Ethnic identification and outgroup attitudes in minority and majority groups

MARIANNA KOSIC and CORRADO CAUDEK

According to Social Identity Theory, ingroup identification leads to negative outgroup attitudes. According to multi-cultural theory, instead, a stronger ethnic identity should favor acceptance of other groups. Here we studied the relation between ethnic identification (in minority vs majority groups) and outgroups attitudes. In particular, we focused on the emotional reactions towards the opening of a national border due to the enlargement of Slovenia in the European Union. By examining questionnaires from 168 Slovene and 134 Italian majority group students, and 110 Slovene minority students aged 16-19, we found that participants of the majority groups with high ingroup identification reported more negative responses towards the outgroups than participants with lower ethnic identification. For the minority group, conversely, a higher level of identification was associated to more positive attitudes towards the outgroups.

Key words: ethnic identification, outgroup attitudes, minority groups, majority groups

The issue of how, or whether, ethnic identification affects outgroup attitudes has stimulated a large body of theory and research, even though no general agreement can be found among theorists and researchers. According to Social Identity Theory (SIT), group membership is a fundamental aspect of our perception of self and others. The desire to have a positive self esteem, or social identity, is achieved by positively differentiating the ingroup from a comparison outgroup. The more positively the ingroup is perceived, the greater the positive esteem individuals can draw from their membership of such group. The extent to which individuals identify with an ingroup, therefore, favors the emergence of ingroup favoritism, and less favorable attitudes toward corresponding outgroups (Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1981; Brown, 2000). Such a position contrasts with current multicultural theory which argues that a stronger ethnic identity leads to higher levels of acceptance toward ethnic outgroups (Angus, 1997; Brewer & Campbell, 1976; Fowers & Richardson, 1996; Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Kymlicka, 1995; Taylor, 1992; Verkuyten, 2005). Consistently with multicultural theory, ethnic identity development models also posit that the achievement of a positive and secure sense of ethnicity is accompanied by a more positive attitude toward other groups (Phinney, 1989).

In the present investigation, the relation between ingroup identification and outgroup attitudes was investigated in both majority and minority groups by considering an indirect measure of outgroup orientation. Such indirect measure concerned the emotional reactions toward the opening of the national frontier (due to the enlargement of Slovenia in the European Union on 1 May 2004) in the multi-ethnic Italo-Slovene borderland, namely the area of the twin cities Gorizia (Italy) and Nova Gorica (Slovenia)[1] . Together with such an indirect measure, outgroup attitudes were also measured by considering other-groups orientation (Phinney, 1992), social distance and reports of ingroup/outgroup friendship. Perceived similarity among the different ethnic groups was also measured. Ethnic identification was assessed with the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Phinney, 1992).

The city of Gorizia (located in the Friuli-Venezia Giulia region of northern Italy) offers an advantageous setting for

Marianna Kosic, Department of Psychology, University of Trieste, Italy;

Corrado Caudek, Department of Psychology, University of Florence, Via S. Niccolo', 89/a-95, 50125 Firenze, Italy. E-mail: corrado.caudek@ unifi.it (the address for correspondence).

---

[1] It is important to note that, upon entering the European Union, Slovenia did not automatically become a member of the Schengen Agreement. The enforcement of such agreement will be possible only after a transition period. This means that border controls remain in place, until Slovenia obtains full membership in the Schengen Agreement. Nevertheless, the enlargement of the EU had a strong impact on the Italo-Slovene border communities, because it changed *the perceived status of the border*. Once the Schengen Agreement is enforced, in fact, the border controls between the two States will be abolished. In the present research, participants were questioned about their emotional reactions towards the opening of the national border in general, without reference to any specific time frame or any specific national group.

the present investigation because of the presence of an autochthon Slovene ethnic minority who shares a common language and socio-cultural heritage with the Slovene majority community in the mother-nation (on the other side of the frontier). Despite this, Slovene minority members tend to clearly differentiate themselves from the Slovenes from Slovenia by considering themselves to be Italian citizens belonging to the Slovene minority group. Such attitude is revealed, for example, by the usage of the word "zamejci" that the minority members use for defining themselves (this Slovene word could be translated as "those on the other side of the border"). For such minority group, therefore, both the Slovene and Italian majority groups can be considered as outgroups (Pertot, 1991; 2002).

Ethnic identification may affect outgroup evaluation in a different manner within minority and majority groups. Ethnic majorities, in fact, tend to provide more negative outgroup evaluations (Bettencourt, Charlton, Dorr, & Hume, 2001). Additionally, minority groups are more likely to endorse multiculturalism (and, thus, to accept other ethnic groups), when such acceptance is perceived as advantageous for the group to which they belong (Arends-Toth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Berry & Kalin, 1995; Verkuyten, 2005). Consequently, minorities may favor multiculturalism more strongly than majorities as, appreciating and promoting the value of ethnic diversity and insisting that all group should be treated as equal, it offers the possibility to maintain their own culture and obtain higher self-esteem and sense of security.

In keeping with the previous considerations, we expect that Italian and Slovene majority groups members with higher ingroup ethnic identification will exhibit more negative outgroup attitudes than those with lower level of ethnic identification. The members of the Slovene ethnic minority group, conversely, are expected to exhibit the opposite trend: higher ingroup ethnic identification should lead to more positive attitudes toward outgroups.

Emotional Reactions

Current models conceptualize attitudes as consisting of affective (feelings and emotions), cognitive (beliefs) and behavioral (action tendencies) components (Zanna & Rempel, 1988; Eagly, & Chaiken, 1993), and suggest that affects contribute more strongly to intergroup attitudes than cognitions (Eagly, Mladinić, & Otto, 1994). Recent research has also proved that affective processes have an important role in intergroup relations, and, specifically, in outgroup evaluations (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000). Affective processes, therefore, provide a useful indicator for investigating individuals' reactions to outgroups. Dijker (1987), for example, reported that emotions were better predictors for attitudes toward other ethnic groups than stereotypes. Similarly, Islam and Janjah (2001) found that affective measures were

good predictors for attitudes toward three minority groups in Australia (see also Stangor, Sullivan, & Ford, 1991). More importantly, Verkuyten, Drabbles and Van den Nieuwenhuijzen (1999) reported that emotional reactions toward ethnic minority groups varied as a function of self-categorization at the group level (self-categorization being more strongly defined in terms of perception of similarity than identification, which is more motivational based). Studying ethnic Dutch participants, Verkuyten et al. found that individuals with high social self-categorization reported more negative emotions toward ethnic minority groups that individuals with low social self-categorization. In their research, social self-categorization was found to be a mediating variable for both negative and positive emotions, also in situations in which the relation with ethnic minority groups was inconsequential for the ingroup.

Ingroup identification and outgroup evaluation

According to SIT, the establishment and maintenance of a positive social identity result in ingroup bias (Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971; Brewer, 1979): Individuals tend to favor their own group and to discriminate against the outgroup, although a preference for the ingroup does not necessarily imply a rejection of other groups (Mullen, Brown, & Smith, 1992; Brewer, 1999; Verkuyten, 2001). Several investigations have shown that strong ingroup identification is likely to be associated with ingroup bias (Branscombe & Wann, 1994; Brown, 2000; Lindeman, 1997; de Vries, 2003; Verkuyten & Nekuee, 1999). It should be noted, however, that the hypothesis of a direct causal connection between ingroup identification and ingroup bias does not necessarily follows from SIT (e.g. McGarty, 2001). The connection between the two is accounted for by SIT only by invoking other intervening factors, such as identification, actual groups concerned and perceptions about the social structure of intergroup relations.

The present investigation focuses on outgroup evaluation, not ingroup favoritism. It is important to distinguish these two aspects of inter-group bias. In general, ingroup identification has been found to be strongly associated to favorable ingroup evaluation, but not to outgroup derogation (Lindeman, 1997; Jackson, 2002; Kinket & Verkuyten, 1999; de Vries, 2003). Several exceptions, however, can be found. Ruttenberg, Zea, and Sigelman (1996), for example, reported a significant association between ethnic identification and unfavorable outgroup attitudes. Branscombe and Wann (1994) report on link between ingroup identification and outgroup derogation only under circumstances that stress intergroup comparison, and under high-threat conditions. More recently, in a study on Italian high school students, Costarelli and Callì (2004) found that higher identifiers expressed higher levels of both ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation as compared to low identifiers. In the Netherlands, Verkuyten (1992) found that members of the

ethnic Turkish minority identified more strongly and evaluated their ingroup more positively than majority groups. Such a positive ingroup evaluation, however, was not associated with the rejection of ethnic outgroups. According to LaFromboise, Coleman and Gerton (1993), such results may be explained by arguing that the development of a positive attitude toward both the own-minority group and the dominant group is an important component for establishing bicultural competence. The dominant Dutch group, conversely, displayed a higher level of outgroup rejection and, only for that group, rejection of ethnic minority outgroups was associated to a higher level of identification (see also Duckitt, Callaghan, & Wagner, 2005; Mummendey, Brown, & Klink, 2001; Negy, Shreve, Jensen, & Uddin, 2003; Verkuyten & Brug, 2004; Verkuyten, 2005).

Social Distance

Social distance is related to outgroup evaluation: A negative outgroup evaluation is more likely to be observed with the growth of social distance (Verkuyten, 1997; Pettigrew, 1998; de Vries, 2003). Vries (2003), for example, found that individuals who perceived a greater social distance between themselves and members of the outgroup were more likely to evaluate the outgroup negatively. Social distance, thus, may be interpreted as another marker of inter-group discrimination. Verkuyten (2001b) also found that a stronger national identification was related in Dutch children to a smaller social distance toward the ingroup and to a larger social distance toward the outgroup. Despite this, no rejection of other groups' nationality was found.

In the present research, social distance was operationalized by four items of our questionnaire. One was the following: "Which relationships would you accept with the group? " Possible answers were: "none", "school companions", "friends", "would even marry". The other three measured the perceived similarity between the participants and the three target ethnic groups. We expect that social distance is affected differently by ethnic identification in majority and minority groups.

Cross-Group Friendship

It is well known that direct cross-group friendship (i.e. intergroup contact) reduces outgroup prejudice (e.g. Aberson, Shoemaker, & Tomollillo, 2004). Pettigrew (1997), for example, examined responses of majority group members from different countries and found that individuals with outgroup friends exhibited significantly lower levels of bias toward that group (see also Wagner, van Dick, Pettigrew, & Christ, 2003). Pettigrew (1998) interpreted these data by proposing that intergroup contact reduces negative affective reactions toward outgroup members and the outgroup in general. Miller (2002) has also shown that intergroup con-

tact induces more positive attitudes because of the development of personalized representations which in turn provides the opportunity to disconfirm negative outgroup stereotypes. Furthermore, Ellison and Powers (1994) found that close cross-ethnic friendship in childhood is associated with positive intergroup attitudes in adulthood. We expect that the reported levels of friendship are affected differently by ethnic identification in majority and minority groups, likewise the other measures of outgroup attitude discussed above.

METHOD

Participants

In total, 412 adolescents between 16 and 19 years of age participated in the study. They were recruited in twelve secondary schools in the cities of Gorizia (northern Italy) and Nova Gorica (Slovenia). 168 (41%) students belonged to the Slovene ethnic group living in Slovenia, 134 (32%) belonged to the Italian ethnic majority group living in Italy and 110 (27%) belonged to the Slovene ethnic minority living in Italy[2]. All students of this last group had italian citizenship and were enrolled to Slovene schools in Gorizia. The composition of the sample as a function of the type of school is described in Table 1. Forty-seven percent of the participants were male and 53% were female. There was no significant age or gender difference across groups.

Measures

All the materials were in structured-questionnaire format administered to participants for completion in the presence of the first author. The data were collected between September and December 2003.

Ethnic Ingroup Identification

We assessed ingroup identification by a standardized group identification scale, the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM, Phinney, 1992). The MEIM is a 14-item questionnaire (plus questions about self-categorization, i.e. "I feel I am a member of ( ) group"), including three subscales (Affirmation and Belonging; Ethnic Identity Achievement; Ethnic Behaviors or Clarity, Pride and Engagement – Lee & Yoo, 2004) that comprise the Total Ethnic Identity. The Ethnic Identity Achievement subscale measures a developmental and cognitive component (i.e. the degree to which a person is identifying with and exploring an ethnic group; the understanding of ethnicity and the secure knowledge

---

2   For the purposes of the present investigation, the high-school students attending to Slovene schools in the province of Gorizia were considered to be part of the Slovene ethnic minority group.

Table 1

Composition of the sample. Slovene majority group: schools 1–3; Slovene minority group: schools 4–8; Italian majority group: schools 9–12.

Index	School	City	Frequency[a]	Proportion
1	Klasična Gimnazija	Nova Gorica	97	23.5
2	Ekonomska Gimnazija	Nova Gorica	36	8.7
3	Tehnična Gimnazija	Nova Gorica	35	8.5
4	Klasični Licej	Gorizia	22	5.3
5	Pedagoški in Družboslovni Licej	Gorizia	28	6.8
6	Državni trgovski tehnični zavod	Gorizia	14	3.4
7	Državni industrijski tehnični zavod	Gorizia	24	5.8
8	Državni poklicni zavod za trgovske dejavnosti	Gorizia	22	5.3
9	Liceo classico	Gorizia	27	6.6
10	Liceo pedagogico e delle scienze sociali	Gorizia	36	8.7
11	Istituto commerciale	Gorizia	29	7.0
12	Istituto tecnico industriale	Gorizia	42	10.2

Note. [a]Number of students included in the sample from each of the listed schools.

and sense of clarity of who one is as member of an ethnic group); the Affirmation and Belonging subscale measures an affective component which assesses how much one accepts her or his one's ethnicity (i.e. the feelings of attachment, the ethnic pride and the attitudes toward one's own group); the Ethnic Behaviors subscale measures a behavioral component that explores involvement in ethnic activities/practices, participation in cultural traditions and socialization with ingroup members. In the present study we did not differentiate among these components of ethnic identity (see Lee, 2005) – only the Total Ethnic Identity scores were used. Higher values of such composite score indicate stronger ethnic group identification.

Attitude/Orientation toward outgroups

1. Emotional Reactions. Participants were asked to express how they felt when they thought about the opening of the national frontier (due to enlargement of Slovenia in the European Union in May 2004). The labels for the listed emotions were: "angry", "worried", "confused", "happy", "peaceful" and "indifferent". The neutral term "indifferent" was not used in the final analysis, and the other two positive terms were inverted ("unhappy", "distressed"). All items were measured on scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). To determine whether it is possible to differentiate among emotions, a factor analysis was performed on the 5 items. A ML 2 factor solution with varimax rotation ($\chi^2 = 0.62$, n.s.) revealed that the first factor saturated mostly on items "angry" (.53), "worried" (.94), "confused" (.54), whereas the second factor had high loadings on "unhappy" (.98) and "distressed" (.46). Factor scores were analyzed as a function of the two factors, ethnic group and the MEIM overall score. A mixed-effects analysis revealed that

the three-way interaction between MEIM, ethnic group and "factor" was not significant [$F(2,731) = 0.177$, n.s.], thus not providing evidences that specific patterns of emotions toward outgroups can be distinguished. A visual inspection of the factor scores and the single emotions as a function of the (discretized) MEIM scores and ethnic group confirmed such conclusion. The 5 items were thus summed to produce an overall score ranging from 5 to 25. Cronbach α was .77. A power transformation was used to correct a positive skewness. The data so transformed where then re-scaled to the range 1-100. Higher scores indicate stronger negative emotional reactions toward the opening of the national frontier (i.e. they can be interpreted as the willingness to maintain the separation between the Italian and the Slovene ethnic groups).

2. Other-Group Orientation Scale (OGOS, Phinney, 1992). Participants were asked to evaluate the six items of the Other-Group Orientation Scale on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 4 (*strongly agree*). Examples of items administered are: "I like meeting and getting to know people from ethnic groups other than my own"; "I sometimes feel it would be better if different ethnic groups didn't try to mix together". OGOS evaluates the orientation toward other ethnic groups *in general* and does not mention the target groups of the present investigation. A higher OGOS score indicates a more positive attitude toward other groups, that is, acceptance and openness to others.

3. Social Distance Scale (derived from Bogardus, 1933) and *Perceived Similarity between Participants and the Target Social Groups.* With one item of the questionnaire, participants were asked to indicate the highest degree of acceptable contact with a member of the other two outgroups ("no contact", "school companions", "friends", "marriage"). Moreover, the feeling of similarity between participants

and the target social groups was measured with other three items. Responses were made on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 ("very unlike me") to 5 ("very like me").

4. Reports of Outgroup Friendship and Frequency of Interaction (level of contact). Participants were asked two questions regarding ingroup and outgroup friendships: "How many friends do you have in other-ethnic groups?" (Possible answers: "none", "from 1 to 5", "from 6 to 10", "more than ten") and "How often do you see them?" ("3-5 times a year", "1-2 times a month", "1-3 times a week", "nearly every day").

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Emotional Reactions

The emotional reaction data were fit with a hierarchical linear model (e.g. Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992; Singer, 1998). Following Fox (2002), we centered MEIM at the school average (CMEIM) to aid interpretability of the regression coefficients. The emotional reactions were predicted by ethnic group and CMEIM, allowing for the interaction between these two terms.

Before estimating and testing the fixed effects, we determined whether the variances of the random effects in the model were different from 0. We tested the hypotheses about the random effects by deleting random-effects terms from the model and noting the change in the log of the maximized restricted likelihood, calculating log likelihood-ratio

statistics. There was no evidence that the average level of emotional reactions (as represented by the intercept) varied from school to school [$\chi^2(2)$ = 0.63, n.s.], neither that the coefficient of MEIM varied, once differences between the three groups were taken into account [$\chi^2(2)$ = 1.37, n.s.].

The fitted model omits the non-significant random effects for CMEIM. For the minority group, the coefficient B_{CMEIM} = -.29 was significantly smaller than zero ($t(361)$ = -2.58, $p < .05$), thus indicating that the negative emotional reactions toward the opening of the national border decrease as the degree of ethnic identification increases. For the Italian majority group, the estimated average slope for CMEIM was positive B_{CMEIM} = .38 ($t(361)$ = 3.92, $p < .001$); the difference in average slopes between the Italian and minority groups was significant [$t(361)$ = 4.51, $p < .001$]. For the Slovene majority group, the estimated average slope for CMEIM was also positive B_{CMEIM} = .43, ($t(361)$ = 4.02, $p < .001$); the difference in average slopes between Slovene and minority groups was significant [$t(361)$ = 4.63, $p < .001$]. For both majority groups, therefore, the emotional reactions toward the opening of the national border become increasingly negative as ethnical identification increases.

The estimate of the average level of emotional reactions for the Italian group was 21% higher than for the minority group. This difference was significant [$t(9)$ = 3.61, $p < .01$]. Since MEIM was centered at the school level, this result indicates that the average at the school level of the (negative) emotional reactions for the Italian group is higher than for the minority group. The estimate of the average level of emotional reactions for the Slovene group was 0.02% lower than for the minority group; this difference was not significant [$t(9)$ = -.26, n.s.].
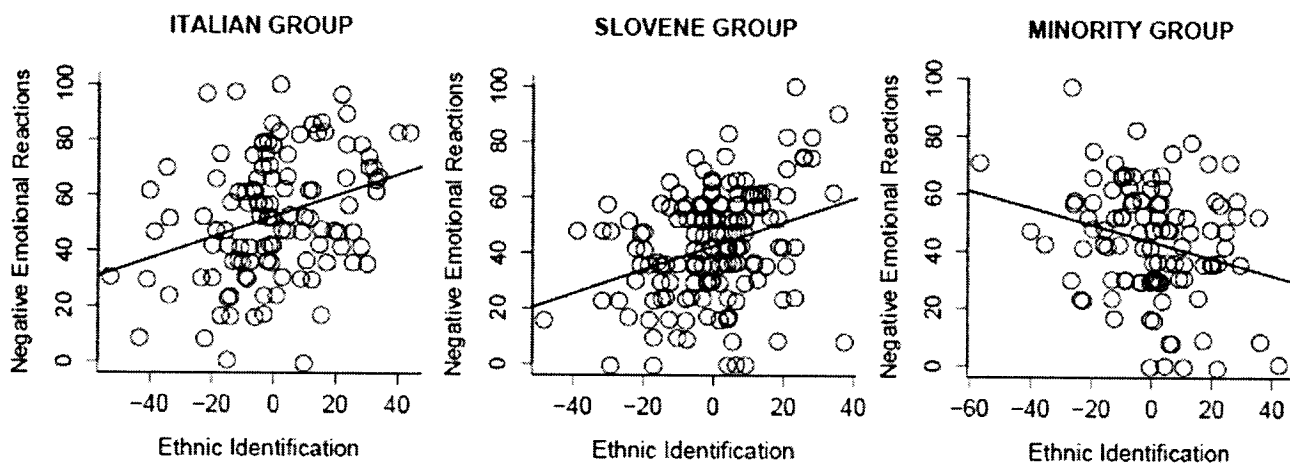

Figure 1. Negative emotional reactions toward the opening of the national frontier by ethnic identification (MEIM) for students in Italian and Slovene high-schools in Gorizia and Nova Gorica with multilevel regression lines.

Note. MEIM is centered at the mean of each school. The *x,y* positions of the points are slightly jittered to improve visibility.

Other Groups Orientation Scale

The data from the OGOS scale were also fit with a hierarchical linear model (Figure 2). As for the previous analysis, there was no evidence that the average level of OGOS varied from school to school [$\chi^2(2) = 4.22$, n.s.], neither that the coefficient of MEIM varied, once differences between the three groups were taken into account [$\chi^2(2) = 0.43$, n.s.].

For the minority group, the fitted model omitting the non-significant random effects for CMEIM showed that the coefficient $B_{CMEIM} = .476$ was significantly higher than zero [$t(361) = 4.36, p < .001$]: acceptance and openness toward other groups increased with ethnic identification.

For the Italian majority group, the estimated average slope for MEIM was negative $B_{CMEIM} = -.329$ and significantly different from zero [$t(361) = -3.54, p < .001$]; the difference in average slopes between Italian and minority groups was significant [$t(361) = 5.61, p < .001$]. For the Italian majority group, therefore, ethnical identification decreased the degree of acceptance and openness toward other groups.

For the Slovene majority group, the estimated average slope for MEIM was $B_{CMEIM} = -.03$, not significantly different from zero [$t(361) = -0.27$, n.s.]; the difference in average slopes between Slovene and minority groups was significant [$t(361) = 3.36, p < .001$]. No effect of ethnical identification on the acceptance and openness toward other groups, therefore, was found for the Slovene group.

The estimate of the average level of acceptance and openness for the Italian group was 15% lower than for the minority group. This difference was significant [$t(9) = -2.84, p < .05$]. The estimate of the average level of acceptance and

openness for the Slovene group was 13% lower than for the minority group; also this difference was significant [$t(9) = -2.35, p < .05$].

Social Distance

The proportional odds model was used to model the ordinal response data of the modified Social Distance Scale. The degree of acceptable contact with members of the other two groups was predicted by (centered) MEIM and group (a participant of each group provided judgments about the other two outgroups).

For the Italian group, the interaction between CMEIM and group was not significant ($\chi^2(2) = 2.37$, n.s.) and, therefore, was deleted from the model. The parallelism assumption was met when only the main effects were included in the model ($\chi^2(4) = 6.70$, n.s.). Both the CMEIM ($\chi^2(1) = 8.57, p < .01$) and the group ($\chi^2(1) = 13.1, p < .01$) factors were significant. The odds of a negative attitude toward the Slovene outgroup were 2.55 times higher than those toward the minority group. The odds of a negative attitude increased by 7.42 times over the whole range of CMEIM values.

For the Slovene group, the interaction term was not significant ($\chi^2(1) = 0.83$, n.s.) and it was removed. The parallelism assumption was met when only the main effects were included in the model ($\chi^2(4) = 4.18, p = .38$). The group factor was significant ($\chi^2(1) = 9.17, p < .01$), whereas CMEIM was not ($\chi^2(1) = 0.02$, n.s.). The odds of a positive attitude toward the minority group were 1.98 higher than those toward the Italian outgroup.

For the minority group, the interaction between CMEIM and group was significant ($\chi^2(1) = 6.51, p < .02$). The

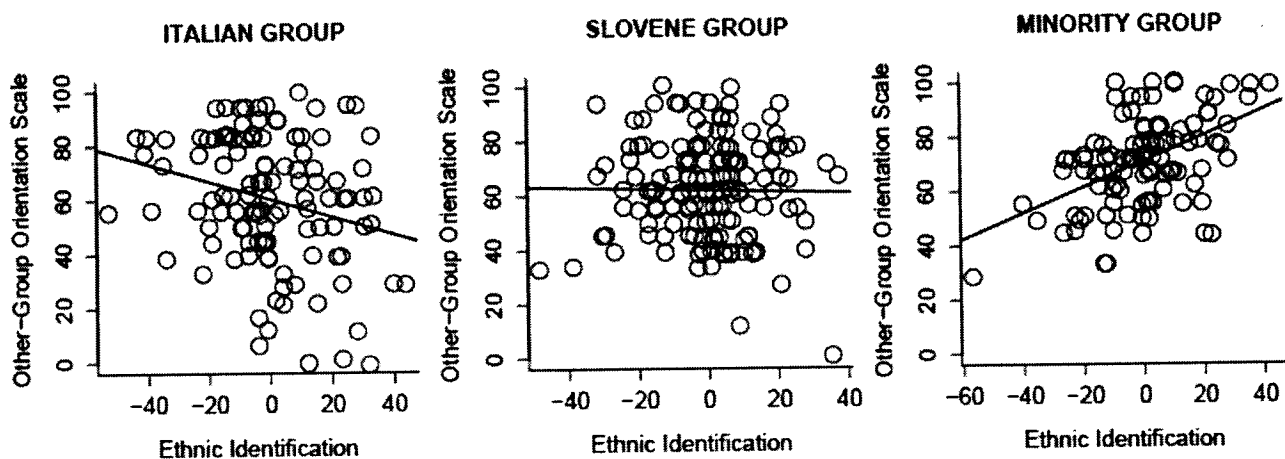**ITALIAN GROUP** **SLOVENE GROUP** **MINORITY GROUP**

Figure 2. Scores on the Other-Group Orientation Scale by ethnic identification (MEIM) for students in high-schools in Gorizia and Nova Gorica with multilevel regression lines.

Note. MEIM is centered at the mean of each school. A higher OGOS score indicates a more positive attitude toward other groups. The *x,y* positions of the points are slightly jittered to improve visibility.

CMEIM coefficient associated to the Italian group was not significant; instead, the odds of a positive attitude toward the Slovene group (over the whole range of CMEIM values) increased by 5.36 times more than those toward the Italian group. The parallelism assumption was met for the proportional odds model that included the interaction ($\chi^2(6)$ = 10.51, n.s.).

Perceived Similarity between Participants and the Target Social Groups

Each of the three items rating the feeling of similarity between the participants and the three target group was analyzed separately with a hierarchical linear model by considering one social group at the time. Perceived similarity was predicted by CMEIM and target group (i.e. the data of the Italian group were analyzed by considering how each member of that group felt about each of the three target groups).

For the Italian group, when considering only the ingroup data, the estimated average slope for CMEIM was positive B_{CMEIM} = .014 and significantly different from zero [$t(109)$ = 2.54, $p < .05$]: similarity with the ingroup increased with ethnical identification. This increase amounted to 1.39 points on the 5-points scale over the whole range of CMEIM scores. When considering the similarity perceived by the Italian group members toward the Slovene group, the estimated average slope for CMEIM was negative ($t(109)$ = 2.71, $p < .01$) and amounting to 1.48 points over the whole range of CMEIM values; this slope was significantly different than for the Italian group ($t(218)$ = -4.51, $p < .001$). When considering the similarity perceived by the Italian group members toward the minority group, the estimated average slope for CMEIM was negative ($t(218)$ = -2.25, $p <$ .05) and amounting to 1.23 points over the whole range of CMEIM values; this slope was significantly different from that of the Italian group ($t(218)$ = -4.95, $p < .001$). With respect to the amount of similarity perceived by the Italian group members toward the Italian group itself, perceived similarity was 43% lower on average toward the Slovene group ($t(218)$ = -13.92, $p < .001$) and 28% lower toward the minority group ($t(218)$ = -9.09, $p < .001$).

For the Slovene group, when considering only the ingroup data, the estimated average slope for CMEIM was positive and significantly different from zero ($t(109)$ = 2.26, $p < .05$). This increase amounted to 1.187 points over the whole range of CMEIM scores. When considering the similarity perceived by the Slovene group members toward the Italian ($t(143)$ = -1.04, n.s.) and minority group ($t(143)$ = -0.19, n.s.) groups, the estimated average slope for CMEIM were not significant in both cases. With respect to the amount of similarity perceived by the Slovene group members toward the Slovene group itself, perceived similarity was 43% lower on average toward the Italian group ($t(286)$ = -3.28, $p < .01$) and 26% lower toward the minority group ($t(286)$ = -2.51, $p < .05$).

For the minority group, when considering only the ingroup data, the estimated average slope for CMEIM was positive and significantly different from zero [$t(99)$ = 2.15, $p < .05$]. The increase of similarity with the ingroup with ethnical identification amounted to 1.284 points over the whole range of CMEIM scores. When considering the similarity perceived by the minority members toward the Slovene group, the estimated average slope for CMEIM was positive ($t(99)$ = 2.15, $p < .05$) and amounting to 1.27 points over the whole range of CMEIM values. The effect of CMEIM was not significant when considering the similarity that the minority group members perceived toward the Italian group ($t(218)$ = -0.2, n.s.). With respect to the amount of similarity perceived by the minority group members toward the minority group itself, perceived similarity was 20% lower on average toward the Slovene group ($t(198)$ = -12.52), $p < .001$) and 18% lower toward the Italian group ($t(198)$ = -5.86, $p < .001$).

In a second analysis, only the ingroup similarity ratings were considered. These data were fit with a hierarchical linear model by using CMEIM and group as predictors. The variable CMEIM was significant [$F(1,343)$ = 20.4, $p < .001$], whereas the group variable [$F(1,10)$ = 0.64, n.s.] and the interaction term [$F(1,343)$ = 0.03, n.s.] were not. This result suggests that the amount of ingroup identification does not vary across the three ethnical groups.

Reports of Outgroup Friendship

The two items measuring the level of contact were recoded and combined. For the question "How many friends do you have in the in other ethnic groups? " the following values were used: 0, 3, 8, 15; for the question "How often do you see them? " the following values were used: 91, 20, 3, 1. The ratio of the two recoded variables (i.e. the reported number of friends weighted by the inverse of the time span between the encounters) thus defined a composite index representing the number of friends and/or frequency of contact. This composite index transformed to normality was then fit with a hierarchical linear model for each separate group with group and CMEIM as predictors.

For the Italian group, the group factor was significant [$F(1,111)$ = 41.23, $p < .001$], indicating a higher level of contact with the minority group than with the Slovene group. Neither CMEIM [$F(1,111)$ = 0.83, n.s.] nor the interaction term [$F(1,111)$ = 0.72, n.s.] were significant.

For the Slovene group, CMEIM was significant [$F(1,90)$=9.42, $p < .005$], indicating that ethnical identification leads to a smaller number of friends and/or frequency of contact. Group was also significant [$F(1,90)$=12.19, $p < .001$], indicating a higher number of friends and/or frequency of contact with the minority than with the Italian group. The interaction term was not significant [$F(1,90)$ = 0.06, n.s.].

109

For the minority group, only group was significant $[F(1,85) = 44.56, p < .001]$, indicating a higher number of friends and/or frequency of contact with the Italian than with the Slovene group. Neither CMEIM $[F(1,81) = 0.05,$ n.s.] nor the interaction term $[F(1,85) = 0.76,$ n.s.] were significant.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The primary goal of the present investigation was to assess the emotional reactions toward the opening of the national frontier in the multi-ethnic Italo-Slovene borderland. The results clearly indicate that ethnical identification leads to negative emotional reactions among both the Italian and Slovene majority groups. In contrast, ethnic identification leads to more positive emotional reactions among the minority group.

SIT and multicultural theories make different predictions about the relation between the degree of ingroup identification and outgroup evaluations. According to SIT, as the ingroup identification grows, so it does the negative evaluation toward the outgroup members (e.g., Branscombe & Wann, 1994). Conversely, multicultural theories (Taylor, 1992) and ethnic identity developmental model (Phinney, 1989) argue that tolerance toward the outgroups depends on a strong and clear sense of ethnic identity.

When considering the majority groups, the present data are consistent with the predictions of SIT. For the two majority groups, in fact, ethnic identification not only leads to negative emotional reactions toward the opening of the national frontier, but also to (i) lower levels of acceptance and openness, as measured by the OGOS Scale (for the Italian majority group), (ii) more limited acceptable relations with the other two groups, as measured by the modified Social Distance Scale (for the Italian majority group), (iii) a lower level of contact, as measured by the reports of outgroup friendship (for the Slovene group), and (iv) a smaller degree of perceived similarity with the outgroup members (for the Italian group). These unfavorable outgroup attitudes may result from various factors that are related to the opening of the national frontier and that are perceived as negative, such as economic deprivation and frustration (Grenn, Glaser, & Rich, 1998), or threat to self-esteem (Fein & Spencer, 1997).

The minority group reveals a different pattern of results. Ethnic identification leads not only to more positive emotional reactions toward the opening of the national frontier, but also to (i) higher levels of acceptance and openness, (ii) acceptance of a broader range of relations with the Slovene group, and (iii) higher levels of perceived similarity with both outgroups. No evidence has been found, conversely, that the minority members tend to reject their own group and culture (i.e. Kinket & Verkuyten, 1999): The similarity ratings, for example, indicate that the minority members

identify with their ingroup as much as the members of the majority groups do. The results of the minority group, therefore, are consistent with the predictions of multicultural theories, but not with those of SIT.

For the minority group members, ingroup identification leads to a more favorable outgroup orientation. Such "outgroup love" has been linked to the moderating effect that the relative status of the comparison groups has on outgroups orientation. Whereas majority group members tend to display ingroup favoritism (Wagner, Lampen, & Syllwasschy, 1986), sometimes outgroup favoritism is observed for minority group members (Brown & Abrams, 1986; Espinoza & Garza, 1985; Ng, 1985; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1991; van Knippenberg, 1984) and this has been explained as the attempt of minority groups to identify with the majority group, in order to achieve higher status and esteem (Guimond, Dif, & Aupy, 2002).

Previous studies have shown that outgroup favoritism occurs only if group boundaries are permeable and low-status groups members can pursue membership in high-status groups. Guimond and Palmer (1993), for example, examined French and English Canadian students and observed outgroup favoritism among French Canadian students speaking fluent English, but not among those who spoke only French and could not, because of the language barrier, become members of the high-status group (see also Boldry & Kashy, 1999; Guimond, 2000; Reynolds, Oakes, Haslam, Nolan, & Dolnik, 2000; van Knippenberg & Ellemers, 1993; Taylor & McKirnan, 1984). In the present case, group boundaries are certainly permeable since, with respect to the minority group, the two outgroups may be considered more broad ingroups: Members of minority are affiliated and similar to both (even though our data suggest that the minority members feel closer to the Italian than to the Slovene group). Our results also indicate that respondents are more willing to associate with a target outgroup as perceived similarity with that outgroup increases. This finding provides evidence to similarity-attraction hypothesis (see Osbeck, Mogghaddam, & Perreault, 1997). What remains to be studied is whether the minority Slovene group maintains a favorable outgroup orientation also when other outgroups (neither Italian nor Slovenian) are perceived as distant and dissimilar.

In conclusion, it is important to stress that the present findings, consistently with previous research, reveal more discriminatory attitudes on the part of dominant social groups than on the part of minority group (Boldry & Kashy, 1999; Brown, 2000; Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Ellemers & van Knippenberg, 1997; Guimond & Palmer, 1993; Kinket & Verkuyten, 1999; Shah, Kruglanski, & Thompson, 1998; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). The more positive attitudes toward the outgroups displayed by minority members may be due to the greater opportunities to interact with other groups, the absence of a language barrier, and a propensity toward multicultural theories and pluralistic societies that value "unity in diversity". LaFromboise et

al. (1993) has also suggested that a bicultural identity, such that held by the minority group here considered, is the most adaptive. The challenge is to discover how to stimulate and induce such an attitude in majority groups as well. For minorities, in fact, openness is an attempt to achieve equality of treatment and recognition by the larger society whilst, in general, majorities do not have to deal with such issues.

REFERENCES

Aberson, C. L., Shoemaker, C., & Tomolillo, C. (2004). Implicit bias and contact: The role of interethnic friendships. *Journal of Social Psychology, 144,* 335-347.

Angus, I. (1997). A border within: National identity, cultural plurality, and wilderness. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Arends-Toth, J., & Van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2003). Multiculturalism and acculturation: Views of Dutch and Turkish-Dutch. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 33,* 249-266.

Berry, J. W., & Kalin, R. (1995). Multicultural and ethnic attitudes in Canada: An overview of the 1991 national survey. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 27,* 301-320.

Bettencourt, B. A., Dorr, N., Charlton, K., & Hume, D. (2001). Status differences and intergroup bias: A meta-analytic examination of the effects of status stability, status legitimacy, and group permeability. *Psychological Bulletin, 127,* 520-542.

Bogardus, E. S. (1933). A social distance scale. *Sociology and Social Science Research, 17,* 265-271.

Boldry, J. G., & Kashy, D. A. (1999). Intergroup perception in naturally occurring groups of differential status: A social relations perspective. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77,* 1200-1212.

Branscombe, N. R., & Wann, D. L. (1994). Collective self-esteem consequences of outgroup derogation when a valued social identity is on trial. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 24,* 641-657.

Brewer, M. B. (1979). Ingroup favouritism in the minimal intergroup situation: A cognitive motivational analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 86,* 307-324.

Brewer, M. B. (1999). The psychology of prejudice: Ingroup love or outgroup hate? *Journal of Social Issues, 55,* 429-444.

Brewer, M., & Campbell, D. (1976). *Ethnocentrism and intergroup attitudes: East African evidence.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Brown, R. (2000). Social identity theory: Past achievements, current problems and future challenges. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 30,* 745-778.

Brown, R. J., & Abrams, D. A. (1986). The effects of intergroup similarity and goal interdependence on inter-

group attitudes and task performance. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 22,* 78-92.

Bryk, A. S., & Raudenbush, S. W. (1992). *Hierarchical linear models: Applications and data analysis methods.* Newbury Park: Sage.

Costarelli, S., & Callf, R. M. (2004). Self-directed negative affect: The distinct roles of ingroup identification and outgroup derogation. *Current Research in Social Psychology, 10,* 13-27.

de Vries, R. E. (2003). Self, ingroup and outgroup evaluations: bond or breach? *European Journal of Social Psychology, 33,* 609-621.

Dijker, A. J. M. (1987). Emotional reactions to ethnic minorities. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 17,* 305-325.

Duckitt, J., Callaghan, J., & Wagner, C. (2005). Group Identification and Outgroup Attitudes in Four South African Ethnic Groups: A Multidimensional Approach. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 5,* 633-646.

Eagly, A. H., & Chaiken, S. (1993). *The psychology of attitudes.* Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Eagly, A. H., Mladinić, A., & Otto, S. (1994). Cognitive and affective bases of attitudes toward social groups and social policies. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 30,* 113-137.

Ellemers, N., Kortekaas, P., & Ouwerkerk, J. (1999). Self categorization, commitment to the group and social self esteem as related but distinct aspects of social identity. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 28,* 371-398.

Ellemers, N., & Van Knippenberg, A. (1997). Stereotyping in social context. In R. Spears, P. J. Oakes, N. Ellemers & S. A. Haslam (Eds.), *The social psychology of stereotyping and group life* (pp. 208-235). Oxford: Blackwell.

Ellison, C. G., & Powers, D. A. (1994). The Contact Hypothesis and Racial Attitudes among Black Americans. *Social Science Quarterly, 75,* 385-400.

Espinoza, J. A., & Garza, R. T. (1985). Social group salience and interethnic cooperation. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 21,* 380-392.

Fein, S., & Spencer, S. J. (1997). Prejudice as self-image maintenance: Affirming the self through derogating others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 73,* 31-44.

Fowers, B. J., & Richardson, F. C. (1996). Why is multiculturalism good? *American Psychologist, 51,* 609-621.

Fox, J. (2002). *An R and S-PLUS Companion to Applied Regression.* Newbury Park: Sage.

Grenn, D. P., Glaser, J., & Rich, A. (1998). From lynching to gay bashing: The elusive connection between economic conditions and hate crime. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75,* 82–92.

Guimond, S. (2000). Group socialization and prejudice: The social transmission of intergroup attitudes and beliefs. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 30,* 333-354.

Guimond, S., Dif, S., & Aupy, A. (2002). Social identity, relative group status and intergroup attitudes: When favourable outcomes change intergroup relations... for the worse. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 32,* 739–760.

Guimond, S., & Palmer, D. L. (1993). Developmental changes in ingroup favouritism among bilingual and unilingual francophone and anglophone students. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 12,* 318-351.

Hinkle, S., & Brown, R. (1990). Intergroup comparisons and social identity: Some links and lacunae. In D. Abrams & M. Hogg (Eds.), *Social identity theory: Constructive and critical advances* (pp. 48-70). New York: Springer.

Islam, M. R., & Janjah, M. (2001). Predictors of young Australians' attitudes toward aboriginals, Asians and Arabs. *Social Behavior and Personality, 29,* 571-582.

Jackson, J. W. (2002). Intergroup attitudes as a function of different dimensions of group identification and perceived intergroup conflict. *Self and Identity, 1,* 11-33.

Kinket, B., & Verkuyten, M. (1999). Intergroup evaluations and social context: a multilevel approach. *European journal of Social Psychology, 29,* 219-237.

Kymlicka, W. (1995). *Multicultural Citizenship.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

LaFromboise, T., Coleman, H. L. K., & Gerton, J. (1993). Psychological impact of biculturalism: Evidence and theory. *Psychological Bulletin, 114,* 395-412.

Lee, R. M., & Yoo, H. C. (2004). Structure and measurement of ethnic identity for Asian American college students. *Journal of Counselling Psychology, 51,* 263-269.

Lee, R. M. (2005). Resilience against discrimination: Ethnic Identity and Other-Group Orientation as protective factors for Korean Americans. *Journal of Counselling Psychology, 52,* 36-44.

Lindeman, M. (1997). Ingroup bias, self-enhancement and group identification. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 27,* 337-355.

Mackie, D. M., Devos, T., & Smith, E. R. (2000). Intergroup emotions: Explaining offensive action tendencies in an intergroup context. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79,* 602-616.

McGarty, C. (2001). Social identity theory does not maintain that identification produces bias, and self categorisation theory does not maintain that salience is identification: Two comments on Mummendey, Klink and Brown. *British journal of Social Psychology, 40,* 173-176.

Miller, N. (2002). Personalization and the promise of Contact Theory. *Journal of Social Issues, 58,* 387-410.

Mullen, R., Brown, R. J., & Smith, C. (1992). Ingroup bias as a function of salience, relevance and status. An in-tegration. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 22,* 103-122.

Mummendey, A., Klink, A., & Brown, R. (2001). Nationalism and patriotism: National identification and outgroup rejection. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 40,* 159-172.

Negy, C., Shreve, T. L., Jensen, B. J., & Uddin, N. (2003). Ethnic identity, self-esteem, and ethnocentrism: a study of social identity versus multicultural theory of development. *Cultural Diversity of Ethnic Minority Psichology, 9,* 333-344.

Ng, S. H. (1985). Bias in reward allocation resulting from personal status, group status and allocation procedure. *Australian Journal of Psychology, 37,* 297-307.

Osbeck, L. M., Mogghaddam, F. M., & Perreault, S. (1997). Similarity and attraction among majority and minority groups in a multicultural context. *International Journal of Intercultural behaviours, 21,* 113-123.

Pertot, S. (1991). Tostran meje: družbene predstave o narodnostni identiteti pri slovenskih predadolescentih v Trstu [On this side of the border: Social representations of national identity in slovenian preadolescents in Trieste]. *Progetto IRRSAE 002,* IRRSAE FVG: Trieste.

Pertot, S. (2002). The sense of ethnical and geographical identity of the Slovene schools' graduates in Trieste: a comparison of results of projective tests, applied in years 1990 and 2000. *Slovene Research Institute,* Trieste.

Pettigrew, T. F. (1997). Generalized intergroup contact effects on prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 23,* 173-185.

Pettigrew, T. F. (1998). Intergroup Contact Theory. *Annual Review of Psychology, 49,* 65-85.

Phinney, J. S. (1989). Stages of ethnic identity development in minority group adolescents. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 9,* 34-49.

Phinney, J. S. (1992). The multigroup ethnic identity measure: A new scale for use with diverse groups. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 7,* 156-176.

Reynolds, K. J., Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S. A., Nolan M. A., & Dolnik, L. (2000). Responses to powerlessness: Stereotyping as an instrument of social conflict. *Group Dynamics, 4,* 275-290.

Ruttenberg, J., Zea, M., & Sigelman, C. (1996). Collective identity and intergroup prejudice among Jewish and Arab students in the United States. *Journal of Social Psychology, 136,* 209-220.

Sachdev, I., & Bourhis, R. Y. (1991). Power and status differentials in minority and majority group relations. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 21,* 1-14.

Shah, J. Y., Kruglanski, A. W., & Thompson, E. P. (1998). Membership has its (epistemic) rewards: Need for clo-

sure effects on ingroup favoritism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75,* 383-393.

Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (1999). *Social dominance: An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Singer, J. D. (1998). Using SAS PROC MIXED to fit multilevel models, hierarchical models, and individual growth models. *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics, 24,* 323-355.

Stangor, C., Sullivan, L. A., & Ford, T. E. (1991). Affective and cognitive determinants of prejudice. *Social Cognition, 9,* 359-380.

Taylor, D. M., & McKiman, D. J. (1984). A five-stage model of intergroup relations. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 23,* 291-300.

Turner, J. C. (1981). The experimental social psychology of intergroup behaviour. In J. C. Turner & H. Giles (Eds.), *Intergroup behaviour* (pp. 66-101). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Van Knippenberg, A. (1984). Intergroup differences in group perceptions. In H. Tajfel (Ed.), *The social dimension: European studies in social psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 560-578). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van Knippenberg, A., & Ellemers, N. (1993). Strategies in intergroup relations. In M. A. Hogg, & D. Abrams (Eds.), *Group motivation* (17-32). Harvester Wheatsheef.

Verkuyten, M. (1992). Ethnic group preferences and the evaluation of ethnic identity among adolescents in The Netherlands. *Journal of Social Psychology, 132,* 741-50.

Verkuyten, M. (1997). The structure of ethnic attitudes: The effects of target group, region, gender, and national identity. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs, 123,* 261-284.

Verkuyten, M. (2001a). Ethnic group preferences and the evaluation of ethnic identity among adolescents in the Netherlands. *Journal of Social Psychology, 132,* 741-750.

Verkuyten, M. (2001b). National identification and intergroup evaluations in Dutch children. *British journal of Developmental Psychology, 19,* 559-571.

Verkuyten, M. (2005). Ethnic group identification, and group evaluations among minority and majority groups: Testing the multiculturalism hypothesis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 88,* 121-138.

Verkuyten, M., & Brug, P. (2004). Multiculturalism and ethnic group status: The role of ethnic identification, group essentialism and protestant ethic. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 34,* 647-661.

Verkuyten, M., Drabbles, M., & Van den Nieuwenhuijzen, K. (1999). Self-categorization and emotional reactions to ethnic minorities. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 29,* 605-619.

Verkuyten, M., & Nekuee, S. (1999). Ingroup bias: The effect of self-stereotyping, identification and group threat. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 29,* 411-418.

Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human groups and social categories.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tajfel, H., Billig, M. G., Bundy, R. P., & Flament, C. (1971). Social categorization and intergroup behavior. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 1,* 149-178.

Taylor, C. (1992). The politics of recognition. In A. Guttmann, C. Taylor, S. Wolf, S. Rockefeller, & M. Walzer (Eds.), Multiculturalism and "The politics of recognition" (pp. 25-73). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Wagner, U., Lampen, L., & Syllwasschy, J. (1986). Ingroup inferiority, social identity, and outgroup devaluation in a modified minimal group study. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 25,* 1 23.

Wagner, U., van Dick, R., Pettigrew, T. F., & Christ, O. (2003). Ethnic prejudice in East and West Germany: The exploratory power of inter-group contact. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, 6,* 22-36.

Zanna, M. P., & Rempel, J. K. (1988). Attitudes: A new look at an old concept. In D. Bar-Tal & A. Kruglanski (Eds.), *The social psychology of knowledge* (pp. 315-334). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.