further corroboration of the construct validity of the moral neutralization scale.

**Table 6: Correlations of moral neutralization with selected constructs**

	All	Boys	Girls
Gender (1=male; 2=female)	-.248***	--	--
Prosociality (child)	-.269***	-.243***	-.156***
Prosociality (parent)	-.100***	-.106*	.029
Prosociality (teacher)	-.149***	-.135**	-.005
Direct/overt aggression (child)	.585***	.603***	.465***
Direct/overt aggression (parent)	.097**	.075	.049
Direct/overt aggression (teacher)	.268***	.264***	.162***
Indirect/covert aggression (child)	.457***	.459***	.411***
Indirect/covert aggression (parent)	.038	.088*	.029
Bullying (child)	.417***	.382***	.380***
Delinquency and problem behavior (child)	.314***	.290***	.239***
Delinquency and problem behavior (parent)	.108***	.105*	.022
Delinquency and problem behavior (teacher)	.209***	.190***	.175***
Aggressive conflict resolution strategies (child)	-.550***	-.557***	-.440***
Competent conflict resolution strategies (child)	-.223***	-.221***	-.187***
Low self-control (child)	.514***	.524***	.453***
Intrinsic benefits and discounting of moral costs (child)	.475***	.475***	.357***
	994≤N≤1109	505≤n≤564	483≤n≤545

\*\*\*p<.001; \*\*p<.01; \*p<.05

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

Our research confirms that the three concepts of *Neutralization Techniques* (Sykes and Matza 1957), *Moral Disengagement* (Bandura et al. 1996), and secondary *Self-Serving Cognitive Distortions* (Barriga and Gibbs 1996) essentially capture the same cognitive processes. A conceptual review broadly supports the convergence hypothesis by demonstrating that the three approaches identify (under different labels) *cognitive restructuring*, *minimizing own agency*, *disregarding/distorting negative impact*, and *blaming/dehumanizing the victim* as the four key mechanisms forming a cluster of cognitive processes serving to cognitively overcome dissonance between individual moral standards and behavioral transgressions.<sup>17</sup> This set of processes, labeled moral neutralization in the present study, is important for individuals to maintain their moral self-concept without experiencing moral self-sanctions, and thus allowing transgressions of moral norms at reduced psychological costs. Importantly, all three approaches identify these processes as *preceding* specific antisocial actions and thus conceive moral neutralization as facilitating such actions. So all three approaches conceive moral neutralization as a factor in the (proximal) causation of antisocial action.

Factor analyses of 31 items derived from a selection of moral neutralization measures tested in a small-scale study (Study 1) corroborate empirical convergence of the different formulations of moral neutralization and confirm the finding from previous research (e.g., Bandura et al. 1996) that the key mechanisms of moral neutralization tend to appear together in the same persons.

<sup>17</sup> The self-serving cognitive distortions approach additionally identifies the mechanism of *assuming the worst* which is partly related to *attribution of blame* but is more general in assuming negative outcomes as legitimization for the transgression of moral rules.

The 16-item scale of moral neutralization focusing on neutralization of aggression and bullying constructed in Study 1 was found to be internally consistent, invariant across genders and valid when tested in a large sample of 11-year olds (Study 2). Confirming previous research we found a higher prevalence of moral neutralization among boys (Bandura et al. 1996; van der Velden 2008) and marked positive correlations with aggressive, violent, and delinquent behavior (Agnew 1994; Bandura 1996; Barriga and Gibbs 1996; Hymel et al. 2005; Nas et al. 2008; Pelton et al. 2004). Conversely, moral neutralization was confirmed to be negatively correlated with prosocial behavior (Bandura et al. 1996). These correlations remained fairly stable across genders, suggesting that the scale has the same predictive power in both gender groups. Concerning the sources of information about behavioral outcomes, the children's self-ratings were much better correlated with (self-assessed) moral neutralization than the teachers' and parents' ratings. This finding is in line with validation studies of moral disengagement which also find higher correlations for the children's self-assessments (Bandura et al. 1996, 36; Pelton et al. 2004, 36). The scale's criterion validity was further corroborated by its marked correlation with conflict resolution strategies, which is also found for each gender separately and which confirms earlier findings on a linkage between moral disengagement and social competence (Pelton et al. 2004, 36).

### 5.1. Theoretical Outlook

Our conceptual and empirical analyses suggest that moral disengagement, neutralization techniques, and (secondary) self-serving cognitive distortions describe the very same cognitive processes and that these processes tend to cluster within the same persons. For the sake of scientific parsimony it seems justified to subsume these processes under the single label of moral neutralization and to derive a single scale informed by all the original conceptualizations.

From this unifying point, theoretical criminology needs to integrate the concept into a broader theoretical frame. As suggested by Maruna and Copes (2005) it makes little sense to construct an etiology of deviance or aggression on the sole basis of neutralization techniques (or, correspondingly, moral neutralization).<sup>18</sup> Because of its understanding of crime and violence as *moral* action and its focus on the most *proximal* mechanisms of crime/violence causation, Situational Action Theory (Wikström 2004; Wikström and Treiber 2009) offers a promising framework to integrate the concept of moral neutralization. Wikström and Treiber posit that acts of crime and violence are the product of an interaction between situational characteristics (temptations, provocations, moral context<sup>19</sup>) and individual decision making, viewing individual decision-making as largely determined by an individual's morality and ability to exercise self-control. In a given situation of temptation or provocation with a given moral context, acts of violence are expected 1) when an individual has not internalized the moral rules relevant in the corresponding situation so that acting violently is viewed as a legitimate option or 2) when an individual is unable to exercise self-control when confronted with temptation or provocation and hence unable to act in accordance with his or her moral beliefs.

Within this framework the concept of moral neutralization is useful for understanding another mechanism that *facilitates* violent or, more generally, immoral action. Specifically, we posit that an individual able to cognitively neutralize the incongruence between his or her moral beliefs and acts that conflict with those beliefs is also more likely to engage in immoral action. In other words, moral neutralization allows internalized moral rules to be temporarily discarded and makes them appear irrelevant in specific situations.<sup>20</sup> It is expected that such a mechanism will substantially lower the psychological costs of violence and thus also lower the individual pressure to exercise self-control. This view is also

<sup>18</sup> Maruna and Copes (2005) suggest a theoretical integration that differs substantially from what we propose. In essence, they conceive neutralization techniques/moral neutralization as *post*-transgression mechanisms that are important for understanding persistence of or desistance from criminal behavior. Although we agree on the relevance of such mecha-

nisms, we believe that moral neutralization is also important in the immediate *pre*-transgression phase. In line with Bandura, our starting point is that "people do not ordinarily engage in reprehensible conduct until they have justified to themselves the rightness of their actions" (Bandura et al. 1996, 365).

<sup>19</sup> "A moral context is defined as the action-relevant moral rules that apply to a setting and their level of enforcement" (Wikström and Treiber 2009, 91).

<sup>20</sup> With regard to neutralization techniques, Agnew (1994, 567–568) supplies valuable evidence in support of this hypothesis.



in line with the concept of Gibbs and colleagues (1995) that secondary self-serving cognitive distortions (or, more generally, moral neutralization) are “pre- or post-transgression rationalizations [that] reduce the stresses from the consequences of the primary distortions” (Barriga and Gibbs 1996, 334), where the notion of primary distortions shares much in common with Gottfredson and Hirschi’s concept of self-control (1990; see footnote 4).

The strong correlations between moral neutralization and both self-control and favorable perception of the costs and benefits of offending supplies preliminary empirical support for our conception of the mechanisms linking self-control and moral neutralization in the causation of aggressive and otherwise antisocial behavior. However, further research is needed to conclusively elucidate the mechanisms connecting these three constructs in the immediate causation of violence and, more generally, immoral action. Further extensions of the theory should also encompass situational characteristics – or elements of the moral context – that are likely to trigger specific moral neutralizations (e.g., being with a group of friends is likely to trigger diffusion of responsibility).

### 5.2. Need for Conceptual Clarification

Our review of the different conceptualizations of moral neutralization shows that some authors fail to clearly differentiate between processes of moral neutralization and biased social information processing. In particular, we found that hostile attribution of intent (e.g. Crick and Dodge 1994) was identified as a mechanism of *blaming the other* (Bandura et al. 1996) or of *assuming the worst* (Barriga and Gibbs 1996). Other authors have already stressed the fundamental difference between biased information processing and cognitive processes related to aggression beliefs and aggression legitimation (Zelli et al. 1999). For that reason we dropped items likely to measure biased social perception rather than

self-serving legitimations from our scale in the preselection procedure. Future research should better take into account such delimitation problems to increase the conceptual clarity and, consequently, the discriminant validity of corresponding measurements.<sup>21</sup>

### 5.3. Limitations and Future Directions for Research

The moral neutralization scale presented in this article suffers from several limitations. First, unlike most other scales reviewed above, our moral neutralization scale focuses specifically on the neutralization of aggression and violence rather than on a broader range of antisocial and/or immoral behaviors, and its predictive scope is accordingly narrower than that of more general scales. Second, the findings are limited to a general population of preadolescents. Results from younger and older age groups and from high-risk populations are needed for a fuller assessment of the scale’s properties. Third, given the cross-sectional nature of our data, the direction of the relationship between moral neutralization, aggression, and other proximal factors involved in the causation and perpetuation of aggression is not clear. From a theoretical point of view experimental and longitudinal research aimed precisely at unraveling pre- and post-transgression mechanisms involving moral neutralization would be highly desirable.

Finally, our review of different scales in the field of moral neutralization showed that they were validated with samples of very different ages, in a range between 10 and 20 years. However, in most studies the age of the participants and their level of moral development are not an issue. Hence, both theory and research would likely benefit to focus on the emergence and consequent development of moral neutralization patterns in the life course<sup>22</sup> and to link these patterns with other relevant developmental processes, such as moral development, the emergence and consolidation of self-control and, of course, with trajectories of aggression and violence.

<sup>21</sup> Similar conceptual blur is also likely in other domains such as the differentiation between lack of empathy and conscious denial of injury.

<sup>22</sup> To our knowledge, only one study specifically focuses on the developmental precursors of moral disengagement (Hyde, Shaw, and Moilanen 2010) while another analyzes trajectories of moral disengagement (Paciello et al. 2008). However, since in this study measurement of moral disengage-

ment started as late as age 14, the decisive stage of preadolescent development remains unexplored.

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