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ABSTRACT

This article outlines a new approach to the social psychology of power. Specifically, it challenges the currently influential conflict-oriented dependence analysis, in which power operates as an almost exclusively repressive force. Drawing on relevant work from other social science disciplines, the article presents an identity model of power, in which both consensus and conflict play important roles. The model theorizes power as a productive as well as repressive force, and differentiates between social *power to* achieve desired outcomes and social *power over* others (domination). The implications of the model for two classic issues in the power literature are considered: the relationship between power and status, and challenges to power (resistance and social change). The model's empirical potential is also discussed.

KEYWORDS dependence ▪ identity ▪ power ▪ resistance ▪ status

Bertrand Russell (1938) once commented that power is as fundamental to our understanding of the human social world as energy is to our understanding of the physical world. Indeed, it is difficult to see how we could present a comprehensive analysis of social life without an account of the way in which some people are able to decide what should be done and induce others to do it, to set the agenda and expect others to follow through. In essence, this is the exercise of social power.

A vast social scientific literature on power has accumulated, spanning

many decades and many disciplines (see Haugaard, 2002, for an excellent sampling of this literature), but social psychology has remained fairly isolated from this body of work. Ideas from political science, social theory, and the relevant 'political' branches of sociology and philosophy have had little impact on social psychology's analysis of power (for an exception, see Ng, 1980), and vice versa. One of our main aims in this article is to bring some of the ideas from these neighbouring disciplines into the current social psychological discussion of power. We believe that this is important, not least because other disciplines have confronted head-on some very basic issues in the analysis of social power which social psychology has sidestepped or ignored.

In particular, social psychology has opted for an almost exclusively conflict-based analysis of power – power is the coercive, repressive force that determines who prevails in conflicts of interest and clashes of will. In his recent text, for example, Haslam describes social power as the 'essentially conflictual and quite ugly' (2001: 140) control of others through 'domination, forced compliance and submission' (p. 221). The largely unchallenged ubiquity of this view within social psychology (for notable exceptions, see Ng, 1980; Turner, 2005) can be contrasted with intellectual activity in other disciplines, where the operation and nature of power under conditions of both conflict and consensus is vigorously discussed (e.g. Clegg, 1989; Haugaard, 1997, 2001, 2002; Hindess, 1996; Scott, 1982). This work has led us to reconsider the social psychological analysis of power, and to develop an alternative approach in which *identity* plays a crucial role.

We begin our treatise with a critique of the current conceptual state of play in the social psychology of power. We focus on the dominant social psychological argument that power is created through functional dependence, and on the theoretical distinction between power and influence, as originally developed by Moscovici (1976) and Turner (1991). We then outline our *identity model of power*, and discuss its implications for the relationship between power and status, and for the analysis of resistance and social change.

Reconsidering the dependence model of power

If power is the ability to prevail in a conflict, what distinguishes those who prevail from those who comply? In other words, what is the social psychological basis of power? The predominant answer is dependence.

Relations of functional, resource dependence feature prominently in social psychological accounts of the power process, both long-standing

(e.g. Cartwright & Zander, 1968; French & Raven, 1959; Kelman, 1958; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and contemporary (Fiske, 2001; Keltner et al., 2003; Overbeck & Park, 2001; Reynolds & Platow, 2003). The analysis is simple and, at first glance, compelling: competition for scarce resources (social as well as material) gives those who control resources power over those who need or desire but don't control them. Early accounts attempted to differentiate various bases of resource dependence that might produce power relations, including dependence on others for rewards, expertise and information (Raven, 2001). More recently, the focus has been on outcome dependence per se: power is 'an individual's relative capacity to modify others' states by providing or withholding resources or administering punishments' (Keltner et al., 2003: 265). Empirical research has investigated the effects of such dependence, and interpreted them as effects of social power.

The most straightforward and influential recent statement of this approach is Fiske and colleagues' argument that social power is outcome control rooted in dependence (e.g. Dépret & Fiske, 1993, 1999; Fiske, 1993, 2001; Fiske & Dépret, 1996). Fiske describes this dependence, and the power it creates, as 'social structural forms of control deprivation and control maintenance' (Fiske & Dépret, 1996: 32). Whereas classic dependence-based accounts described a tight interrelationship between power and influence (see Turner, 1991), Fiske argues that power (outcome control) should be distinguished from influence (producing change in others), so that power can be understood as a structural characteristic of social interaction rather than an outcome of social interaction. She therefore edits Robert Dahl's classic A/B statement[1] to read, 'we can define social power as fate control: person A has power over person B when A controls B's outcomes, regardless of influence processes. In turn, power relations can be conceived as asymmetrical outcome-dependency situations' (Fiske & Dépret, 1996: 55–6).

The self-categorization critique

The dependence model of social power emerges from a dependence approach to social relations in general, and social group formation in particular. In the dependence model, group membership rests on need satisfaction, on the resources of approval, acceptance, and the sundry other rewards, protections, and positive outcomes that the group can mediate (Lott & Lott, 1965). Individuals join and are affected by groups insofar as – and only insofar as – groups are able to deliver the goods and satisfy the dependency.

The problem with this dependence account is that it stops just where the interesting questions begin – what constitutes a social reward (or punishment), to whom, when and why? It was questions like these that

provoked the development of an alternative approach to group formation and its effects (*self-categorization theory*, SCT; Turner, 1982, 1985). SCT sets out to replace the dependence account of the group with an identity account (see Turner & Bourhis, 1996; Turner et al., 1987). It argues that group membership – the crucial pivot between the individual and the social – rests on a process of self-categorization, in which various shared and differentiating ways of being (e.g. Germans, surfers, philosophers, women, communists) become part of the self's way of being. The resulting dynamic, context-specific definitions of social *identity* function as internalized guides to thought and action rather than extrinsic providers of reward or punishment. They are about *the construction of meaning*, meaning for the self in social context, and do not reflect resource dependence or need satisfaction (see Haslam, 2001; Oakes et al., 1994, 1999; Turner, 1985, 1999; Turner et al., 1994).

In elaborating the identity model of the group, and differentiating it from the individualism of the dependence model, Turner and his colleagues have developed and tested identity-based analyses of a range of issues within social psychology. Our interest here is in the self-categorization treatment of social influence and the implications for an identity-based analysis of social power.

Influence and power

Early influence researchers identified two distinct types of social influence, believed to produce two forms or modalities of social impact. The classic distinction was between social and cognitive dependence, leading respectively to normative and informational influence (Deutsch & Gerard, 1955). Socially, it was argued, we depend on others for approval and rewards (the basic group membership dependence discussed above), and in order to secure these we may exhibit compliance, a superficial going along with others' expectations, but not necessarily internalized change. This normative effect occurs in public and requires surveillance. Cognitively, when we experience uncertainty about ambiguous aspects of physical reality we depend on others for valid information. The resultant informational influence produces 'conversion', the acceptance of others' views as communications about objective reality and their consequent internalization as 'truth'. This is a private process and doesn't require group oversight. Normative and informational influence are, then, distinct processes, but both work through psychological dependence.

The self-categorization critique of this account of social influence builds on groundbreaking work by Moscovici (1976, 1980), who was the

first to challenge the analysis of influence as dependence, and to separate influence from power. SCT follows both of these leads, but where Moscovici aligned 'informational', cognitive processes with influence (and conversion) and 'normative', social effects with power (and compliance), Turner (1991) argues that influence is *both* cognitive and social. He suggests that the classic dual process model betrays an individualism in which only private cognitive processing can access information and establish the facts of reality and truth. Society is reduced to a thorn in the information processor's side, exploiting her dependence to produce empty-headed compliance, attitudes and behaviours that don't reflect the real self.

Turner's (1991) counter-argument is that information is social and norms are information. Following both Moscovici (1976) and Tajfel (1969), he suggests that the achievement of subjective validity (i.e. our sense of being correct and certain) is always a social process, that '[t]he meaning of sensory data is interpreted in terms of the normative categories, theories, assumptions, standards and procedures of one's culture' (1991: 151), such that 'information' doesn't exist in isolation from a social process which designates it as valid. Further, Turner argues that it is people with whom we identify psychologically (i.e. ingroup members) who both drive and satisfy the requirement of subjective validation. Shared identification produces a shared perspective on the world and hence an expectation of agreement – if we are the same, facing the same relevant stimulus, we should see the same thing and feel the same about it. When this happens we achieve subjective validity. Conversely, disagreement with ingroup others produces uncertainty, a sense of subjective invalidity – 'Have I misunderstood this?'; 'Am I wrong?' It can provoke mutual influence to reduce the uncertainty, a dynamic consensualization process which can produce revisions of both identity and (our understanding of) 'reality' (Haslam et al., 1998; see also Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). Importantly, then, influence is not provoked by dependence – it is a result of the active meaning-seeking engaged in by social agents in a social world. And in order to predict and explain influence, we look to the context-specific parameters and associated content of identity, rather than post hoc or absolute definitions of reward and punishment.

But what about power? Turner (1991) regards Moscovici's distinction between power and influence as 'still important' (p. 172), basically because it captures the distinction between internalized conversion as the result of influence and superficial compliance as the result of (coercive) power. However, the distinction takes on new meaning in the SCT account because it is now identity-based: Power is basically about outgroups and influence about ingroups. Outgroup members must resort to power (coercion) to assert their will because we don't identify with them and therefore don't expect to

agree with them, so they can't provoke the influence process. Ingroup members could use coercion, of course, but they don't need to because they have influence owing to our shared group identification.[2]

Moving away from the dependence model of power

We share with SCT the critical stance towards the explanatory efficacy of the dependence concept. However, we take its critique one step further and apply it also to previous identity-based accounts according to which power is, at base, about dependence on resources controlled by outgroups (e.g. Haslam, 2001; Reynolds & Platow, 2003). In our view, if resource dependence is insufficiently robust, unambiguous, sophisticated, predictable or predictive to underpin analyses of the individual/group relationship and of social influence processes, it doesn't look like a first choice candidate to carry the explanatory weight in the social psychological account of a concept as fundamental as power. There always remains the 'need to specify subjectively valued outcomes in advance of the compliance which they supposedly motivate . . . Dependence is not self-explanatory and neither, therefore, is power' (Turner, 1991: 141).

Commentary from other disciplines supports the view that dependence offers, at best, an incomplete social psychological account of the power process. For instance, the dependence model suggests a unilateral process of power – the resourced have power over the un-resourced – which sits uncomfortably with the reality of power relations as observed by social theorists. Thus, Fiske defines being powerful as '*independence* from others, a lack of dependency for resources' (Fiske, 2001: 184, emphasis added), whereas many theorists insist that, by definition, social power obtains in relationships of *mutual* dependence where A controls certain resources that B needs, but A also needs further 'resources' that B controls – B's labour, B's support, B's silence, and so on (e.g. Foucault, 1982; Giddens, 1979; Haugaard, 1997; see also Ng, 1996; Reynolds & Platow, 2003). Similarly, Isaac (1992: 49) argues that power relations can't be reduced to a one-way, stimulus–response dynamic, but are in fact about 'endemic reciprocity, negotiation, and struggle, with both dominant and subordinate groups mobilizing their specific powers and resources'.

Moreover, recall Fiske's insistence on the separation of power (resource control) from influence (psychological change), such that power is a *structural*, resource-based matter of relative outcome control 'regardless of influence processes' (Fiske & Dépret, 1996: 56). This raises an issue discussed by Hindess (1996). He notes that 'quantitative' views of power, dealing in resource-based 'capacity' to achieve control through dependence, invite the

social scientist (or any other interested observer) to predict the outcome of any power struggle by simply 'adding up the resources available to each side and subtracting one from the other' (p. 30). Might is right, and if this is social power, the more resourced-up combatant must win. But what are the 'resources' to be added and subtracted in this social arithmetic? History is littered with power conflicts in which, on a relatively non-controversial reading of 'resources', the less resourced party prevailed (the Vietnam War, for example; see Hindess, 1982).

The fact that not all 'resources' are relevant in all situations has been discussed by some theorists as the 'scope' issue (e.g. Dahl, 1957), but the basic point here is the one raised by Turner – either we slip into that vacuous circularity in which power follows dependence on valuable resources and 'valuable' resources are the ones we depend on (see Keltner et al., 2003), or the value and relevance of the resources have to be specified and explained in advance. Once we recognize this, processes other than dependence appear to shoulder most of the explanatory burden. The explanation of power shifts towards consideration of the social psychological nature of the As and Bs, and of the social system in which they and their 'resources' are developed and deployed. Within the experiments reported by Fiske and her colleagues, for example, it could be argued that power is actually produced in the experimenter's definition of what matters in the 'system' of the experiment, and *the participants' acceptance of this*. Any effects of outcome dependence between participants may be entirely secondary to this dynamic.

All this doesn't mean that outcome dependence is unimportant in power relations, but we may need to see it as an effect as well as a cause, to reconsider its explanatory role in the power story. Indeed, far from feeding into a dependence relationship as unproblematic givens, the status of certain events as rewards and others as punishments can be seen as itself an outcome of social power (Digeser, 1992; Lukes, 1974). We consider this issue further below, but for the moment we note that several theorists have challenged analyses of social power in which A and B are 'constituted as individuals with clear preference orders' (Clegg, 1989: 39), assumed to be 'fully formed, stable and unified entit[ies] that then get[] caught up in power relations which are external to [their] own constitution' (Allen, 2002: 135). But this is just what the dependence model does assume – it *starts with* psychological dependencies that get 'caught up in power relations', and doesn't ask where those dependencies come from. Resource dependence thus appears inadequate, on several counts, as the core social psychological process in the conceptualization of social power. Without prior specification of the basis of dependence – the needs and desires driving behaviour for given groups and individuals in given contexts at given times – dependence falls short as an explanation

of power in the same way as it did in theories of the group and of social influence.

Finally, it seems to us that social psychology continues to rely on dependence in the theory of power because it continues to limit power to conflict and coercion – dependence is there to explain when and why coercion works in the resolution of a conflict of interests or a clash of wills. But is it reasonable to see social power only where there is explicit conflict and coercion? Power scholars in other social science disciplines stepped beyond the limitations of this view at least 30 years ago (Lukes, 1974; see also Digeser, 1992; Haugaard, 1997). Many theorists have argued that modern life involves 'social power of greater sophistication than simple coercion' (Haugaard, 1997: 120), partly because coerced compliance requires an impossibly high level of surveillance, and partly because coercion and violence so often provoke more sabotage and resistance than compliant cooperation. We believe that the social psychology of power can benefit from incorporation of these insights, and that this can be achieved through development of an *identity model of power*. In the remainder of this article we outline such a model and discuss some of its implications. It becomes apparent that we need to place *consensus* rather than conflict at the core of our analysis which will then also help us to overcome the limiting notion that power is reserved for outgroups and operates separately from influence processes.

An identity model of power

Our identity model of power builds on three critical insights:

- Social power is created through the recruitment of human agency.
- Shared identity, and the associated consensus, is always implicated in this process (either explicitly or implicitly).
- Most power relations involve elements of both consensus and conflict, with the balance between them in a given power relation determined by the relative salience of shared and differentiating identities.

Power as recruited agency

Bertrand Russell's (1938) equation of social power and physical energy suggests both that power is fundamental in social analysis and that power is what makes things happen in society, moves life forwards. As Barbalet comments, 'power has to do with getting things done, or with getting others to do them. If it means anything, social power is the generative force through

which social relations and institutions are directed' (1985: 538). Many social theorists discuss this productive aspect of power (e.g. Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1980; Giddens, 1984, Haugaard, 1997, 2001, 2002; Hindess, 1996; Morriss, 1987), but too often, and certainly within social psychology, power has been portrayed as the brake rather than the accelerator in the social vehicle, as 'something which denies, forestalls, represses and prevents' (Clegg, 1989: 152). This is evident in the dependence analysis we have discussed here – it tells us that controlling resources endows some with *power over* others, because the desire to secure those resources channels and limits the actions of the 'others' ('denies, forestalls, represses and prevents'), but it says nothing about the way in which the coordination of human activity (however achieved) is fundamental to the *power to* achieve anything as a society.

In this light, we suggest that the crucial first step in any social psychological analysis of power is recognition that we are discussing a productive as well as (potentially) repressive process. In other words, the base definition of social power cannot restrict the process to ideas about 'power over', but must start with specification of the nature of social 'energy', then consider its production and consequences. Thus, adapting the famous A/B terminology, we suggest that the social psychology of power might begin with this assumption:

> A (a person or group) has power insofar as it recruits human agency in the service of its agenda.

There are three important things to note about this statement. First, 'B' is absent, because introduction of B denotes a differentiation of identity and a suggestion of interests in conflict. At this stage our emphasis is simply on social power as the productive aspect of concerted human agency. Similar ideas have been labelled 'consensual power' in social theory (e.g. Arendt, 1970; Barnes, 1988; see Haugaard, 2002), but we present human agency recruitment as the *base* social psychological definition of power, and elaborate the consensual/conflictual aspects of its production below. Second, it is specifically *A's agenda that moves forward*, so whether or not that agenda is shared by those whose agency is recruited by A will clearly affect the nature of the power relation. Third, in contrast to Fiske's (2001) dependence analysis of power which focuses on the control of people's outcomes, we shift the focus to the control of people's active contributions or inputs. More specifically, we suggest that social power resides in directing others' efforts towards one's own projects. Thus the critical point is not so much that people and their outcomes are *affected*, but rather that projects are *effected*. As the philosopher Peter Morriss puts it, 'those who affect others without effecting

anything are rightly seen not as powerful but merely as nuisances' (quoted in Haugaard, 2002: 296).

Our focus on agency emerges from the view that power relations are characterized by *mutual* autonomy and choice (Giddens, 1979; Haugaard, 1997; Isaac, 1992; Spears & Lea, 1994). Social actors recruit agency – create power – by influencing the choices made by other free (if constrained) social actors. Thus, power involves at least some degree of active commitment to A's agenda, whether this stems from genuinely sharing that agenda (strong commitment), or choosing, for the moment, to cooperate with it for instrumental reasons (weaker commitment). At base, where there is no autonomy there is no 'agency' to recruit, only a physical object to be manipulated (see Haugaard, 1997). As Foucault put it,

> power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free . . . Where the determining factors saturate the whole there is no relationship of power; slavery is not a power relationship when man is in chains.
>
> (1982: 221)

Extremely coercive power relations may attempt the destruction of agency in various ways, but the point is that this then ceases to be a relationship of 'power' (i.e. in our terms, ceases to recruit agency) and becomes violence or even war (see also Foucault, 1982). There is no relationship of power between helpless victims and agents of plain violence and war, although the latter may very well be involved in a power relationship with a third party that recruited them as 'willing executioners' (Turner, 2005: 12). In any case, it is not slavery or plain violence but *power*, the coordination and management of productive human agency, which cuts ice in modern mass society.

In pursuit of one's agenda, social power may be more effective than slavery or plain violence, but it is by no means impregnable. Indeed, power relations are 'often unstable, ambiguous and reversible' (Hindess, 1996: 101) *precisely because* they engage active commitment and manipulate but never destroy human agency. Relatively autonomous subjects are, therefore, both the absolute prerequisite and the inescapable Achilles' heel of social power. We elaborate this point later.

Identity and the power of consensus

Identity defines the social agent – what we can do and what we want to do depend on who we are (and vice versa; see Simon, 2004). Thus power, as the recruitment of agency, works 'through' identity and the people united by the

bond of identity (Turner, 2005). As specified in SCT (Turner et al., 1987, 1994), identity emerges from a context-specific process of self-categorization which represents self as equivalent to certain stimuli and different from others (McGarty, 1999; Oakes, 2001). For present purposes, we need to elaborate three key theoretical ideas of SCT (for a full account, see Haslam, 2001; Oakes et al., 1994; Turner et al., 1994).

First, self-categorization operates within a hierarchically organized system in which higher-level categories are more abstract, or inclusive, than those at lower levels (Rosch, 1978). Thus, a given person may think of herself, at different times, as a microbiologist (least abstract), a biologist (more abstract, all microbiologists are biologists) and a scientist (most abstract, all biologists are scientists); another person may experience self-categorization as a theoretical physicist, a physicist, and a scientist, and so on. For purposes of theoretical clarity, SCT emphasizes the hierarchical relationship between self-categories at three important levels: self as individual, self as group member, and self as human. For us, however, it is the general notion of hierarchical organization that matters.

Second, these levels of self-categorization are related, and constrained, by the rule of *class inclusion*: 'scientist' must contain 'biologist', together with other relevant categories at that lower level (e.g. physicist, chemist, geologist), and indeed render them *equivalent* at the higher level (just as 'biologist' renders micro-biologists equivalent to other biological specialists, and so on). The differentiation, even conflict, of interests, goals, values and so forth associated with identity at the lower level (say between biologists and physicists) transforms into shared interests, goals and values when common identification as scientists becomes salient (Turner et al., 1994).

Third, the judgements of similarity and difference that both produce and emerge from a specific salient identity at a particular level are not fixed or objectively given, but highly variable, theory-driven, and motivated (Haslam et al., 1996; Oakes, 2001; Oakes & Haslam, 2001; Turner et al., 1994). This means that people can experience themselves as different and perhaps in conflict in one context (e.g. as biologists and physicists within a science faculty) but as united in consensus in another (as natural scientists rather than social scientists within a university) without any actual change in their own objective positions or characteristics. Social categorization subjectively transforms given positions into relations of similarity and difference – into shared and differentiating identities – and from identities flow perceptions of attraction versus dislike, agreement versus disagreement, cooperation versus conflict *and*, as we discussed above, reliance on influence versus coercion as a means of directing others' ideas and actions.

This pattern of mutually interdependent shared and differentiating

identities both reflects and makes possible the *antagonistic cooperation* that characterizes modern society (Digeser, 1992; Esser, 1993; Haugaard, 1997; Simon, 2004). Self-categorization operates in the context of a multitude of social groupings nested within more or less explicit higher-level social organizations, nation-states and trans-national structures (Fraser, 1996; Young, 1990, 2000). Pursuit of goals at every level of such a complex structure means that conflicts at lower levels of identity can become part and parcel of consensus and cooperative achievement at higher levels. For example, rival political parties are in conflict during democratic elections, in that they compete for victory, but at the same time their political struggle reflects and reproduces their *shared* identity as members of a democracy. Indeed, given that it creates the very possibility of victory (and defeat), the shared, higher-level identity is the basic prerequisite for the lower-level conflict, and for one party's victory.

In summary, social actors access multiple multi-level identities and associated interests, goals, values, and so forth. Shared identity provides the vital social psychological infrastructure for consensus and influence; where identity differentiates there is the potential for conflict and the resort to coercion. This produces a dynamic social psychological context in which power – agency recruitment – must adapt its tactics to identity conditions.

Identity and the four faces of power

We have suggested that a social entity – A – has power insofar as it recruits human agency in the service of its agenda. This is our base conception of the productive social power which enables A to pursue its agenda – 'power to'. This power can be produced through both *consensual* processes (influence) and *conflictual* processes (coercion). Most power relations involve a mix of conflictual power and consensual power, and the composition of the mix depends largely on the psychological salience of the protagonists' identities as A and B and the salience of their shared identity at a higher level of social inclusiveness or organization.[3] Salient higher-level identification increases the likelihood of consensual power, under which the social entity whose agency is being recruited by A identifies with A and their agenda, and therefore co-operates in the pursuit of A's agenda. Salient identities as A and B make conflictual power – the domination of B – more likely. Under these conditions A has to use various resources (including economic, cultural and social capital; Bourdieu, 1989, 2002; French & Raven, 1959; Giddens, 1984) to make B serve A's agenda. However, and crucially, this domination still involves consensus, because the resources or types of capital that A uses to

dominate B must be anchored in a consensus concerning their meaning, value, and legitimacy. Such consensus, in turn, is indicative of, and made possible by, a higher-level identity shared by A and B. For example, money works as a power resource because A and B participate in and identify with a higher-level social organization or system within which everyone agrees that 'money makes the world go round'. To give another example, one that concerns a more circumscribed higher-level identity and thus a more distinct consensus, publications in international journals work as a power resource in academia because most academics agree on the (career) value of such publications.

We can now elaborate power relations which combine conflictual and consensual processes in order to flesh out the role of identity in power and, importantly, in domination. The prominent debate in political and social theory over the distinction between several faces (or dimensions) of power provides a useful context for this elaboration (see Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; Dahl, 1957; Digeser, 1992; Lukes, 1974). This debate concerns the nature of power and its manifestation in social life. For our purposes, it serves to draw attention to the involvement of consensus in manifestly conflictual power relations, and to the conflict that can underpin apparently consensual agency recruitment.

The first face

Both Dahl (1957) and Bachrach and Baratz (1962) describe power relations in which conflict is manifest. Dahl's famous definition states that 'A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not do otherwise' (1957: 202–3). In our terminology, the protagonists' identities as A and B are salient, and from each identity flows a distinct agenda. Because B would normally not support A's agenda, the latter employs various resources in order to recruit B's agency. For example, an employer (A) might let it be known to junior managers (Bs) that promotions and pay rises depend upon compliance with an unpopular policy direction. The conflict and domination are obvious here, but our identity model points out that the instrumental value of the resources deployed by A is rooted in consensus at a higher level of social organization (all agree that promotion and pay matter) and therefore ultimately in a higher-level identity that includes and transcends both the identity as A and the identity as B.

The second face

Bachrach and Baratz (1962) saw limitations in Dahl's focus on manifest conflict. They argued that, insofar as B's agenda is known to conflict with

A's, A may seek to arrange matters such that the conflict never surfaces. Prevailing values and decision-making procedures may be portrayed as 'objective' or 'fair', but may in fact operate in a way that is 'biased' towards the best interests of the As. These procedures can then be actively mobilized by A to suppress B's agenda. As Schattschneider famously put it, 'Some issues are organised into politics while others are organised out' (1960: 71). Bachrach and Baratz (1962) give the example of the disgruntled junior academic (B) who remains silent because complaint will likely be construed by senior academics (As) as disloyalty, and administrative procedures will likely bury any proposals for change forever. Again, the A/B conflict is obvious, but we would emphasize in addition the consensus grounded in higher-level identity (the university) that produces the desire to appear loyal (to 'our' university), and the observance of procedures that define the university and its practices.

The third face

As Digeser points out, both Dahl and Bachrach and Baratz deal with power as 'an overtly or covertly conflictual relation between agents coercively advancing well-understood, self-defined interests against the interests of other agents' (1992: 979). The 'radical' step taken by Lukes (1974) was to describe a third face of power in which interests could be other than self-defined. He suggested that 'the supreme exercise of power [is] to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have' (1974: 23). Thus, employer A encourages worker B to believe that it is in her interest to invest time in various unpaid 'organizational citizenship' initiatives, whereas B's *real* interests lie in securing the mandated wage with minimum effort (see Isaac, 1992, for discussion). In contrast to the explicit conflict and (in our view) implicit consensus under the first two faces of power, Lukes thus describes apparent consensus masking actual conflict.

Lukes's investigation was a crucial step in the analysis of power, but his separation of the self from interests was problematic, provoking difficult debates over the definition of B's 'real' or 'objective' interests that A attempts to subvert. From our perspective, *interests follow identity*, so subjective interests that are common to A and B indicate a higher-level identity shared by A and B. However, this will often co-exist with (more or less salient) conflict at lower levels. Lukes's reference to 'real' interests both makes intuitive sense *and* defies consensual definition precisely because the interests he wants to define as 'real' reside in the lower-level conflict. From their identity perspective as a low-paid worker, as a union member, a parent, and so forth, B's attitude to work may well conflict with A's agenda. At the same time,

however, B may share with A an identification as members of The Company or Organization, and insofar as this identification is salient, the conflict recedes and the power relation is consensual. This brings us to the fourth face of power.

The fourth face

Power resides also in 'the way in which political actions and arrangements encourage some identities and marginalise others' (Digeser, 1992: 990). Rather than manipulating interests, as Lukes (1974) suggested, A may attempt to manipulate *identities* in order to create a robust social psychological basis for consensual agency recruitment – recruitment which requires no coercion, no investment of punitive or rewarding resources, no surveillance (Foucault, 1977, 1980). Perhaps the best known recent example of this process was the declaration made by US President George W. Bush shortly after 11 September 2001: 'You're either with us or against us', a statement which offered everyone a choice between two identities, friend of the US (and therefore supporter of any actions taken in relation to 11 September), or terrorist. Similarly, the As (e.g. employers or medical doctors) often play an active role in defining the identities of the Bs (e.g. employees or patients) and thereby also define what a B is supposed to want and to do in the relationship with an A (Davis, 1988). Rather than the violent, coercive dictators, it is these 'entrepreneurs of identity' who become the most successful agency recruiters, the most powerful social actors (Reicher & Hopkins, 1996a, 1996b, 2001; Reicher et al., 1997).

The fourth face of power describes, in our terms, consensual power, insofar as a higher-level identity shared by A and B is involved (e.g. a shared identity as peace-loving people, as hard-working people committed to their company, or as responsible people that look after their health), and is mobilized by A in furtherance of A's agenda. Conflict is not entirely absent from this scenario, however. It still lingers in the availability of self-categorization at the lower level of A/B identities (such as 'patriots' versus civil libertarians, employers versus employees, doctors versus patients), which of course A attempts to (re-)define, defuse or marginalize. When the Bs assert themselves as such, however, identification as As also becomes salient, and furtherance of the As' agenda now entails conflictual power and domination.

To summarize, Figure 1 illustrates that at least two levels of identity are implicated in typical power relations involving both conflict and consensus. One is the level of A and B identities, the level on which conflict and domination is usually expected and more or less readily uncovered – depending on which face of power is at work. The other level concerns the higher-level

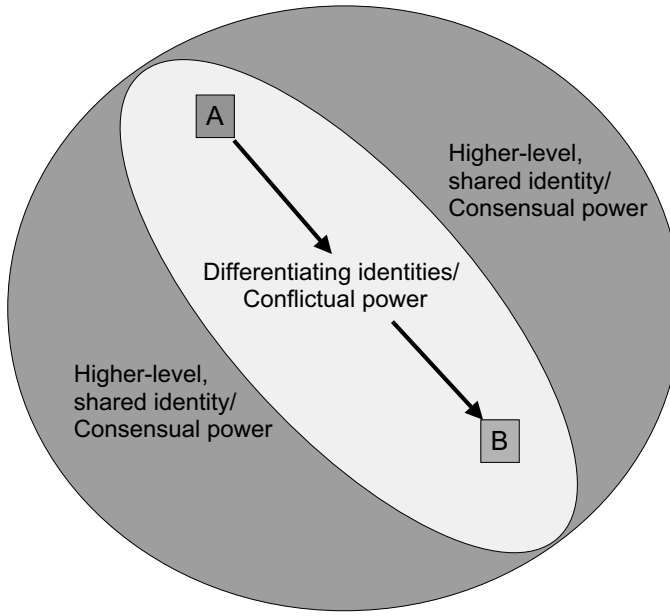

Figure 1 The role of shared and differentiating identities in power

identity that A and B share with each other. Although the role of this level of identity and the associated consensus in power and domination has hitherto received relatively little attention, it consistently surfaced in our discussion of each of the four theoretical scenarios that have engaged power researchers in the social sciences. Thus the higher-level identity plays a crucial role in determining the instrumental value of the resources or capital that A may use under the first face of power. It also provides the values, procedures, and biases that A may mobilize under the second face of power and provides the frame of reference and meaning for the specific agendas, interests and identities that A may define or construct under the third and fourth faces of power.

Clarifications

We have identified the interplay between consensus and conflict as typical of power relations, but our model leaves open the possibility of extremes characterized by the exclusive operation of either conflictual or consensual power. Nevertheless, in our view, these extremes should be viewed more as ideal types serving an analytical function rather than as common empirical realities (cf. Haugaard, 1997). This is mainly because of the multi-level and

contrastive nature of social identities, producing relations of both consensus and conflict.

With respect to the extreme of pure conflictual power, it should be noted that, even if not salient, higher-level identities tend to be effective as implicit identities (Simon, 2004) or habitus (Bourdieu, 2002) through what Giddens calls practical consciousness (Giddens, 1984; see also Haugaard, 2001). As a consequence, at least some degree of consensual power is likely to be at work. Otherwise, the total absence of an effective higher-level identity and the ensuing absence of any disciplining sense of consensus and cooperation would turn an at least potentially productive power relation into pure conflict, or war (see Foucault, 1982; Haugaard, 1997).

At the other extreme, pure consensual power would derive from the salience of a shared identity combined with the absence of any salient or effective (lower-level) A and B identities. In such a (hypothetical) situation power would be psychologically equivalent to influence in its functioning and effects. However, like any other identity, a shared identity must also be defined in relation to a contrast or outgroup identity at the same level of social inclusiveness (Turner et al., 1987; see also Digeser, 1992). As a consequence, in addition to pure consensual power within the boundaries of the shared identity, we should witness the emergence of a new conflictual power relation *across* identity boundaries. Again, assuming at least the implicit involvement of identity at the next higher level of social inclusiveness, we have another instance of a mixed conflictual and consensual power relation, namely between ingroup and outgroup. Otherwise, we would come full circle back to pure conflict or war, albeit on a higher level of social inclusiveness, and encounter a meeting of the extremes (Simmel, 1908) – theoretically, both pure conflictual power and pure consensual power would eventually result in some sort of war.

We also need to make clear that, although our model portrays identity as the key to consensual power, we do not suggest that identities are actually homogeneous. On the contrary, especially higher-level identities are usually internally differentiated or structured such that lower-level A and B identities are assigned specific positions relative to each other in the respective structure. These relative positions of A and B are part and parcel of the power relation between A and B in the sense that 'Every relationship of power puts into operation differentiations which are at the same time its conditions and its results' (Foucault, 1982: 223). Although there exists always a plurality of possible structurings or differentiations, economic and cultural differentiations are among the most important ones, especially in modern societies (Bourdieu, 1989). Accordingly, economic agendas (redistribution) and cultural agendas (recognition), connected respectively

to class- and status-based identities, figure prominently in modern power relations (Bourdieu, 2002; Fraser, 1996; Weber, 1958; see also the following section on power and status).

What is more, higher-level identities represent the legitimized resolution of previous A/B conflicts and thus give legitimacy to any inequality inherent in the differentiation between A and B. This may involve asymmetrical access to various resources and forms of capital or asymmetrical valuation of the identities and differential agendas of the As and Bs. In other words, higher-level identities can legitimize structures of domination, and this typically includes the legitimization of the dominant form of domination (Bourdieu, 2002). As indicated above, both domination in terms of class (economic capital) and domination in terms of status (cultural capital) qualify as candidates for the dominant form of domination in modern societies, although the two forms likely engage different legitimizing ideologies – the former is likely to engage a meritocracy ideology ('I earned it'), the latter an inherent, naturalized superiority ('I deserve it', 'I am entitled to it'; see Bourdieu, 2002).

Finally, higher-level identities (e.g. national identities), together with their internal social differentiations and legitimizations, can themselves become the target of contestation and debate and may therefore themselves be at the heart of power struggles. Our model suggests that such struggles are usually fought out within a frame of reference defined by identities that contestants share at an even higher level of abstraction or social inclusiveness (e.g. broader cultural or supranational identities; Preston, 1997). However, there is of course no guarantee that contestation and debate always take place within the realm of *power* relations. As discussed above, if there is no shared identity or consensus beyond the contested identity, contestants will soon find themselves in the sphere of pure conflict which in turn easily escalates into plain violence or even war – phenomena that are admittedly beyond the scope of our present analysis.

We can now turn to consideration of the implications of our approach for two classic issues in the power literature: the relationship between power and status, and challenges to power – resistance and social change.

Power and status

The conceptual relationship, and distinction, between power and status has received insufficient attention from social psychologists to date. In fact, it seems that researchers have tended towards a tacit or implicit equation of power with (high) status, often subsuming power under the heading of status

and then forgetting about it. For example, both relative deprivation theory (Runciman, 1966) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) conceptualize perceived status as the outcome of social comparison processes. Although theoretically included as one of many possible comparison dimensions, power is practically excluded as a variable of interest from the bulk of social psychological research conducted within those frameworks (Ellemers & Barreto, 2001).

The relationship between power and status remains under-examined in the new wave of publications on power (e.g. Dépret & Fiske, 1999; Guinote et al., 2002; Keltner et al., 2003). For example, Keltner et al. (2003) suggest a conceptual distinction between power as the dependence relationship discussed above and status as 'the outcome of an evaluation of attributes that produces differences in respect and prominence' (p. 266). Unfortunately, they then go on to accept status as a proxy for power in their empirical review so that the distinction, as well as the relationship, between power and status is blurred rather than sharpened.

A promising approach to the relationship between power and status can be derived from Max Weber's writings. Weber (1958) views status as social honour or prestige which is typically unequally distributed between groups in a community or society. The different status groups with their specific styles of life make up what Weber calls the social order. He distinguishes the social order from the economic order, which refers to the distribution of economic goods between different (economic) classes, but stresses that 'The social order is of course conditioned by the economic order to a high degree, and in its turn reacts upon it' (Weber, 1958: 181).

More important in the present context, Weber postulates that status groups (as well as classes and parties) are phenomena of the distribution of power in a community, with power being defined as 'the chance of a man or of a number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action' (Weber, 1958: 180). According to Weber, there is a bi-directional cause–effect relationship between power and status. On the one hand, he points out that status 'may even be the basis of political and economic power' (Weber, 1958: 180) as well as the basis of a potent counter-power in the struggle against the economic power of the threatening 'parvenu' (p. 192). On the other hand, status is a typical *result* of power. Although Weber acknowledges the possibility of power without status (see also Keltner et al., 2003), he views 'naked' power, such as mere economic power, as a transitory state: 'Property as such is not always recognized as a status qualification, but in the long run it is, and with extraordinary regularity' (Weber, 1958: 187).

In line with our earlier discussion of the internal differentiation of

higher-level identities, it thus follows from Weber's analysis that stratification by status is one important differentiation among other possible differentiations, such as differentiation in terms of class or economic capital (Bourdieu, 2002), that are at the same time the conditions and the results of power relations (Foucault, 1982). Moreover, according to Weber (1958) stratification by status – or cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2002) – is particularly likely to operate under stable economic conditions. Hence, status reflects and (re)produces a more static sense of *being* (Weber, 1958) or, more precisely, a sense of being more or less esteemed or even a sense of being (considered) superior or inferior (Lücken & Simon, 2005). Conversely, power seems to revolve more around *doing* and making others do – in the sense of recruiting others' agency, or 'action upon the action of others' as Foucault puts it (1982: 221) – which includes doing something to one's own advantage and/or to other people's disadvantage.

In this view, status, with its emphasis on being – a being that can draw on a long history or tradition and therefore often appears 'natural' (Bourdieu, 2002; Haugaard, 2002) – facilitates the development and use of ideological legitimizations or justifications for (status-based) domination that build on the notion of natural deservingness or entitlement. Power, on the other hand, with its emphasis on doing, should rely more on legitimizations that build on the notion of active earning. Obviously, an ideology of meritocracy is well equipped to supply such power legitimizations and thus to stabilize economic (class-based) domination.

Weber's (1958) critical insights into status and its involvement in power relations are also captured in our identity model of power. Status or status groups are typical sources of identity (i.e. A and B identities) which in turn reflect the internal differentiation or structure of the more inclusive, higher-level identity. The asymmetry that may be inscribed in this structure in terms of higher versus lower status provides the *basis* for the exercise of power by one status group over the other or, in other words, for status-based domination. More specifically, A's alleged superiority to B in social honour (Weber, 1958) or cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2002) can provide A with agency-recruitment advantages relative to B. It seems likely, for example, that surgeons' status advantage in modern society would make it easier for them to get nurses to listen to and work for them than vice versa. In addition, status-based domination often leads to, or reinforces, differential access to various other resources or forms of capital, including economic, social, or political capital (Bourdieu, 2002; Weber, 1958), so that the high-status group A further broadens its power base vis-à-vis the low-status group B (French & Raven, 1959; Keltner et al., 2003). For example, the status that accompanies academic qualifications opens the door to better paid jobs and politically influential positions, and thus results in more comprehensive power.

However, it must not be forgotten that status asymmetries are inscribed in the structure of higher-level identities as the *result* of previous power struggles. In fact, 'The development of status is essentially a question of stratification resting upon usurpation' (Weber, 1958: 188), and the powerful are in general in a better position to usurp not only the material world, but also the symbolic world so that 'the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas' (Marx & Engels, 1978: 172). As a rule, the powerful should therefore be quite successful in disseminating the idea that they have and deserve superior social prestige or status. In the final analysis, power then emerges as the more fundamental process – a process which regularly manifests itself in the form of, but also operates on, status stratifications (Leonardelli & Tormala, 2003).

One important implication of this differentiation between power and status is that a low-status position must not be equated with powerlessness. In fact, experimental social psychology suggests that members of low-status groups have an intuitive understanding that they are not without power despite their status disadvantage (Simon, 2004; Simon & Hastedt, 1997). They have power in that they have fellow group members and thus natural allies whose agency can be recruited for a shared agenda (e.g. for a collective effort to improve one's social status), and the more fellow group members the greater the (potential) power as a collective (Lücken & Simon, 2005). However, there is no guarantee that the power of the disadvantaged and dominated actually materializes as open resistance and attempts at social change. We examine this issue in the next section.

Resistance and social change

A central tenet of our identity model is that power – both consensual and conflictual – is made possible to a large extent by identity processes. Consensual power is possible to the extent that B whose agency is being recruited by A in the service of A's agenda identifies with A and A's agenda. Identity processes also underlie conflictual power, in that a shared higher-level identity is required to constitute the arsenal of domination. This arsenal includes, inter alia, shared values and legitimizations as well as consensually recognized differentiations, resources, institutions, and procedures.

At first glance, it might appear that our analysis suggests that, once a system of nested lower- and higher-level identities is in place, power operates smoothly and people are locked in the same multi-storey house of power for good. From a theoretical vantage point, such a static view would leave little room to theorize resistance and social change. From a political vantage point, it would offer little hope to the dominated, who are consigned to the less

attractive storeys and rooms of the house of power. In fact, our identity model of power by no means entails such a static and pessimistic view. Before we elaborate this, however, it is worth scrutinizing the issue of (non-)resistance more closely.

The absence of resistance seems to be a reality in many contexts. Several interesting accounts or explanatory factors have been suggested. One account is at once an explanation and a further specification of the phenomenon of non-resistance. It has been advanced by James Scott (1990) who argues that it is usually the absence of *open* resistance that we register, while we regularly miss the hidden transcript of 'forms of resistance which avoid any open confrontation with the structures of authority being resisted' (Scott, 1990: 86). It is because the dominated tend to disguise their resistance 'in the interest of safety and success' (Scott, 1990: 86) that resistance often seems to be absent. Resistance is also undermined when social relations are so arranged that important needs and interests of the dominated can in practice only be served through satisfying the particular needs and interests of the dominant (Beetham, 1991). In addition, conditions that promise individual upward social mobility or escape (Simon, 1998; Wright, 2001) as well as conditions of de-grouping and atomization (Apfelbaum, 1979; Foucault, 1977; Scott, 1990; Spears & Lea, 1994) can be responsible for the absence of resistance.

At this point it is important to note that the explanations discussed so far do not necessarily presume ideological hegemony on the macro level of society (Mumby, 1997), nor do they require the assumption of 'false consciousness' on the micro level of the individual member of the dominated group (Jost, 1995). More mundane psychological concepts, such as fear, resignation, cleverness, rational choice or ambition, and social mechanisms, such as isolation and surveillance, may often suffice as explanatory tools. However, this is not to rule out the possibility that absence of resistance may be reflective of consensus between a dominant A and a dominated B. In fact, our identity model of power assumes precisely such consensus which derives directly from the higher-level identity that A and B share. The model further suggests that the structure inscribed in this identity can reproduce and legitimize A's domination of B, and in this sense it might appear that some form of 'duping' is at work. So does our model promote, even rely upon, the idea of 'false consciousness' as a component of power relations?

The 'false consciousness' conundrum

The concept of false consciousness (which originated in Marxist and socialist thinking; see Femia, 1981; Lukács, 1971) is an attempt to explain the

observation that disadvantaged people's thoughts and (in)actions often seem to contradict their own interests, such that in effect they contribute to the maintenance of their unfavourable position. Jost recently introduced it into mainstream social psychology, identifying it as a symptom of fairly widespread cognitive error (1995; Jost & Hunyady, 2002). He differentiated six cognitive aspects of the false consciousness syndrome: fatalism, false identification of blame, failure to perceive injustice and disadvantage, justification of social roles and statuses, identification with the oppressor (including outgroup favouritism) and resistance to change. The key element in all of these phenomena is that the disadvantaged seem to neglect their own interests in one way or another.

Many social theorists have rejected the attribution of this neglect to *false* consciousness, describing the concept as elitist and unfalsifiable (e.g. Beetham, 1991; Clegg, 1989; Haugaard, 2001; Mumby, 1997; Scott, 1990; Willis, 1977; for a social psychological critique, see Spears et al., 2001). As we noted above, it has sparked convoluted debates over the existence or nature of 'true', 'real' or 'objective' consciousness and interests (Isaac, 1992; Jost, 1995; Lukes, 1974; Meyerson, 1991). However, our identity model of power offers a different way of thinking about people's collaboration in the reproduction of relations of power and domination which appear to disadvantage them (see also Haugaard, 2001).

The key is to remember that people have multiple multi-level identities and associated interests. These 'can entail privilege and oppression for the same person in different respects' (Young, 1992: 181; see also Benton, 1981; Mumby, 1997). Cooperation and perhaps shared privilege at the level of more inclusive identities (e.g. national identity) often co-exists with conflict and perhaps oppression in one or more of its guises at the level of less inclusive identities (e.g. identity as an immigrant citizen of a particular country versus identity as an indigenous citizen of the same country) (Young, 1992). Such antagonistic cooperation is integral to social systems (Esser, 1993), and even if the higher-level identity is not constantly psychologically salient, cooperation in terms of such identities often becomes routine – part of what Giddens calls practical consciousness (1984; see also Haugaard, 2001). Possible contradictions between the interests tied to the higher-level identity and those tied to the lower-level identity may then go unnoticed unless and until aspects of social practice (or perhaps social critique; Haugaard, 2001) expose the way in which specific social structures and identities relate to each other, and in fact work together to produce a given pattern of domination.

Integral to our argument here is the assumption that, largely as a result of real social and material contradictions, individuals can define themselves

in terms of a range of identities within which contradictory interests are embedded. From a given political, ideological perspective, certain patterns of self-categorization, identity, and consequent pursuit of interests may appear disadvantageous and ill-advised (e.g. the low-paid workers who identify with the employing organization rather than the union campaigning for better pay). But the fact that those involved don't share the same perspective doesn't indicate the presence of 'false' consciousness, or 'errors in social cognition' (Jost, 1995: 402). It simply reconfirms the inherent *relativity* of social understanding.[4] Many outcomes of the self-categorization process will be politically or personally disappointing from some perspective or another, but this judgement must stand apart from recognition that the process itself is psychologically valid and accuracy-oriented rather than in any sense psychologically 'false'. As Haugaard puts it, 'theorists should abandon any evaluative notions of "true" and "false" [consciousness] and simply focus on the relationship between social knowledge and relations of domination' (2002: 40).

This argument leads to a prediction about resistance and change that may seem, at first sight, paradoxical. Whereas false consciousness would appear to predict that the social 'fringe dwellers', those apparently least 'fooled' by the cosy A/B consensus, would be likely leaders of the resistance, we follow Scott (1990) in predicting that the As have more to fear, in the end, from the most committed Bs. This is because the higher-level identity (and associated consensus concerning values, legitimizations, procedures and so forth) is binding upon them all. Both As and Bs are expected to observe its requirements, both are vulnerable to criticisms of broken promises and betrayal. For the As this creates, in Scott's words, 'a potential zone of dirty linen that, if exposed, would contradict the pretensions of legitimate domination' (1990: 105; see also Beetham, 1991). He further suggests that those Bs who have most taken the shared higher-level identity and associated values to heart will be the ones most likely to challenge the As when these no longer act in accordance with the higher-level identity (i.e. when the As' dirty linen is exposed): 'The anger born of a sense of betrayal implies an earlier faith' (Scott, 1990: 107).

Resistance thus has its starting-point well within the higher-level identity, which also typically serves as the frame within which further politicization of the Bs unfolds (Simon & Klandermans, 2001). However, history teaches us that, once they have gained momentum, social movements that started out with objectives quite compatible with the prevailing social order can radicalize and eventually result in revolutionary action and large-scale social changes (see Scott's [1990] discussion of the dynamic in the French and Russian Revolutions). An important intermediary step in this dynamic seems to be the Bs' increasing awareness that participation in the higher-level identity

is integral to the perpetuation of the total system of domination which structurally disadvantages them (Haugaard, 2001). Consequently, the Bs may become increasingly motivated to seek an anchor for their identity as Bs in alternative standards outside the prevailing social order (Sampson, 1993).

The plurality of possible identities which is particularly characteristic of complex, modern societies can play a facilitative role in this process (although inhibitory effects such that alternative identities are used for distraction and escape may also come into play). If dominated Bs have access to systems of identities that are external to the system of domination and associated identities, they can draw on alternative interpretative horizons (Haugaard, 1997) or frameworks (Turner et al., 1994). They can then put their identity as Bs, as well as the hitherto binding and constraining higher-level identity that they share with the As, into perspective and under critical scrutiny (Haugaard, 1997). As a consequence, the identity as Bs may eventually be re-anchored and re-constructed in ways that transcend and challenge the prevailing social order. In addition to this cognitive resource and its contribution to cognitive liberation (McAdam, 1982), alternative identities also provide access to valuable social and material resources (e.g. new allies and their funds), which should help to further loosen the grip of the original domination. Reconstructed identity as a B thus serves as an 'intervening causal mechanism in situations of "objective" social change' (Tajfel, 1978: 86).

Conclusions and future directions

We have presented an identity model of power which can, we believe, claim several important advantages over the dependence approach currently guiding research in social psychology. Our model does not confound power and domination, and indeed offers a definition of the productive social 'energy' that power is, at base, all about ('power to'). At the same time, it theorizes domination ('power over') as more complex than the coercive exploitation of dependence. Power manages conflict through active commitment to prior consensus, as mediated by identity. We have argued that this consensus-based power process brings into play a far more robust, productive bond between A and B than simple coercion or force could ever hope to sustain. In this sense, we theorize a ubiquitous and more effective social power. At the same time, it is the very fact of (relatively) autonomous commitment under a mutually binding consensus that constitutes the ultimate Achilles' heel of social power.

Our analysis retains the understanding that functional dependence can play a role in power relations, and in fact elaborates the dependence analysis

by identifying the consensus between A and B at a higher level of shared identity as the crucial determinant of 'resource' relevance and value. Thus, power becomes, in our model, an essentially *meaning-based* rather than need-satisfaction or threat-avoidance process.

We have discussed the hard-won differentiation of influence from power in the work of Moscovici and Turner. Some may object that our model of power re-confuses these concepts, given that the consensual aspect of the power process we have theorized is psychologically equivalent to influence in its functioning and effects. Recall, however, that the original separation of power from influence was largely driven by the need to establish influence as a matter of meaning and identity rather than need-satisfaction. It also sat within a conflictual approach to power, in which the phenomenon to be explained was compliance against one's will or interests. In stepping outside the constrictions of the conflictual approach and re-conceptualizing power as identity-based agency recruitment, we have made possible what we see as an inevitable re-convergence of power and influence. Without it, social psychology would be treating power as a far more limited and indeed ineffective social process than it is – in reality, and in other social science disciplines. We can no longer afford the conveniently simplistic distinction of influence (persuasion) versus power (coercion), intragroup process (influence) versus intergroup process (power). Power must, we have argued, draw on consensus, shared identity, and it is at its most effective, most dangerous, when it uses the very processes we have, until now, placed outside its reach under the heading of influence (see Haugaard's, 1997, excellent discussion of the relationship between power and 'truth', i.e. subjective validity).

We also believe that our identity model of power can generate innovative research hypotheses. To illustrate this, we will briefly discuss the potential of our model for the investigation of three hitherto underresearched topics. First, our identity model of power allows us to better appreciate the power dimension of intercultural conflicts. In contemporary social psychological analysis, intercultural conflicts, such as conflicts between immigrant and indigenous groups, are often reduced to a competition for a positively distinct collective identity – to a matter of what Fraser (1996) calls 'recognition' (of equal status) as opposed to 'redistribution' (of economic power). While this emphasis on people's striving for positive distinctiveness is consistent with the special attention that social psychologists have given to the role of relative group status in intergroup relations (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), the power dimension of intercultural conflicts has regularly been neglected, if not disguised. Our model suggests that issues of identity are closely intertwined with issues of power, and recent research on intercultural conflict clearly points in this direction (Simon, 2004). In many national

contexts, radical indigenous groups fight for the dominance of their cultural identity (Klandermans & Mayer, 2006). They fight for cultural hegemony and demand assimilation from immigrants, if they accept any immigration at all. In other words, they reject multiculturalism because it would entail power sharing with immigrant groups. Such power concerns are by no means restricted to radical groups, however. Research indicates that indigenous people and cultural majorities in general tend to prefer the melting-pot approach, requiring assimilation on the part of immigrants and other minority members, whereas immigrants and cultural minorities tend to prefer integration in terms of multiculturalism (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Verkuyten & Brug, 2004). Fear of power loss and hope for power gain, respectively, are very plausible explanations for these differential preferences. The melting-pot approach endorses the dominance of the cultural identity and hence the power of indigenous people or other cultural majorities, whereas multiculturalism facilitates the maintenance and autonomy of the cultural identity of immigrants or other cultural minorities and thus empowers these groups.

The second example of the innovative potential of our identity model of power concerns the phenomenological or experiential correlates of power, which have so far received only sparse attention in social psychological research. Recent work by Haslam (2001) is a notable exception. He suggests that the phenomenology of power varies depending on whether power is experienced in an intergroup or an intragroup context. A power relation is more likely to be experienced as coercive – especially by the less powerful party – when the parties involved in the relation belong to different groups (say A and B) than when they share the same group membership. In other words, experiences of being coerced or 'overpowered' should be more common when agency is being recruited across salient group boundaries. This view meshes with our discussion of conflictual power as linked to salient A/B identities and consensual power as linked to shared higher-level identities. However, we have also argued that most power relations involve a mix of conflictual power and consensual power, and that the exact composition of this mix depends largely on the (psychological) salience of the protagonists' identities as A and B and the salience of shared higher-level identities. Consequently, we would generally expect the Bs also to experience feelings of internal tension as a result of the contradictory impulses emanating from their lower-level identity, on the one hand, and their higher-level identity, on the other hand. The lower-level identity as a dominated B is an unattractive position, which one would rather avoid or leave behind. At the same time, however, the higher-level identity and the associated interests attract the person to the status quo. In contrast, the dominant As should

experience less tension, if any, and should therefore feel more at ease with themselves. Their lower-level identity as a dominant A is a very attractive position and quite compatible with their higher-level identity, which additionally legitimizes their advantage. In addition to being an important experiential correlate of power relations that in itself deserves systematic investigation in future social psychological research, such (differential) tension could also serve a useful function as an indicator or diagnostic tool which helps researchers to uncover more subtle power relations.

Third, our model with its focus on identity as the critical agency-recruiting mechanism suggests the identity-action link as an important topic for future research. Because 'to be is to do' (Stets & Burke, 2000) and 'not to do is not to be', it appears that the power of identity resides to a large extent in internalized identity-specific obligations to act 'appropriately' (i.e. to act in identity-consistent ways; see Stürmer et al., 2003). The battle over identity definitions and their implications for action should therefore be regarded, and investigated, as an essential part of every power relation. Interestingly, people seem to be inclined to presume that identities have a deeper 'genotypic', but not necessarily known essence (Medin, 1989). Hence, identity symbolizations alluding to such essences, while glossing over more 'phenotypic' differences, should be particularly powerful instruments for the recruitment of the agency of people who claim the same identity (Edelman, 1977; Wimmer, 2002).

A cautionary note

Our emphasis on the *productive* aspect of social power must not be misunderstood as an affirmation or defence of any existing power structures or relations. By the same token, the conceptual distinction between consensual and conflictual power must not be confused or equated with an ideological distinction between 'good' and 'evil' power(s), or between the use and abuse of power (see Lee-Chai et al., 2001; Pratto & Walker, 2001). In our view, the latter distinctions are symptomatic of an understandable but regrettable tendency for social scientists to allow political or ideological judgement to infiltrate basic conceptual analysis (for discussion, see Mackie, 1973; Oakes & Haslam, 2001). Judgements of 'good' and 'evil', useful versus abusive, are necessarily partisan and relative. At best, giving theoretical space to such distinctions must slow down the discovery of the *general* social psychological principles of power. At worst, the attempted solution (to evil power) becomes part of the problem, as the scientific rubber-stamp of 'goodness' affirms and entrenches a power relation which may represent intolerable

abuse to some of those involved. Thus, the social scientist has (inadvertently) further strengthened what is, to some, an 'evil' power.

Our article presents a strictly analytical attempt to improve our understanding of the way in which people are able to get things done, regardless of whether or not, from the perspective of our political selves, we approve of their agendas and actions. We also believe, however, that advances in the theory of social power can only enhance the effectiveness of political action.

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Notes

1 The classic, widely used schematic representation of a power relationship is the one introduced by Robert Dahl (1957), involving A (a person or group) who prevails over B (another person or group). Dahl's own version of the A/B statement was that power can be observed when one party (A, in the conventional usage) makes the other (B) do something that they wouldn't otherwise have done.

2 Turner (1991: 172) brackets 'legitimate power', authority, as a form of ingroup power in which certain members are able to influence without immediate internalization (also Turner, 2005). Haslam (2001: 212) comments that this is not 'power proper' because it involves 'some implicit acceptance of the user's right to control', some element of consent and alignment of wills. In what follows we reject the division of 'power' from internalization or consent, and would see legitimacy as a variable characteristic of *all* power relations rather than a special case identifier.

3 This aspect of our approach was strongly influenced by the work of social theorist Mark Haugaard (1997, 2001) who develops aspects of Giddens's work, but rejects the overly deterministic element he detects in structuration theory. Haugaard proposes power as a 'scalar concept' (2001: 59), anchored by absolute conflict at one extreme, absolute consensus at the other (see also Ng's suggested 'power continuum', 1980: 168). His argument builds from a distinction between superordinate social structures (the 'rules of the game') and specific social goals, with various patterns and balances of consensus on and conflict over structures and goals defining the scale points in between total consensus and total conflict. In place of these more sociological constructs, we use the identity process to adapt some of Haugaard's insights for social psychological purposes.

4 See the work by Oakes and colleagues for a similar argument in relation to categorization and stereotyping, and an elaboration of the crucial difference between 'relativity' and 'relativism' in this context (Oakes, 2001; Oakes & Haslam, 2001; Oakes & Reynolds, 1997; Oakes et al., 1994).

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