

Introduction

Ethnic and political conflicts have been part of human experience throughout history. The persistence of conflicts in contemporary times is evident in examples such as Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, Sri Lanka, Basque Provinces, Chechnya, Rwanda, South Africa, Kashmir, and the Middle East. In these places groups clash and resort to violent means, including terrorism, atrocities, wars, ethnic cleansing, and genocide, that bring widespread suffering to the civilian population. In these conflicts psychological components play an important role. Group members act on the basis of the knowledge, images, attitudes, feelings, and emotions that they hold about the conflict; about their own past, present, and future as a group; and about the rival group. Although we do think that conflicts are about disagreements and contradictions with regard to real issues such as territories, self-determination, resources, or trade, we also believe that psychological determinants contribute greatly to their evolvment, maintenance, and management.

In discussing the psychological foundations of conflicts, the representation of the rival groups is of special importance, since it plays a determinative role in the intergroup relations. This representation, which includes cognitive-affective elements, determines the level of animosity, hostility, and mistrust between the groups that eventually may lead to violent acts that continue to reinforce the representation. In S. T. Fiske's words, "thinking is for doing" (1992, p. 877); we suggest that feeling as well as thinking about the other is for doing.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The study of a group's mental representations requires an exploration of stereotyping and prejudice, which are essential aspects of intergroup relations. Indeed, the study of stereotypes and prejudice is one of the major undertakings of the social sciences in general and social psychology

in particular. Currently, as is reflected by the numerous studies published in the past decade, this line of research is still one of the focal areas of social psychology (e.g., Bourhis & Leyens, 1999; Brown, 1995; Eberhardt & Fiske, 1998; Mackie & Hamilton, 1993; Macrae, Stangor, & Hewstone, 1996; Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994; Sedikides, Schopler, & Insko, 1998; Spears et al., 1997a; Stephan & Stephan, 1996a; Wyer, 1998; Zanna & Olson, 1994). This line of investigation has provided much knowledge about stereotypes and prejudice, mostly at an individual level but also at a group level. However, much of this research is preoccupied mostly with specific, microlevel research questions and refrains from looking at real-life issues in a holistic way. The latter approach is rare in social psychology, with the exception of the comprehensive, systematic, and coherent analysis of racism and sexism in the United States (e.g., Bem, 1993; Eagly, 1987; Kinloch, 1974; Schuman, Steeh, & Bobo, 1985; Simpson & Yinger, 1985).

This book tries to fill this void by applying an integrative, general, and universal conceptual framework to the study of the acquisition and development of stereotypes and prejudice in a society involved in an intractable conflict. We explore the case of how Arab stereotypes and prejudice evolve and are maintained by Jewish society in the state of Israel, and how they are acquired by the new generations. The representation of the Arab held by Israeli Jews is of interest because the Jewish society has been engaged in intractable conflict with Arabs for the past 100 years. The Arab social category has become the most significant and the most frequently used term in the Arab-Israeli conflict through the years, with respect to the generic group (i.e., Arabs) as well as to the specific ones (e.g., the Palestinians).

On the basis of knowledge accumulated in social, developmental, and political psychology, sociology, political science, cultural studies, and communication, we first present an integrative conceptual framework to deal with questions such as, How and why do stereotypes, prejudice, and emotions about the adversary come into being, and what are their contents? What functions do they fulfill? How are they transmitted by societal channels of communication and by political, social, cultural, and educational institutions? And what are their consequences? In this vein, our main empirical endeavors were directed at questions such as when and how young children acquire such views and how do they change through the developmental trajectory?

Our analysis of the Israeli Jewish society provides answers to these questions by drawing on published studies and studies performed in our laboratory over the past decade. Our research focuses on the acquisition and development of the Arab concept, image, stereotype, and prejudice by Israeli Jewish children and adolescents and includes interviews, questionnaires, task performance, and human figure drawings. The last method, developed in our laboratory, allows an implicit multidimensional

assessment of social perception, attitudes, and emotions – that is, of stereotypes and prejudice.

The study of stereotypes and prejudice has burgeoned for decades. The concept “stereotype” pertains to the cognitive repertoire (i.e., beliefs) that people have about the characteristics of other groups, and “prejudice” refers to the attitude that people hold toward another group (e.g., Leyens, Yzerbyt, & Schadron, 1994; Stroebe & Insko, 1989). The journalist and commentator Walter Lippmann (1922) coined the term “stereotype” in his book *Public opinion* to describe the uniform pictures (i.e., preconceptions) that group members hold in their minds to simplify their view of the world and for reaching common agreement regarding events in their environment. Although there were empirical studies about attitudes toward other groups in the 1920s (e.g., Bogardus, 1925; Thurstone, 1928), it was not until 1933 that Daniel Katz and Kenneth Braly formulated a more limited operational definition of stereotype and on this basis performed the first influential study of stereotypes. In their study, they define stereotypes as “pictures” of national and ethnic groups, which reflect attitudes toward them. These “pictures” include traits that produce varying levels of aversion or acceptance. The results indicate that people hold a shared repertoire of traits that characterize other groups, and that the observed sharing of traits is a result not of personal knowledge but of public fiction, when “individuals accept consciously or unconsciously the group fallacy attitude toward place of birth and skin color” (D. Katz & Braly, 1933, pp. 288–289). Katz and Braly’s pioneering study opened the road to other investigations of stereotypes and prejudice.

Over the years, as new theories and conceptions were developed, studies of stereotypes and prejudice shifted their emphasis. At first, stereotype was seen as the product of faulty, rigid, and irrational thinking, and it was often used interchangeably with prejudice (e.g., Fishman, 1956). However, later most researchers began to consider it an expression of normal and universal cognitive functioning, based on the categorization process (Tajfel, 1969). This basic conception is accepted today.

The continuous interest in stereotypes and prejudice by scientists from different disciplines conveys the significance attributed to this area. This drive is of importance since from very early on it was proposed that this line of study could contribute to an understanding of intergroup relations (Bogardus, 1928; D. Katz & Braly, 1935). This view is based on the assumption that members of a group act toward other groups on the basis of shared stereotypes and attitudes. In spite of this early awareness, however, many studies of stereotypes and prejudice in social psychology have remained focused on the individual’s thinking and feeling, ignoring the wider social context in which these processes occur. This implies that, up until today, the majority of the empirical studies and conceptualizations approached the study of stereotyping

and prejudice as a cognitive, evaluative, and affective process of the individual.

An Individual-Oriented Approach

An individualistic line of research is mainly geared to answering questions such as how individuals categorize other people, how they perceive other groups, how they encode information about other groups, how they remember information about other groups, how they store, organize, evaluate, and interpret information about other groups, how affect is related to the information about groups, how and when individuals retrieve the stored repertoire about other groups, under what conditions individuals may change their repertoire about other groups, and so on (see, e.g., the reviews by S. T. Fiske, 1998; Hamilton & Sherman, 1994). To answer these and similar questions, social psychology developed sophisticated and precise methods of investigation that made it possible to explore both conscious and unconscious layers of individuals' repertoires (see, e.g., Banaji & Greenwald, 1994).

The state of affairs described here is not surprising in light of the fact that for the past 40 years American social psychology has narrowly defined its scope of study as relating mainly to individuals. Despite emerging criticisms (see Bar-Tal, 2000a; Elms, 1975; Himmelweit & Gaskell, 1990; Israel & Tajfel, 1972; Oakes, et al., 1994), American social psychology has been dominated by the individualistic perspective. Brewer (1997) notes that "Over the years, the process of legitimizing social psychology as a sub-field of the discipline of psychology has led us to focus almost exclusively on the cognitive, motivational, and affective underpinning of social behavior – treating these individual-level processes as the building blocks of social processes. This emphasis has had the unintended consequences of colonializing social psychology" (p. 54). S. T. Fiske (2000) explains the focus of the American social psychologists on the individuals by pointing out that "Centuries of dramatically heterogeneous immigration into one nation have brought ethnic issues to the surface sooner in the USA than elsewhere. Coupled with an explicit constitutional ideology of equality, the US cultural focus on individualism places the responsibility for bias on individuals, and privileges individual autonomy over ethnic group identity" (p. 302).

Stereotypes and Prejudice as Societal Phenomena

The individualistic orientation in studies on stereotyping and prejudice provided valuable knowledge about the microdepiction of individual functioning but less understanding about the macropicture of the societal repertoire. As noted by D. Katz and Braly (1933) decades ago,

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5

stereotypes and prejudice are first and foremost societal phenomena, and it is in this perspective that their importance lies. Stereotypes and prejudice about particular outgroups develop within a particular intra- and intergroup social context. They concern specific ideas, attitudes, and feelings about another group; they are shared by group members and guide group members' behavior toward the stereotyped group. As such, stereotypes and prejudice play a determinative role in intergroup relations.

Only in the 1980s did the theory of social identity proposed by Henry Tajfel (Tajfel, 1978a, 1981a, 1981b; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which directed attention to social context, stimulate a considerable amount of new research, first in European and later in American social psychology. The theory places stereotypes in the context of group membership, suggesting that when people identify with the group by forming social identity, they tend to derogate and even discriminate outgroups in order to raise their own self-esteem as group members. This idea provides an important framework for understanding that stereotyping is a social intragroup and intergroup mechanism for forming consensual perception and intergroup differentiation. Tajfel argues against the individualistic views of stereotyping, stressing that "stereotypes held in common by large numbers of people are derived from, and structured by, the relations between large-scale groups or entities. The functioning and use of stereotypes result from an intimate interaction between this contextual structuring and their role in the adaptation of individuals to their social environment" (Tajfel, 1981a, p. 148).

Tajfel's theory directs the study of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination to new questions, such as when do group members derogate other groups, why do group members devalue other groups, what is the relationship between ingroup identification and stereotyping, what are the social functions of stereotyping and prejudice, how do groups of different status stereotype other groups, and how does differentiation between groups influence discrimination?

On the basis of social identity theory, John Turner and his colleagues conceptualize a self-categorization theory that focuses on the cognitive mechanism of self-categorization as an underlying basis of psychological group formation (Turner et al., 1987). In their opinion, individuals categorizing themselves as group members are subjected to social processes that create a common shared reality. In this framework, stereotypes represent the contextual view of intergroup reality, which group members are expected to accept (Oakes et al., 1994). The appearance of the social identity and self-categorization theories, as well as preoccupation with sharing beliefs in general and shared stereotypes in particular (e.g., Gardner, 1993; Stangor & Schaller, 1996), direct the attention in recent years to the social nature of the stereotypes.

A collection of papers by Spears et al. (1997a), titled *The social psychology of stereotyping and group life*, is one of the few examples that attempts to take “more social (but no less social psychological) dimensions of stereotypes, which might perhaps be better placed to explain the very social nature of the phenomena in which they are embedded (e.g., intergroup relations, ethnocentrism and prejudice)” (Spears et al., 1997b, p. 2). Their approach, greatly influenced by the self-categorization theory, has been most precisely described by Bourhis, Turner, and Gagnon (1997) in the same book:

The major theme of this book is that stereotypes are not only an outcome of individual cognitive functioning, but are always at the same time a social product of group life. Stereotypes are not idiosyncratic creations of particular personalities. They are collective representations of one’s own and other groups, shared by members of the stereotyping group and reflecting intergroup relationships. . . . they are collective in origin, evolving from within group interaction and influence to become normatively shared beliefs, consistent with group values and ideologies. . . . Moreover, the social context in which they develop is a specifically intergroup one. . . . They play an active and not merely passive role in the conduct of intergroup behaviour. (p. 273)

Accordingly, the study of the social nature of stereotypes and prejudice must take into account that people live in groups and that this is the determinative context of their life experience. As group members, individuals go through meaningful collective experiences, forming shared beliefs that shed light on their experienced reality, providing the basis for group identity, sense of commonality, interdependence, and functioning. In such a framework, the sharing of stereotypes and prejudice by group members is of crucial importance for social life. We acknowledge that understanding individual functioning is an important endeavor of psychology, but, as the founding fathers of social psychology proposed (see Asch, 1952; Lewin, 1947; Sherif & Sherif, 1969), we believe that social psychology as a discipline should also focus on the group context in which individuals function. “Social psychology needs understanding of the surroundings in which people act if it is to study adequately how they act in the surroundings. From the standpoint of psychology the regularities of society are a map or skeleton of the social environment necessary as a starting point of investigation of the individuals who are the actual centers and the points at which social forces intersect” (Asch, 1952, p. 37). And Sherif and Sherif (1969) write that “The interchange between the individual and his social surroundings is a two-way street. He is not merely the recipient of sociocultural influence, that is, a learner of his culture. In transaction with others, he is an active participant in the creation of social influence. . . . The two-way interchange between individual and sociocultural surroundings . . . is the core problem of social psychology” (p. 9).

In view of these premises, we assume that there is a significant difference between cases in which the stereotypes and prejudice are held by individuals who are not aware of their group members' repertoire and cases in which stereotypes and prejudices are shared by group members who are aware of this sharing. In the latter case, stereotypes and prejudice turn into powerful psychological mechanisms that can have a crucial effect on the status of this repertoire in individuals' minds and the functioning of the group in the intragroup framework and toward other group(s). That is to say, shared stereotypes and prejudice have important cognitive, affective, and behavioral implications for group members as individuals and for the group as a whole (see Bar-Tal, 2000a, for a theoretical conception and Stangor, Sechrist, & Jost, 2001, for a specific example). On an individual level, sharing validates the stereotypes and prejudices, turning them into a confidently held repertoire, expressed verbally and resistant to change. On the group level, it increases a sense of similarity and thus increases feelings of identification, cohesiveness, and unity. In addition, sharing affects the steps that the group takes in view of the perceived dispositions, abilities, and intentions of the other group(s). They may include reconciliation, cooperation, mobilization, deterrence, attack, and even genocide.

The study of the social nature of stereotypes and prejudice requires a focus on their formative contexts in the life of a group and on their expressions in particular contents. In this line of thinking, the study of macro-contexts is of special importance. Without the study of context it is impossible to understand the functioning of individuals in groups because human thoughts and feelings are embedded in historical, social, political, and cultural contexts (Bar-Tal & Sharvit, 2003). This embeddedness is a result of shared social life experiences, which include constant and continuous communication, social learning, and interaction. That is, the thoughts and feelings of individuals represent, under certain conditions and during a particular epoch, the norms, beliefs, values, and attitudes of their group, and these construct the particular context in which people live. In a more limited framework, contexts of continuous intergroup cooperation, friendship, support, disagreement, and competition and intragroup economic and/or political instability, rigid stratification, mobility, and authoritarianism provide a fertile ground for the evolvment of stable stereotypes and prejudice. These stereotypes and prejudice play a major role in group functioning in both intragroup and intergroup frameworks. Thus, the study of contents of stereotypes is inseparable from the study of contexts.

The contents of stereotypes, which evolve in the particular context, represent theories and ideas held by group members and can shed light on their intergroup reality. They explain the experiences of the group vis-à-vis other groups, and they also, together with the valence of the attitudes and affects and the particular emotions, serve as a motivating and directing

force for group behavior. As Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachey (1962) suggest, "Man acts upon his ideas. His irrational acts no less than his rational acts are guided by what he thinks, what he believes, what he anticipates. However bizarre the behavior of men, tribes or nation may appear to an outsider, to the men, to the tribes, to the nation, their behavior makes sense in terms of their own views" (p. 17).

Thus, the study of stereotypes in any macrocontexts is essential for social psychologists to understand group behavior in real-life situations. An example of this line of study can be found in the classic work on ethnocentrism by LeVine and Campbell (1972). On the basis of ethnographic work, they proposed several generalizations with regard to relations between certain group characteristics (e.g., urbanism, occupation, and political-technological dominance) and stereotype contents. For example, they proposed that "Rural groups are seen by urban groups as unsophisticated, guileless, gullible, and ignorant" (p. 159), or "Groups doing manual labor are seen as strong, stupid, pleasure-loving, improvident" (p. 160).

In addition, the study of the social nature of stereotypes and prejudice requires an examination of how they become shared and maintained by group members. Group members acquire stereotypes and prejudice in their social environment through agents of socialization, societal channels of communication, social institutions, and cultural products. These mechanisms serve to transmit and disseminate the contents of the stereotypes, as well as the attitudes, affect, and emotions toward other groups. They also help to maintain this repertoire by its continuous and systematic exposure. When stereotypes and prejudice are widely shared and used, they become societal phenomena. Accordingly, they need to be studied as societal phenomena in a systematic and holistic way that is able to explain and account for their societal functioning. This method of study necessitates an interdisciplinary approach, so that a comprehensive picture can be built up to provide a macroanalysis of a society. The present book focuses on one specific society and attempts to provide a systematic analysis of the stereotypes and prejudice in this society toward a particular group.

Unit of Analysis

In this book the terms "a group" and "a society" are used interchangeably. The first term is frequently used in social psychology, whereas the second is mainly used in other social sciences. Although the term society was previously used by social psychologists, and even one of the classic textbooks by Krech et al. (1962) was titled *Individual in society*, the term has almost disappeared from the vocabulary of mainstream social psychology, which prefers to use the term group, even when referring to large systems (e.g., see Oakes et al., 1994). This trend is not accidental but reflects the previously noted preoccupation of social psychology with the

individuals and their functioning in small groups. Still, it is worth noting that even now the study of small groups receives less attention than the study of the individual (Moreland & Hogg, 1993; Wilder & Simon, 1998) and the study of the individual's functioning in the society has almost disappeared completely from the agenda of social psychology (Bar-Tal, 2000a; Himmelweit & Gaskell, 1990). Although various social psychologists and sociologists have offered different definitions for the term group, they all provide minimal requirements for collectives to be included in this category (see, e.g., Brown, 2000; Homans, 1950; Shaw, 1981; Tajfel, 1981b). The definitions suggest that a group may include two or more individuals who have something in common (e.g., similarity, common goal, common fate), define themselves as a group, and form some kind of basis for common functioning (e.g., interdependence, common task, relationship, mutual influence). Under these conditions we can include a dyad as well as a society in the category group, implying that the term group is more general than the term society.

In contrast, the term society defines the collective in a more specific way. It denotes large stable social systems, with a collective of people who have a clear sense of common social identity; differentiate themselves from other societies; lay claim to the legitimate occupation of a territory; and create traditions, culture, collective memories, belief systems, social structures, channels of communication, and institutions (Giddens, 1984; Griswold, 1994; Hoebel, 1960). Of special importance is the observation that "society is thus the creation of its members; the product of their construction of meaning, and of the action and relationships through which they attempt to impose meaning on their historical situation" (Dawe, 1970, p. 214). This observation suggests that society members construct shared beliefs, which reflect the perceived reality and at the same time shape their world view. These shared beliefs also demarcate the society's boundaries. In modern times national societies are meaningful units of belonging and serve as an important basis for individuals' social identity. Israeli Jewish society is the focus of our analysis and research, and in this book we use the term group when we discuss the social psychological literature and the term society when we refer to a defined particular collective, such as a Jewish collective living in the state of Israel.

The Context of Intractable Conflict

The present book focuses on a particular macrocontext characterized by intractable conflict, known as the Arab-Israeli conflict. The beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict can be traced to the end of the nineteenth century, when the first Zionist immigrants who arrived in Palestine to realize their national goals were soon confronted by the local Arab population, which had opposing national aspirations. The massive immigration of Jews

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and the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 escalated the conflict between Jews and Arabs over territorial and national rights. The conflict has generated seven wars and several civil uprisings. The continuous flare-ups of violence, along with unrelenting animosity, denote the intractable nature of the conflict that has an ongoing presence in the experience of the people living in this area. At the same time as the violent confrontations, attempts were made to put an end to the conflict and to initiate and maintain the peace process. Deescalating events, such as the peace treaties between Egypt and Israel in 1979 and between Jordan and Israel in 1995, the Madrid conference in 1991, and the mutual recognition between the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the state of Israel in 1993, represent such attempts. The present eruption of violence (beginning in fall 2000) in the region indicates how difficult it is to resolve a deeply rooted, intractable conflict that has lasted for generations.

Most of the findings of our research project were obtained between 1992 and 1999 when the peace process had the upper hand; only two studies were performed after 2000. The findings of all the studies are reported in detail in Chapters 9, 10, and 11, but already here we note that Jewish Israeli children and adolescents hold a very negative repertoire about Arabs. This repertoire, which includes stereotypes, prejudice, affect, emotions, and behavioral intentions, is acquired at a very early age and, despite periodical moderation, is maintained through the developmental trajectory into young adulthood.

Generally findings indicate that the context of the intractable conflict, which is characterized by prolonged and violent confrontation between two groups over their contradictory essential and existential goals, has a powerful influence on the psychological repertoire of the group members involved in such conflict. As the conflict lasts, people form a stable view of the violent reality and the adversary, including his ascribed characteristics, dispositions, feelings, and intentions. All serve the purpose of comprehending the reasons for the outbreak of the conflict and its course, explaining past and present behavior of the rival, and predicting future acts. In the context of an intractable conflict, the accumulated experiences and the continuous stream of negative information about the opponent validate and reinforce the held repertoire. This negative repertoire is stored, frozen, and chronically continually accessible.

Because most of the members of the society are actively or passively, directly or indirectly, involved with the conflict, this repertoire is widely shared. The shared repertoire is expressed in the major societal channels of communications and eventually permeates cultural products such as books, plays, and films and may even become a part of the ethos of the society. Thus, on the one hand, societal communications and cultural products reflect the beliefs, attitudes, and affects experienced by the members of the society, and at the same time they also transmit, disseminate, and validate