Moral motivation within groups

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Chapter 1

General Introduction

"Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value" — Albert Einstein

Morality refers to ethics, to that which is considered to be right or wrong, to codes of conduct. These codes of conduct, or normative rules about how one is supposed to feel, think, and behave, are put forward by the social groups one belongs to. At the most abstract level, these are explicitly formulated by societies in terms of laws, and by religions in terms of, for example, the Ten Commandments. In everyday life, however, codes of conduct are set by the smaller social groups one belongs to, such as companies, schools, and clubs. Usually these codes of conduct are not explicitly formulated but rather manifest itself in implicit norms and expectations as to how one should, and should not, behave as a member of that group. Individuals are not only *expected* to behave in line with the group's norms and expectations, they are also *motivated* to do so. That is, individuals derive part of their self-esteem from their group membership, and consequently strive towards attainment of a positive social identity (i.e., a positive evaluation of that part of their self that comprises their group membership; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). At the intragroup level this means that groups evaluate the extent to which individual group members adhere to the group's norms and expectations, thereby affirming and maintaining the positive social identity of the group. In turn, individual group members care about how the group evaluates them and are motivated to act accordingly.

Despite the great potential to influence others on the basis of morality judgments, the majority of previous studies examining what motivates group members have mainly focused on competence judgments as the primary domain of evaluation. Competence judgments are important because they reflect the group's and individual group members' level of success, which in turn determines both their individual and the group's status. More recently, however, the attention of researchers who investigate group processes and intergroup relations has shifted towards the motivational power of judgments on the domain of morality (e.g., Ellemers & Van den Bos, 2012; Leach, Bilali, & Pagliaro, 2013). As Albert Einstein implied, it might be more important for individuals to adhere to the group's moral standards than to try to meet the group's standards of competence.

Indeed, *moral motivation* refers to the motivational force of morality judgments (The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2008). That is, morality judgments seem to have an intrinsic connection with motivation and behavior.

When something is judged to be (im)moral, for example as either being right or wrong, individuals tend to be intrinsically motivated to act accordingly (e.g., Aquino & Reed, 2002). Morality judgments thus have a motivational impact on individuals, because individuals are generally inclined to behave in ways that they judge to be "good", "right", and "fair". This is not only the case for individuals' own morality judgments, but also for the morality judgments of the group. Research has demonstrated how morality judgments at the individual level motivate behavioral choices (e.g., moral reasoning and decision making; Greene, Sommerville, Nystrom, Darley, & Cohen, 2001; Haidt & Kesebir, 2010), whereas research at the intergroup level has demonstrated how morality judgments affect intergroup relations (e.g., stereotyping, intergroup violence; Bandura, 1999; Janoff-Bulman, Sheikh, & Hepp, 2009). Yet, little research has examined how morality judgments regulate behavior *within* groups. This is the focus of the research described in this dissertation.

The aim of the current dissertation is to shed more light on the impact of moral motivation on individuals in groups by adopting a social identity approach. This approach can help us understand how individuals as members of social groups feel, think, and behave. Building on the premise that a social identity can motivate individual group members, in the research described in this dissertation I examine the impact of morality judgments on group members' motivational responses—in terms of affect, cognition, psychophysiology, and behavior—and compare those to the impact of competence judgments. I investigate the regulation of group behavior by taking on an intragroup perspective: In Chapter 2, I focus on how group members respond to the group's morality or competence judgments of their *own* prior behavior; in Chapter 3, I demonstrate how the morality or competence judgments of *another* ingroup member's behavior reflect on the self as a group member; and in Chapter 4, I examine how group members respond to *prospective* group members who are judged on the domain of morality or competence. In sum, the goal of the current dissertation is to enhance our understanding of how morality vs. competence judgments regulate the motivated behavior of individuals in groups.

A social identity approach to intragroup evaluations

In examining the motivated behavior of individuals in groups, the social identity approach offers a comprehensive theoretical framework that provides an integrative perspective on group processes and intergroup relations. The social identity approach—consisting of Social Identity Theory and Self-Categorization Theory—is indeed one of most influential approaches to understanding inter- and intragroup behavior. It has been extensively applied in research on the motivational, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of group processes, and explains, among other phenomena, individual motivation in groups in terms of the value of group membership for the self (e.g., Ellemers, 2012; Hornsey, 2008; Postmes, Haslam, & Swaab, 2005; Turner, 1991). According to Social Identity Theory (SIT; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), individuals derive part of their self-concept from their social identity. Social identity is that part of the self that stems from the social groups one belongs to and includes the emotional and evaluative consequences of this group membership. Considering that people are motivated to maintain positive self-esteem, they strive for a positive social identity (i.e., a positive evaluation of their group membership). Consequently, individuals care deeply about how the group evaluates them as well as other individuals in the group, because these others constitute part of their social identity. Following SIT's propositions, Self-Categorization Theory (SCT; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987) elaborates on the cognitive aspects of social identification by explaining how individuals (self)categorize as members of social groups. This categorization leads to *depersonalization*, meaning that individuals, once categorized as members of a social group, see themselves more in terms of the attributes (e.g., emotions, attitudes, behavior) of the group than in terms of their relatively unique combination of personal attributes. In other words, individuals internalize the attributes of the group through a social identity (Postmes et al., 2005). According to the social identity approach, a social identity thus not only represents to which group an individual belongs, but also provides the individual with group norms as a useful guideline for the appropriate ways to feel, think, and act. Individuals are motivated to emphasize intragroup agreement about core group values (e.g., Brown, 2000; Hornsey, 2008). In turn, they strive to behave in ways that maintain the legitimacy of the group's values and ultimately their positive social identity,

because this leads them to be liked and praised, and they gain ingroup respect from doing so (Branscombe, Spears, Ellemers, & Doosje, 2002; Hogg & Hardie, 1991; Schmitt, Silvia, Branscombe, 2000).

A primary strategy through which individuals can maintain the positive social identity of their group is by validating the group's norms. Adherence to the prescriptive norms—the requirements that group members must meet in order to validate their positive social identity (e.g., Pinto, Marques, Levine, & Abrams, 2010)—are particular relevant for this purpose, because they lead to a set of expectations about how group members should feel, think, and act. The subjective group dynamics model describes how groups, through a process of intragroup differentiation, validate the group's positive social identity (e.g., Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Henson, 2000; Marques, Abrams, & Serôdio, 2001; Marques, Abrams, Paez, & Martinez-Taboada, 1998). That is, groups differentiate between individual group members depending on the extent to which they adhere to the group's standards, because validation of those standards legitimizes the group's positive social identity (e.g., Doosje, Ellemers, & Spears, 1995; Lee & Ottati, 1995).

This differentiation in the extent to which group members adhere to the group's norms can be established by means of a socialization process (Levine & Moreland, 1994; Moreland & Levine, 1982). During the socialization process, groups encourage individuals to adopt the group's norms and evaluate whether they already fit these norms (Ellemers & Jetten, 2013). This process is important for both the group and its individual members: The outcome determines whether individual group members are seen to meet the standards of the group, and, as a consequence, affects not only the social identity of the group as a whole, but also the identity of individual members in the group (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). When individual behavior is evaluated as being in line with the group's expectations, the positive social identity of the individual and the group is validated and legitimized. However, when the evaluation reveals that there are discrepancies between the group's expectations and the individual's behavior, the positive social identity is at risk and the group undertakes action (e.g., excluding the individual) in order to protect its image.

Indeed, deviating group members—group members who do not act in line with the group's norms or expectations—undermine the positive social identity and as a consequence are often reprimanded. Rebukes can range from

a warning to derogation, hostility, punishment, and even social exclusion (e.g., Marques & Paez, 1994; Moreland & Levine, 1982; Pinto et al., 2010; Williams, Forgas, & Von Hippel, 2005). For example, the 'Black Sheep Effect' describes how deviating ingroup members are derogated and excluded from the group in order to uphold the positive social identity of the group (Marques, Yzerbyt, & Leyens, 1988). Although the majority of researchers examining responses to deviating group members have focused on negative deviants (i.e., group members who *negatively* deviate from the group's standards; e.g., Marques et al., 1988; Pinto et al., 2010), there is also research that demonstrates how group members who *positively* deviate from the group's standards can arouse negativity (e.g., Abrams et al., 2000; Cleveland, Blascovich, Gangi, & Finez, 2011; Monin, Sawyer, & Marquez, 2008; Parks & Stone, 2010).

The key in understanding the negative responses to deviating group members—regardless of the direction of deviance—is whether or not group members behave in line with the group's expectations. Deviance, whether it is positive or negative, undermines the legitimacy of the group's values and distinctiveness, and poses a threat to the positive social identity. Consequently, groups derogate deviant group members as a way to protect the group's positive social identity. In turn, these negative responses have a major impact on the deviating target, as rejection has been shown to threaten basic needs and mirrors physical pain (e.g., Eisenberger, Lieberman, & Williams, 2003; Williams et al., 2005). Acting in line with the group's expectations is thus not only beneficial for individual group members' self-esteem because it validates their positive social identity and commands respect (e.g., Branscombe et al., 2002); it also avoids painful rebukes from the group.

Thus, an important function of intragroup evaluations is that they validate the positive social identity. In particular, evaluations that reveal a discrepancy between an individual's behavior and the group's expectations are useful, because they indicate a potential threat to the group's positive social identity. These evaluations can consequently be used to reprimand deviating group members and to elicit desired behaviors that validate the group norms. Group members are in turn motivated to gain ingroup respect and to avoid the costs of being reprimanded by acting in line with the group's expectations. Thus, intragroup evaluations can motivate individual group members to display desirable behavior and ultimately validate the group's positive social

identity. With the research described in the current dissertation, I aim to further examine the impact of intragroup evaluations on group members' motivational responses, by distinguishing between two different evaluative domains: Morality and competence.

The evaluative domains of morality versus competence

Social judgments generally seem to differ along two fundamental domains: Competence and warmth (Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Judd, James-Hawkins, Yzerbyt, & Kashima, 2005). However, in examining what drives the behavior of individuals in groups, the focus of past research has almost solely been on judgments of competence (e.g., Bettencourt, Dorr, Charlton, & Hume, 2001; Ellemers, 1993; Ouwerkerk & Ellemers, 2002). Evaluations of abilities and task performance are seen as important indicators of individual and group success in terms of outcomes and resources, and determine the status of both the individual and the group (e.g., Fiske et al., 2002). Evaluations of warmth have been considered as an alternative source of esteem, or as a source of information that qualifies the competence judgments (i.e., cooperative or competitive intentions towards others; Fiske et al., 2002). Recent research, however, demonstrated that within the warmth cluster sociability judgments (i.e., friendliness, likeability) can and should be distinguished from morality judgments (i.e., trustworthiness, honesty; Leach, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2007). This research has caused a shift in focus from competence judgments as the main driving force behind motivated behavior to the importance of morality judgments for individuals and groups.

Indeed, various literatures describe morality as a primary source of value for the self, others, and groups. On the individual level, people across different cultures consider moral values to be among the most important guiding principles in their lives (Dahlsgaard, Peterson, & Seligman, 2005; Schwartz, 1992), and people desire having a moral identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Monin & Jordan, 2009). When judging others, people primarily consider information about morality (Wojciszke, 1994), and value characteristics that are indicative of morality—such as trustworthiness—the most (Cottrell, Neuberg, & Li, 2007). At the group level, morality is seen as essential for survival and cooperation (e.g., De Waal, 1996; Skitka, 2003). Moreover, morality is argued to regulate the behavior of individuals in groups (Ellemers & Van den Bos,

2012; Leach et al., 2013). In sum, research has alluded to the importance of morality by showing that—both at the interpersonal and the group level—people want to be considered moral and want to belong to moral groups.

Considering the centrality of morality for people's identity, it stands to reason that individuals care deeply about judgments regarding their own and relevant others' (i.e., group members') morality. An additional reason for the importance of morality judgments is provided by research on the asymmetry of morality judgments in terms of attributional diagnosticity during impression formation (e.g., Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). That is, negative information about morality is perceived to be more diagnostic of individual dispositions than negative information about competence. The opposite is argued for positive information: Positive information about competence is perceived as more diagnostic of the individual than positive information about morality. Negative morality judgments in particular have thus been argued to be valuable sources of information because they are considered to be diagnostic, stable, and therefore of predictive value in terms of future behavior (Martijn, Spears, Van der Pligt, & Jakobs, 1992; Reeder & Spores, 1983; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). Not surprisingly then, people are particularly attuned to morality judgments; they possess a certain degree of moral attentiveness (Reynolds, 2008). Continuing this line of reasoning, it is also not surprising that morality judgments elicit strong affective responses in people (Skitka, Bauman, & Sargis, 2005; Wojciszke, 2005) and, as outlined in more detail below, impact on the regulation of individual motivation and behavior.

At the individual level, morality affects the behavioral choices that people make. Generally speaking, morality judgments impact on individuals' self-regulatory efforts and motivation to refrain from behaving inhumanly and to strive to behave humanly (Bandura, 1999). Prior displays of *immoral* behavior are argued to threaten one's sense of self-worth, and consequently individuals engage in compensatory behaviors in an effort to regain their sense of esteem and identity. These 'moral cleansing' effects have been related to different compensatory behaviors, such as pro-social behaviors like donating to charity and volunteering (e.g., Jordan, Mullen, & Murnighan, 2011; Sachdeva, Iliev, & Medin, 2009). Contrary, prior displays of *moral* behavior are argued to have affirmed the individual's esteem and identity (i.e., the individual has established moral credentials), and therefore allow the individual to temporarily refrain

from moral behavior (because engaging in moral behavior is often costly and effortful). This 'moral licensing' has been related to a range of immoral behaviors, such as cheating (Jordan et al., 2011; Sachdeva et al., 2009). These effects of morality judgments on subsequent behavior are not only demonstrated when the morality judgment concerned individuals' own prior behavior, but also when the morality judgment concerned the behavior of others. That is, individuals display vicarious (im)moral behavior in response to witnessing (im)moral behavior of *others*. On the one hand, research has demonstrated that when one's group has established moral credentials by behaving in a nonprejudiced manner, individuals are more willing to subsequently express prejudiced attitudes (i.e., vicarious moral licensing; Kouchaki, 2001). On the other hand, the unethical behavior of one's group member can also enhance individuals' subsequent cheating behavior (i.e., moral contagion), arguably because individuals infer social norms from the morality judgments of others' behavior (Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2009).

Other lines of research examined the impact of morality on individual behavior by focussing on decision making in so-called moral dilemmas. Whereas developmental psychology has traditionally argued for a key role of cognition in moral reasoning (e.g., Kohlberg, 1969), more recent research argues for "the new synthesis in moral psychology", emphasizing the role of emotion and intuition in moral decision making (e.g., Haidt, 2001; 2008; Haidt & Kesebir, 2010). By employing research methods such as the trolley and footbridge dilemmas—in which individuals are confronted with the dilemma of saving five people at the expense of one, or saving five people at the cost of harming one, respectively (e.g., Greene et al., 2001)—the role of affect and emotion-related brain areas in moral decision making are investigated (Greene & Haidt, 2002; Greene, Nystrom, Engell, Darley, & Cohen, 2004; Haidt, Koller, & Dias, 1993). In summary, as outlined above, an extensive body of research demonstrated the impact of morality judgments on the regulation of individual motivation and behavior.

At the group level, morality judgments also impact on motivation and behavior regulation. Morality is seen as an important regulator of social relationships (Rai & Fiske, 2011) and affects intergroup relations. For example, it has been argued that liberals and conservatives have different moral standards (Haidt & Graham, 2007), which has implications for the role of

morality in social regulation and justice (for a discussion see Janoff-Bulman et al., 2009; Janoff-Bulman & Carnes, 2013). More generally, morality appears to be an important domain of social categorization, even more so than is the case for competence (Van Leeuwen, Park, & Penton-Voak, 2012). Morality judgments, compared to competence judgments, guide information gathering (Brambilla, Rusconi, Sacchi, & Cherubini, 2011) and dominate impression formation when judging other groups (Brambilla, Sacchi, Rusconi, Cherubini, & Yzerbyt, 2011). When considering the ingroup, morality judgments are more important than competence judgments for a positive evaluation (Leach et al., 2007) and guide the behavioral choices of individual group members (Ellemers, Pagliaro, Barreto, & Leach, 2008). That is, group members are motivated to act in line with the group's moral standards, because they anticipate gaining ingroup respect by behaving in this way (Pagliaro, Ellemers, & Barreto, 2011). In addition, morality judgments about a newcomer determine group members' willingness to help the newcomer adjust (Pagliaro, Brambilla, Sacchi, D'Angelo, & Ellemers, 2013).

Taken together, different literatures describe the impact of morality judgments on motivation and behavior-regulation at the individual, interpersonal, and group level. The current research operates at the intersection of these interpersonal and group processes by examining the impact of morality judgments in intragroup relations. Specifically, in the experiments reported in this dissertation I investigate how morality judgments, compared to competence judgments, affect the motivational responses of individual group members. In doing so, the current research aims to enhance our understanding of how morality regulates motivation and behavior *within* groups. Before providing an overview of the research described in this dissertation, I will first elaborate on the concept of morality, and subsequently describe different aspects of group members' motivational responses—affect, cognition, psychophysiology, behavior—on which these morality judgments may impact.

Morality defined

Considering the extensive body of research on morality judgments, part of which is reviewed above, it is both surprising and important to note that there is no generally accepted definition of morality. Morality is sometimes defined

as that which is good and right (e.g., Aquino & Reed, 2002), as consisting of generic virtues such as care vs. harm (e.g., Haidt & Graham, 2007; Graham, Nosek, Haidt, Iyer, Koleva, & Ditto, 2011), or as indicated by specific traits such as honesty and trustworthiness that can characterize individuals or groups (e.g., Leach et al., 2007). Regardless of the level of abstraction at which morality is defined, however, there seems to be a general consistency regarding the content of what exactly constitutes morality, namely *trustworthiness*. Trustworthiness is a necessity for inferences about morality, because it is what people find most desirable in others, it is viewed similar across societies, and it is most beneficial for interacting and cooperating with others (for an overview see Leach et al., 2013). Trustworthiness thus appears to be the most important aspect underlying notions of "right" and "wrong", which can be expressed by endorsing the moral foundations (Haidt & Graham, 2007) of Care/Harm and Fairness/Reciprocity, both to others (Ingroup/Loyalty and Authority/Respect) and to the self (Purity/Sanctity). These virtues can in turn be deduced to concrete personality traits that pertain to trustworthiness, such as sincerity and honesty. These traits indicate how individuals relate to others, and it has been shown that people judge these to be moral traits (Leach et al., 2007; Leach et al., 2013). The social implications of morality judgments—besides their conceptual content—are, however, pivotal to understanding the impact of morality in groups (e.g., Ellemers & Van den Bos, 2012). In this dissertation, I therefore primarily focus on the social implications of morality judgments rather than on the content of the morality judgments per se.

Motivational responses

As outlined earlier, morality vs. competence judgments of group members' behavior are argued to have an impact on their motivational responses. Motivation refers to the way in—and degree to—which individuals try to attain their goals (e.g., Carver, Sutton, & Scheier, 2000; Higgins, 1997; Locke & Latham, 1990; 2002; Pinder, 1998). The literature on motivation generally distinguishes between two basic strategies for self-regulation towards goal attainment: The first strategy aims at approaching positive outcomes, ideals, and challenges; while the second strategy aims at avoiding negative outcomes, obligations, and threats (e.g., Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996; Carver & Scheier, 1990; Higgins, 1997). These motivations have been linked to different

responses in terms of affect, cognitions, psychophysiology, and behavior (e.g., Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996, Carver & Scheier, 1990; Higgins, 1997). For example, approach motivation has been associated with positive affect, whereas avoidance motivation has been associated with negative affect (e.g., Cacioppo, Gardner, & Berntson, 1999; Carver et al., 2000). Motivational responses—whether affective, cognitive, psychophysiological or behavioral—can thus be perceived as responses that follow goal pursuit and are affected by the degree to which goal striving is effective.

Connecting these insights to intragroup evaluations suggests that validation of the group's positive social identity is a goal that group members highly value, and that intragroup evaluations are informative of the extent to which attainment of this goal is met. Indeed, people have a "sociometer" that monitors the degree to which they are included or excluded by others, and motivates them to behave in ways that maintain their connections with others (Leary, Tambor, Terdal, & Downs, 1995). Whereas intragroup evaluations can indicate that goal striving is successful, evaluations can also reveal a discrepancy between the individual's behavior and the group's expectations, indicating a less successful pursuit of the positive social identity. I argue that the morality judgments of the group are more important indicators of group members' successful goal pursuit than the group's competence judgments, and that these judgments consequently elicit different motivational responses in group members. In order to examine this notion, I compare how morality and competence judgments impact on group members motivational responses, in terms of affect, cognition, psychophysiology, and behavior. I will next elaborate on each of these responses.

Affective responses

When considering the impact of an event, the emotional response is intuitively one of the first that individuals attend to (i.e., how does it *feel*). In general, people categorize emotions in terms of valence (pleasant – unpleasant) and degree of arousal (high – low; Russell, 1980). Although both the valence and intensity (i.e., arousal) of affective responses have been linked to motivational consequences (e.g., Gable & Harmon-Jones, 2010), affective valence directly emerges from motivation (Carver & Scheier, 1990). Put differently, goal pursuit leads to the experience of positive and/or negative affect. When goal

striving is successful, individuals report positive feelings such as happiness, enthusiasm, and excitement. In a similar vein, when goal striving is unsuccessful, people generally experience negative feelings, such as anxiety, sadness, and despair. Because one of the aims of the current dissertation is to examine how intragroup evaluations impact on the direction of the affective experience rather than on the intensity of the affective responses, I specifically focus on the valence dimension of affect.

Cognitive responses

Research on motivation and coping has illuminated the ways in which goal pursuit can affect cognitive responses. Individuals' coping ability with regard to any given situation is indicated by their cognitive appraisals of how the situational demands relate to their currently available personal resources (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988; Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen, & DeLongis, 1986; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Two kinds of cognitive appraisals can be distinguished: Primary and secondary appraisals. Primary appraisals refer to the immediate assessment of the stakes for one's self-esteem in terms of situational demands (i.e., danger, uncertainty). Secondary appraisals refer to the degree of available resources (i.e., abilities) to overcome or solve the situation whilst benefiting, or without harming, one's self-esteem. Once a situation is appraised as a potential threat to one's self-esteem (i.e., demanding in terms of e.g., uncertainty, required effort), cognitive appraisals of personal resources (i.e., knowledge, skills) thus determine one's perceived coping ability.

In situations where group members are evaluated on the extent to which their behavior is in line with the group's standards, this implies an immediate risk for their self-esteem. That is, if the evaluation indicates that there is a discrepancy between the group's expectations and the individual's behavior, the positive social identity of the group is undermined. Intragroup evaluations are thus demanding in the sense that they are likely to be primarily appraised as a potential threat to one's positive social identity. In the current dissertation, I therefore focus on group members' cognitive appraisals as indicating the balance between the situational demands and personal resources in coping with intragroup morality and competence evaluations.

Psychophysiological responses

According to the Biopsychosocial model (BPSM) of challenge and threat, appraisals of a situation in terms of situational demands and personal resources also induce different psychophysiological states (e.g., Blascovich & Mendes, 2000; Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996). When situational demands outweigh individual resources, a state of *threat* emerges. Conversely, when individual resources outweigh situational demands, a state of *challenge* emerges. The BPSM focuses specifically on motivated performance situations—situations that require instrumental responses in terms of affective, cognitive, and behavioral actions that can be evaluated—because these situations are engaging and goal relevant (e.g., working on a group task, giving a presentation). Although often discussed as similar, challenge and threat differ from approach-avoidance energization models of motivation (for a discussion see Blascovich, 2008b). Whereas both challenge and threat states are engaging and goal relevant, both involve approach tendencies. In a state of threat, however, there simultaneously is a desire to avoid. The BPSM thus describes motivational states along a bipolar motivational continuum ranging from threat to challenge, because both contain approach, but are separated by their level of avoidance.

The BPSM also describes how specific patterns of cardiovascular markers indicate the motivational states of challenge and threat. Because both challenge and threat involve approach tendencies and engagement, both involve activation of the sympathetic neural and adrenal medullary (SAM) axis. SAM activation involves sympathetic nervous system activity, which mobilizes the body in stressful situations that require action (flight-or-flight responses). This produces increases in myocardial (i.e., heart muscle) contractility, visible in increased heart rate (HR) and decreased pre-ejection period (PEP; an index of left ventricular contractile force). The epinephrine released due to SAM activation further increases HR which results in increased cardiac output (CO; the amount of blood in liters that is pumped through the heart per minute), but also leads to a dilation of the arteries, resulting in decreased total peripheral vascular resistance (TPR; the resistance of blood flow through the arterial system). Challenge states primarily involve SAM activation. In a state of threat, however, there is not only SAM activation but simultaneously also activation of the hypothalamic pituitary adrenal (HPA) axis. HPA activation leads to the

release of cortisol which inhibits the effects of SAM activation on TPR, resulting in an increase in TPR and decrease in CO. Based on SAM and HPA activity, which lead to measurable cardiovascular responses (HR, PEP, CO, TPR), challenge and threat motivational states can thus be distinguished. First, task engagement and goal relevance (a fundamental characteristic of motivated performance) are indicated by an increase in HR and a decrease in PEP. Second, a combination of CO and TPR index challenge and threat: Challenge is marked by relatively high CO and low TPR, whereas threat is marked by relatively low CO and high TPR. Taken together, both challenge and threat states involve SAM activation, indicating approach tendencies towards a goal in terms of task engagement and goal relevance. Additional HPA activity indicates simultaneous avoidance tendencies in threatening, but not challenging, situations. Challenge states thus represent a relative efficient pattern of cardiovascular reactivity during motivated performances (more and easy blood flow through dilated arteries), whereas threat states represent a rather inefficient pattern of cardiovascular reactivity (reduced blood flow through constricted arteries).

Over the last years, research on the BPSM has associated the motivational states of challenge and threat (and their cardiovascular correlates) to specific cognitive and behavioral outcomes. In general, and parallel to the cognitive demands/resources ratio, challenge facilitates better performance than threat (see Blascovich, 2008b for a review). For example, challenge states enhance subsequent athletic performance relative to threat states (Blascovich, Seery, Mugridge, Norris, & Weisbuch, 2004), as well as academic performance (Seery, Weisbuch, Hetenyi, & Blascovich, 2010). Depending on the nature of the task, threat states may however also facilitate performance compared to challenge states. In tasks that require vigilance and rigidity, threat has, for example, been related to better performance outcomes than challenge (De Wit, Scheepers, & Jehn, 2012). In the long run, challenge and threat states have different implications for health. For example, threat can have negative health effects; it has been associated with cardiovascular diseases, immune system dysfunction, and mental health problems such as anxiety and depression (Blascovich, 2008a).

At the interpersonal and group level, challenge and threat motivational states have been, among others, related to social comparison, stigma, and

stereotype threat. For example, upward interpersonal comparison induces a relative state of threat, whereas downward comparison is associated with a state of challenge (Mendes, Blascovich, Major, & Seery, 2001). As for understanding the motivational underpinnings of intergroup relations, research has demonstrated that interacting with stigmatized others is associated with threat rather than challenge (e.g., Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, Lickel, & Kowai-Bell, 2001; Mendes, Blascovich, Hunter, Lickel, & Jost, 2007). In addition, the BPSM provided insight in the motivational implications of stereotype threat effects (Vick, Seery, Blascovich, & Weisbuch, 2008).

Only recently research has begun to examine how the BPSM of challenge and threat relate to intragroup processes. For example, deviance in recently-formed teams is associated with threat rather than challenge (Cleveland et al., 2011), whereas in other studies deviance of an ingroup member yielded no clear distinction between challenge and threat, or evoked a challenge response (Frings, Hurst, Cleveland, Blascovich, & Abrams, 2012). In the current dissertation, I aim to further examine the motivational underpinnings of intragroup processes. Considering that intragroup evaluations regarding the legitimacy of the positive social identity require immediate actions of the individual, they meet the requirements of a motivated performance situation. Hence, the evaluations should impact on group members' motivational responses in terms of challenge and threat motivational states. This is relevant to our understanding of how intragroup morality and competence judgments impact on group members' motivational responses. More specifically, these cardiovascular indices go beyond group members' conscious and self-presentational motives and provide insight in their implicit motivational responses. In several of the reported experiments in the current dissertation, I therefore examine the cardiovascular indices of challenge and threat motivational states in response to intragroup morality and competence evaluations.

Behavioral responses

When examining motivational responses, an investigation of behavior, or behavioral intentions, can also provide a fruitful source of information. Behavioral responses can be examined at the individual level, for example in terms of task performances, or at the group level, such as behavior directed

towards others, which can be either members of the own group (intragroup interactions) or members of an outgroup (intergroup interactions). So far I have discussed *individual* responses to intragroup evaluations in terms of affect, cognition and psychophysiology. Considering that the aim of the current dissertation is to examine the impact of intragroup evaluations on group members' motivational responses, I will examine motivated behavioral responses in an intragroup setting. In other words, in the current dissertation, I will investigate individuals' behavioral responses towards *other group members* who pose a potential threat to the group's positive social identity. These behavioral responses—both intentions and actual behavior—follow from the morality and competence judgments of other group members and are thus aimed at protecting the group's positive social identity.

As outlined above, groups are inclined to undertake action in order to protect its positive social identity when a potential threat arises. Group members, or prospective group members, who deviate from the group's standards, pose such a threat. In general, behavioral responses aimed at protecting the positive social identity can be divided into two categories: One consisting of inclusive forms of rebukes, and one consisting of social rejection and exclusion. Inclusive forms of rebukes include derogation and attempts to conform the deviant by teaching appropriate behaviors, whilst allowing the deviant to remain a member of the group (e.g., Marques et al., 1988; Moreland & Levine, 1982; Pinto et al., 2010). Such forms of punishment keep the deviance within the group, which can in itself serve as an identity protecting strategy (Hornsey, De Bruijn, Creed, Allen, Ariyanto, & Svensson 2005; Van Leeuwen, Van den Bosch, Castano, & Hopman, 2010). These inclusive forms of punishment are thus aimed at correcting the deviant, and can be labeled as socializing responses (e.g., Moreland & Levine, 1982). Other forms of punishments, such as rejection and social exclusion, deny or withhold membership from the deviant and have a major negative impact on the deviant's well-being (e.g., Van Leeuwen et al., 2010; Williams et al., 2005). In several of the experiments reported in this dissertation, I included both types of rebukes, and examine behavioral responses towards prospective group members in terms of socializing responses and exclusion behavior.

Overview of the current dissertation

Intragroup evaluations provide a group with valuable insights in the extent to which individual group members contribute to the group's positive social identity, and can help to define and elicit desirable behavior from group members. These evaluations affect group member's motivational responses and are aimed to validate and secure their positive social identity. I propose, however, that the impact of such evaluations depends on the evaluative domain in question. Specifically, I argue that the impact of intragroup evaluations on group members' motivational responses depends on whether group members are evaluated in terms of morality or competence. In doing so, I adopt a social identity approach by building on the premise that a social identity can motivate individual group members. That is, I examine the impact of morality and competence judgments on individuals' motivational responses in groups by investigating intragroup evaluations from different perspectives, namely evaluations of 1) group member's *own* prior behavior, 2) *another* group member's behavior, as well as 3) the behavior of a *prospective* group member. In addition, I incorporate different types of motivational responses—affective, cognitive, psychophysiological, and behavioral—and vary those along different intragroup perspectives. That is, in Chapter 2, I examine the impact of the group's morality and competence judgments about group members' own prior behavior, and focus specifically on affective and cognitive motivational responses. In Chapter 3, I examine how morality and competence judgments of group members' own prior behavior, as well as another group member's behavior, impact on psychophysiological motivational responses. Finally, in Chapter 4, I examine the impact of morality and competence judgments of prospective group members on psychophysiological and behavioral motivational responses towards the prospective group member.

In the experiments reported in the following empirical chapters, I operationalized morality and competence at the trait level. Traits, or characteristics, are inferred from behavioral observations, and give rise to expectations about future behavior. In order to examine the impact of intragroup evaluations of own or a group member's behavior or characteristics, some degree of trait inferences is involved. That is, intragroup evaluations also include an assessment of likely future behavior, which are based on the trait inferences derived from the currently evaluated behavior.

Defining morality and competence at the trait level therefore seemed the appropriate level of operationalization when examining the social implications of intragroup judgments. Following prior research on moral and competence traits (e.g., Leach et al., 2007), morality is defined as trustworthiness, honesty, and sincerity; competence is defined as competencies, intelligence, and skills.

Considering the differences in diagnosticity between morality and competence judgments (e.g., Skowronksi & Carlston, 1987), I compare the impact of negative morality and competence judgments with the impact of positive judgments on the domain of morality and competence in multiple of the reported experiments in this dissertation. The general prediction is that, regarding the importance of morality for individuals' identity, morality judgments have a more pronounced impact on group members' motivational responses than competence judgments. I will next present a short overview of each of the empirical chapters that examine this general hypothesis.

Chapter 2

In the three experiments that comprise this chapter, group members' affective and cognitive responses towards the group's morality and competence evaluations of their own behavior were examined. In Experiment 2.1a, group members reflected on their own prior behavior that was negatively evaluated by the group in terms of morality or competence. Their affective responses with regard to the evaluation were assessed, and it was predicted that evaluations of one's immoral behavior induce more negative affect than evaluations of incompetent behavior. The aim of Experiment 2.1b was to investigate whether this might occur because morality evaluations generate more intense affective responses overall. Group members reflected on their own prior behavior that was positively evaluated by the group, and it was predicted that being evaluated as competent by others in a group elicits more positive affect than being evaluated as moral. Experiment 2.2 again focused on negative morality and competence evaluations, but included additional measures of group members' cognitive responses. I assessed how negative morality (vs. competence) evaluations impact on group members' perceived coping ability, and predicted that negative morality judgments of one's prior behavior would diminish group members' perceived coping ability compared to negative competence judgments. In addition, Experiment 2.2 also examined

whether group members' affective and cognitive responses are affected by a new opportunity to restore their image as a moral group member. In this chapter, I thus investigated whether the initial impact of negative morality rather than competence judgments on group members' affective and cognitive responses can be overcome when group members are given a chance to restore their image.

Chapter 3

In Chapter 3, I examined how negative morality and competence judgments of one's own and another group member's behavior impact on psychophysiological responses. I predicted that negative morality judgments with the aim of improving group members' behavior might backfire, because these raise a motivational state of threat rather than challenge. In two experiments, group members worked on a group task while cardiovascular indices of challenge and threat motivational states were measured following the BPSM (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1996). In Experiment 3.1 participants recalled their own prior behavior evaluated as immoral or incompetent by the group; in Experiment 3.2 participants were exposed to an ingroup member's prior behavior evaluated as immoral or incompetent. I assessed the prediction that negative morality judgments induce a state of threat rather than challenge, whereas negative competence judgments induce a challenge rather than threat response. Moreover, I predicted that the pattern of psychophysiological motivational responses would be similar in both experiments—in other words, regardless of whether the judgment concerned own prior behavior or the prior behavior of another group member. In this chapter I thus investigated whether negative morality judgments, which often tend to be used to motivate group members to adapt their behavior, are effective or might actually be counter-effective.

Chapter 4

What determines whether an individual will be accepted by, or excluded from, a group? In this chapter, I examined group members' behavioral responses towards prospective group members depending on how they compare to the group in terms of morality or competence. In three experiments, I examined the overall prediction that the morality of prospective group members has

more impact on the group's tendency to accept versus exclude them than their competence. In Experiment 4.1, group members were presented with an individual who lacked morality or competence; in Experiment 4.2, the prospective group member excelled in morality or competence. The level of identity threat that the prospective group member aroused was assessed, as well as group members' tendency to accept and socialize, or to exclude the prospective group member. In Experiment 4.3, I directly compared responses to prospective group members who either lacked or excelled in morality or competence. In addition, psychophysiological measures were included to assess group members' stress and coping responses when considering the credentials of a prospective group member. It was predicted that due to the social identity threat they impose, individuals who lack morality are more likely to be excluded from the group than individuals lacking competence. Conversely, the group should be keener to include individuals who can contribute to the group's morality rather than its competence. Overall, the experiments described in Chapter 4 examined the notion that the morality, rather than the competence, of prospective group members elicits more pronounced motivated behavioral responses from group members.

In sum

The experiments reported in the three empirical chapters that follow examine the impact of intragroup morality and competence judgments on group members' motivational responses. Specifically, I examined the effect of morality and competence judgments on group members' affective responses (Chapter 2), cognitive responses (Chapter 2), psychophysiological responses (Chapters 3 and 4), and behavioral responses (Chapter 4). In the final chapter (Chapter 5: General Discussion) I reflect on the key findings and implications of these findings for moral psychology and group processes. Because the empirical chapters were written as independent research articles, readers might notice some overlap in the theoretical introductions and method sections. The empirical chapters can be read independently.