research: identity contents, structures, processes and the motivational principles that guide them. However, IPT has been extended subsequently with detailed theorizing about the relationship between identity and social representation processes (e.g. Breakwell, 1993, 2001, 2010). Even more than research into IPT, social representations research has typically encompassed a highly diverse range of methods (see Breakwell and Canter, 1993) and it would be impossible to do anything approaching justice here to the multitude of ways in which the two theories might be brought together empirically. Hence, I will restrict myself to illustrating some ways in which social representational ideas can be integrated into the study of identity processes using quantitative research methods. More extensive discussions of the use of quantitative methods in social representation research – which might be integrated with the methods described in this chapter – can be found elsewhere (e.g. Breakwell and Canter, 1993; Doise *et al.*, 1993).

A first sense in which the two perspectives can be integrated is by viewing social representations as providing both a context and content for identity processes. Thus, while IPT describes the structures and processes of identity, the meanings of particular identity aspects are to a large extent socially defined and this may constrain the operation of identity processes (Breakwell, 2001). I will describe two studies examining the effects of social constructions of a particular identity category on attitudes toward social minorities, and a third study examining the effects of wider cultural values and beliefs on the operation of the distinctiveness principle.

Pehrson *et al.* (2009) analyzed survey data from thirty-one nations to test the prediction that different social constructions of nationhood place different constraints on the identity positions that individuals can occupy – specifically, how possible it is to identify strongly with one's nation while simultaneously holding positive attitudes toward immigrants. In nations where membership was defined to a greater extent in terms of shared language, national identification was correlated with negative attitudes toward immigrants (in these nations, either one could identify with the nation, or one could have a positive attitude toward immigrants); whereas in those nations where national membership was defined in terms of shared citizenship, no such correlation was found (in these nations, the social representational climate made it easier to identify strongly and yet also express positive attitudes toward immigrants). Using multi-level analysis, the authors demonstrated that it was the *average* definition of national membership prevailing in each nation, rather than participants' personal definitions of national membership, that moderated the relationship between national identification and attitudes

toward immigrants. Thus, the results appeared to reflect a contextual constraint upon identity processes, irreducible to an individual level of explanation.

The salience of particular social constructions of an identity category can also be primed experimentally. Smeekes *et al.* (2011) tested the effect of priming a construction of Dutch identity as rooted in Christianity on attitudes toward expressive rights for Dutch Muslims. They reasoned that Muslim expressive rights would be seen as threatening to undermine the continuity of Dutch national identity when a Christian representation of Dutch national identity was made salient – leading to greater opposition toward expressive rights even among lower national identifiers. Although they did not measure perceived continuity threat, lower identifiers showed a comparable level of opposition to higher identifiers following a Christian-heritage prime, whereas higher identifiers typically showed greater opposition than lower identifiers when other constructions of Dutch national identity were primed.

Becker *et al.* (2012) sought to test claims that the distinctiveness principle may be stronger in individualist than in collectivist cultures (Triandis, 1995) against the alternative view that the distinctiveness principle should influence identity processes in all cultures, but would be satisfied in different ways depending on prevailing beliefs and values (Vignoles *et al.*, 2000). Using implicit measures of motive strength, they found that the distinctiveness motive was at least as strong in collectivist as in individualist cultures. However, distinctiveness was associated more strongly with difference and separateness in more individualist cultures and more strongly with social position in more collectivist cultures. Multilevel analysis confirmed that the prevailing beliefs and values in an individual's context, rather than the individual's own beliefs and values, accounted for these differences, suggesting that the emphasis on different sources of distinctiveness is a collective process, rather than an individual one.

A second focus for integrating IPT with Social Representations Theory is to explore the role of identity processes in generating, propagating and transforming social representations. Breakwell (2001, 2010) argues that it is especially important to study how individuals "personalize" the social representations that are available to them, depending on their social positions. What is the role of identity dynamics in individuals' internalization or resistance of particular social representations, or their use in communication?

Evidence for the role of identity dynamics in individuals' internalization or resistance of social representations comes from an experimental study by Breakwell *et al.* (2003) into young adolescents' perceptions of

an imaginary girl and an imaginary boy who were portrayed either as liking or not liking science. The authors tested the extent to which participants reflected a social construction of science as "masculine" in their ratings of these imaginary targets. Results showed a small tendency for the female target to be rated as less feminine if she was portrayed as liking rather than not liking science. However, the effect was slightly reversed for the male target – he was rated as marginally *more* feminine if he was portrayed as liking science. Moreover, the de-feminized perception of the girl who liked science was strongest among girls in the sample who liked science less. Thus, far from reflecting the consensual application of a de-feminized social construction of science, it seemed that girls who did not like science were using this social construction selectively and strategically to claim superiority for their own identity position.

Evidence for the role of identity processes in people's communicative use of social representations comes from a study into adolescents' use of "status symbols" in self-presentation. Carr and Vignoles (2011) asked their participants to list ten possessions, to rate each possession for its "status value," and finally to choose five possessions to discuss in an anticipated interaction with another participant. Overall, participants chose especially those possessions that they had rated higher in status value, seemingly basing their communicative choices on the socially constructed meanings of the possessions. Moreover, this effect was stronger among those with greater identity insecurity, providing evidence for the role of identity concerns in the decision to utilize the social representation of certain possessions as status symbols in their self-presentational choices.

Although none of the studies reviewed in this section was explicitly framed in terms of integrating IPT with Social Representations Theory, they hopefully provide an idea of the considerable potential for future quantitative research in this area, illustrating various methods that can be used to explore and to test predictions from this rich area of ongoing theoretical synthesis and development.

Conclusions

I began this chapter commenting on the need for a visible body of quantitative research identifying and systematically testing the key theoretical claims of IPT and demonstrating its advantages over competing perspectives. I have described here studies that have tested some of the key predictions of the theory, but I have also identified some important predictions that to my knowledge have yet to be tested, while illustrating the range of quantitative methods that IPT researchers could use to conduct such research.

An important strength of IPT over many competing perspectives in the identity literature is its greater breadth and richness. Especially distinctive is its attention to issues of multiplicity within identity. IPT can be used to understand multiple kinds of identity content, multiple processes and multiple motivational principles. Correspondingly, it may be best addressed empirically using multiple methodological approaches. The methods I have reviewed can be used to test predictions about the personal and social processes involved in constructing, maintaining and defending a sense of identity. These methods treat identity as a "work in progress" and not as an essentialized "object" and so they are epistemologically compatible with many qualitative approaches to identity research (see Coyle and Murtagh, this volume). I hope that this chapter – and this volume – will contribute to further dialogue between identity researchers using qualitative and quantitative methods.

REFERENCES

Aquino, K., Freeman, D., Reed II, A., Lim, V. K. G., and Felps, W. (2009). Testing a social-cognitive model of moral behaviour: the interactive influence of situations and moral identity centrality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 97, 123–141.

Batory, A. M. (2010). Diaologicality and the construction of identity. *International Journal for Dialogical Science*, 4(1), 45–66.

Becker, M., Vignoles, V. L., Owe, E., Brown, R., Smith, P. B., Easterbrook, M., … and Yamakoğlu, N. (2012). Culture and the distinctiveness motive: constructing identity in individualistic and collectivistic contexts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 201, 833–855.

Becker, M., Vignoles, V. L., Owe, E., Easterbrook, M., Brown, R., Smith, P. B., … and Koller, S. H. (2013). *Cultural bases of self-evaluation: seeing oneself positively in different cultural contexts*. Manuscript submitted for publication, University of Sussex, UK.

Bonaiuto, M., Breakwell, G. M., and Cano, I. (1996). Identity processes and environmental threat: the effects of nationalism and local identity upon perception of beach pollution. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 6, 157–175.

Branscombe, N. R., Ellemers, N., Spears, R., and Doosje, B. (1999). The context and content of social identity threat. In N. Ellemers, R. Spears and B. Doosje (eds.), *Social identity: Context, commitment, content.* (pp. 35–58). Oxford: Blackwell.

Breakwell, G. M. (1978). Some effects of marginal social identity. In H. Tajfel (ed.), *Differentiation between social groups* (pp. 301–336). London: Academic Press.

Breakwell, G. M. (1979). Illegitimate group membership and inter-group differentiation. *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 18, 141–149.

Breakwell, G. M. (1986a). *Coping with threatened identities*. London: Methuen.

Breakwell, G. M. (1986b). Political and attributional responses of the young short-term unemployed. *Political Psychology*, 7, 575–586.

Breakwell, G. M. (1987). Identity. In H. Beloff and A. Coleman (eds.), *Psychology Survey No. 6*. (pp. 94–114). British Psychological Society.

Breakwell, G. M. (1988). Strategies adopted when identity is threatened. *Revue Internationale de Psychologie Sociale*, 1, 189–203.

Breakwell, G. M. (1992). Identity and self-concept. In M. Banks, I. Bates, G.M. Breakwell, J. Bynner, N. Emler, L. Jamieson and K. Roberts (eds.), *Careers and Identities* (pp. 109–126). Buckingham, UK: Open University Press.

Breakwell, G. M. (1993). Social representations and social identity. *Papers on Social Representations*, 2, 198–217.

Breakwell, G. M. (2001). Social representational constraints upon identity processes. In K. Deaux and G. Philogene (eds.), *Representations of the social: bridging theoretical traditions* (pp. 271–284). Oxford: Blackwell.

Breakwell, G. M. (2010). Resisting representations and identity processes. *Papers on Social Representations*, 19, 6.1–6.11.

Breakwell, G. M., and Canter, D. V. (eds.) (1993). *Empirical approaches to social representations*. Oxford University Press.

Breakwell, G. M., Collie, A., Harrison, B., and Propper, C. (1984a). Attitudes towards the unemployed: effects of threatened identity. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 23, 87–88.

Breakwell, G. M., Harrison, B., and Propper, C. (1984b). Explaining the psychological effects of unemployment for young people: the importance of specific situational factors. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 12, 132–140.

Breakwell, G. M., Vignoles, V. L., and Robertson, T. (2003). Stereotypes and crossed-category evaluations: the case of gender and science education. *British Journal of Psychology*, 94, 437–455.

Breakwell, G. M., and Weinberger, B. (1987). Young women in 'gender-atypical' jobs: the case of trainee technicians in the engineering industry. Department of Employment Research Reports (No. 49).

Cai, H., Sedikides, C., Gaertner, L., Wang, C., Carvallo, M., Xu, Y., O'Mara, E. M., and Jackson, L. E. (2011). Tactical self-enhancement in China: is modesty at the service of self-enhancement in East-Asian culture? *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 2, 59–64.

Carr, H., and Vignoles, V. L. (2011). Keeping up with the Joneses: status projection as symbolic self-completion. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41, 518–527.

Cassidy, C., and Trew, K. (2001). Assessing identity change: a longitudinal study of the transition from school to college. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 4, 49–60.

Devos, T., Diaz, P., Viera, E., and Dunn, R. (2007). College education and motherhood as components of self-concept: discrepancies between implicit and explicit assessments. *Self and Identity*, 6, 256–277.

Doise, W., Clémence, A., and Lorenzi-Cioldi, F. (1993). *The quantitative analysis of social representations*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Droseltis, O., and Vignoles, V. L. (2010). Towards an integrative model of place identity processes: dimensionality and predictors of intrapersonal-level place preferences. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30, 23–34.

Easterbrook, M., and Vignoles, V. L. (2012). Different groups, different motives: identity motives underlying changes in identification with novel groups. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38, 1,066–1,080.

Ethier, K. A., and Deaux, K. (1994). Negotiating social identity when contexts change: maintaining identification and responding to threat. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 67, 243–251.

Greenberg, J., Solomon, S., Pyszczynski, T., Rosenblatt, A., Burling, J., Lyon, D., Simon, L., and Pinel, E. (1992). Why do people need self-esteem? Converging evidence that self-esteem serves an anxiety-buffering function. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63, 913–922.

Jaspal, R., and Cinnirella, M. (2010). Coping with potentially incompatible identities: accounts of religious, ethnic and sexual identities from British Pakistani men who identify as Muslim and gay. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49, 849–870.

Jetten, J., and Hutchison, P. (2011). When groups have a lot to lose: historical continuity enhances resistance to a merger. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 41, 335–343.

Jetten, J., Postmes, T., and McAuliffe, B. J. (2002). "We're all individuals": group norms of individualism and collectivism, levels of identification and identity threat. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 32, 189–207.

Jetten, J., and Wohl, M. J. A. (2012). The past as a determinant of the present: historical continuity, collective angst and opposition to immigrants. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 42, 442–450.

Kelly, T. L. (2004). *Ostracism and identity motives*. Unpublished BSc dissertation, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK.

Knowles, M. L., Lucas, G. M., Molden, D. C., Gardner, W. L., and Dean, K. K. (2010). There's no substitute for belonging: self-affirmation following social and nonsocial threats. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36, 173–186.

Korf, L., and Malan, J. (2002). Threat to ethnic identity: the experience of White Afrikaans-speaking participants in post-apartheid South Africa. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 142, 149–169.

Kreuzbauer, R., Vignoles, V. L., and Chiu, C.-Y. (2009). *Motivational foundations of brand identification*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, USA.

Kuhn, M. H., and McPartland, T. S. (1954). An empirical investigation of self-attitudes. *American Sociological Review*, 19, 68–76.

Leach, C. W., Van Zomeren, M., Zebel, S., Vliek, M., Pennekamp, S. F., Doosje, B., Ouwerkerk, J. W., and Spears, R. (2008). Collective self-definition and self-investment: a two-dimensional framework of group identification. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 144–165.

Leary, M. R., Terry, M. L., Allen, A. B., and Tate, E. B. (2009). The concept of ego threat in social and personality psychology: in ego threat a viable scientific construct? *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 13, 151–164.

Lynn, M., and Snyder, C. R. (2002). Uniqueness seeking. In C. R. Snyder and S. J. Lopez (eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 395–410). New York: Oxford University Press.

Manzi, C., Vignoles, V. L., and Regalia, C. (2010). Accommodating a new identity: possible selves, identity change and well-being across two life-transitions. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 40, 970–984.

Manzi, C., Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., and Scabini, E. (2006). Cohesion and enmeshment revisited: differentiation, identity and psychological well-being in two European cultures. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68, 673–689.

Markowe, L. A. (1996). *Redefining the self: coming out as lesbian*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Markus, H., and Kunda, Z. (1986). Stability and malleability of the self-concept. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 51, 858–866.

Markus, H. R., and Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, 41, 954–969.

Martiny, S. E., Kessler, T., and Vignoles, V. L. (2012). Shall I leave or shall we fight? Effects of threatened group-based self-esteem on identity management strategies. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 15, 39–55.

McQuillen, A. D., Licht, M. H., and Licht, B. G. (2001). Identity structure and life satisfaction in later life. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 23, 65–72.

Murtagh, N. (2009). *Voluntary occupation change: a social psychological investigation of experience and process.* Doctoral thesis, University of Surrey, UK.

Murtagh, N., Gatersleben, B., and Uzzell, D. (2012). Self-identity threat and resistance to change: evidence from regular travel behaviour. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 32, 318–326.

Ogilvie, D. M. (1987). Life satisfaction and identity structure in late middle-aged men and women. *Psychology and Aging*, 2, 217–224.

Pehrson, S., Vignoles, V. L., and Brown, R. (2009). National identification and anti-immigrant prejudice: individual and contextual effects of national definitions. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 72, 24–38.

Pickett, C. L., Silver, M. D., and Brewer, M. B. (2002). The impact of assimilation and differentiation needs on perceived group importance and perceptions of ingroup size. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 546–568.

Reicher, S. (2000). Social identity definition and enactment: a broad SIDE against irrationalism and relativism. In T. Postmes, R. Spears, M. Lea and S. Reicher (eds.), *SIDE issues centre stage: recent developments in studies of de-individuation in groups* (pp. 175–190). Amsterdam: Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Reid, A., and Deaux, K. (1996). Relationship between social and personal identities: segregation or integration? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 1,084–1,091.

Riketta, M. (2008). Who identifies with which group? The motive-feature match principle and its limitations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 38, 715–735.

Rosenberg, S., and Gara, M. A. (1985). The multiplicity of personal identity. In P. Shaver (ed.), *Review of personality and social psychology*, vol. 6 (pp. 87–113). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Salvatore, J., and Prentice, D. (2011). The independence paradox. In J. Jetten and M. J. Hornsey (eds.), *Rebels in groups: dissent, deviance, difference and defiance* (pp. 201–218). Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Schimel, J., Pyszczynski, T., Greenberg, J., O'Mahen, H., and Arndt, J. (2000). Running from the shadow: psychological distancing from others to deny characteristics people fear in themselves. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 78, 446–462.

Sedikides, C., and Strube, M. J. (1997). Self-evaluation: to thine own self be good, to thine own self be sure, to thine own self be true and to thine own self be better. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 29, 209–269.

Serpe, R. T. (1987). Stability and change in self: a symbolic interactionist explanation. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 50, 44–55.

Serpe, R. T., and Stryker, S. (2011). The symbolic interactionist perspective and identity theory. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx and V. L. Vignoles (eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 225–248). New York: Springer.

Smeekes, A., Verkuyten, M., and Poppe, E. (2011). Mobilizing opposition towards Muslim immigrants: national identification and the representation of national history. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 50, 265–280.

Smith, P. B. (2011). Cross-cultural perspectives on identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx and V. L. Vignoles (eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 249–265). New York: Springer.

Spears, R. (2011). Group identities: the social identity perspective. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx and V. L. Vignoles (eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 201–224). New York: Springer.

Spears, R., Doosje, B., and Ellemers, N. (1997). Self-stereotyping in the fact of threats to group status and distinctiveness: the role of group identification. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23, 538–553.

Straumann, T. J., Lemieux, A. M., and Coe, C. L. (1993). Self-discrepancy and natural killer cell activity: immunological consequences of negative self-evaluation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64, 1,042–1,052.

Swann Jr., W. B., (1983). Self-verification: bringing social reality into harmony with the self. In J. Suls and A. G. Greenwald (eds.), *Psychological perspectives on the self*, vol. II (pp. 33–66). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Tajfel, H., and Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin and S. Worchel (eds.), *Social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–48). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Tesser, A., Crepaz, N., Collins, J. C., Cornell, D., and Beach, S. R. H. (2000). Confluence of self-esteem regulation mechanisms: on integrating the self-zoo. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 26, 1,476–1,489.

Thorpe, L. J. (2003). *Awareness of death: does this impact on the processes underlying identity?* BA dissertation, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK.

Triandis, H. C. (1995). *Individualism and collectivism*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Trzesniewski, K. H., Donnellan, M. B., and Robins, R. W. (2003). Stability of self-esteem across the lifespan, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 205–220.

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., and Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: a self-categorization theory*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Vignoles, V. L. (2000). *Identity, culture and the distinctiveness principle*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Surrey, UK.

Vignoles, V. L. (2011). Identity motives. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx and V. L. Vignoles (eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 403–432). New York: Springer.

Vignoles, V. L. and 76 members of the Culture and Identity Research Network (2013). *Evidence for the cross-cultural generality of identity motives*. Manuscript in preparation, University of Sussex, UK.

Vignoles, V. L., Chryssochoou, X., and Breakwell, G. M. (2000). The distinctiveness principle: identity, meaning, and the bounds of cultural relativity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 4, 337–354.

Vignoles, V. L., Chryssochoou, X., and Breakwell, G. M. (2002). Evaluating models of identity motivation: self-esteem is not the whole story. *Self and Identity*, 1, 201–218.

Vignoles, V. L., and Deas, C. (2002, September). *Appearance related negative health behaviours and identity motives*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the British Psychological Society Social Psychology Section, University of Huddersfield, UK.

Vignoles, V. L., Dittmar, H. E., Langton, T. A. D., Wright, A. E., and Anderson, N. (2007, September). *The material self: identity motives and the symbolic value of material possessions*. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the British Psychological Society Social Psychology Section, Canterbury, UK.

Vignoles, V. L., Manzi, C., Regalia, C., Jemmolo, S., and Scabini, E. (2008). Identity motives underlying desired and feared possible future selves. *Journal of Personality*, 76, 1,165–1,200.

Vignoles, V. L., and Moncaster, N. (2007). Identity motives and in-group favouritism: a new approach to individual differences in intergroup discrimination. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 46, 91–113.

Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., Manzi, C., Golledge, J., and Scabini, E. (2006). Beyond self-esteem: influence of multiple motives on identity construction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90, 308–333.

Vignoles, V. L., Schwartz, S. J., and Luyckx, K. (2011). Introduction: toward an integrative view of identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx and V. L. Vignoles (eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 1–27). New York: Springer.

Wylie, R. C. (1974). *The self-concept: a review of methodological considerations and measuring instruments*, vol. I. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Part III

Integrating theoretical frameworks

5 On the meaning, validity and importance of the distinction between personal and social identity: a social identity perspective on Identity Process Theory

Samuel Pehrson and Stephen Reicher

At first glance, Identity Process Theory (IPT) seems to have a great deal in common with the Social Identity Approach (SIA). Both perspectives share, for example, an appreciation of the multiplicity and fluidity of identity, its embeddedness in broader socio-historical contexts and its centrality to processes of representation and social change. Both perspectives, also, have appealed to researchers seeking to resist the overwhelming tendency for much of psychology (whether in North America, Europe or elsewhere) to reduce social phenomena to de-contextualized mechanisms operating within individual minds. Indeed, SIA and IPT scholars often pursue complementary programs of research and have, to some extent, a common agenda.

Our emphasis in this contribution, however, is on difference rather than similarity. Efforts toward theoretical integration such as that undertaken in this volume are commendable. However, such efforts should not come at the expense of conceptual clarity with regard to the particularities of existing perspectives. We do not want to end up with what Engels once memorably described as "a pauper's broth of eclecticism." Thus, we aim to elucidate what we see as particular insights offered by the SIA and to highlight how these differ from the approach taken by IPT. The SIA comprises Self-Categorization Theory (SCT), Social Identity Theory (SIT) and a number of other theoretical extensions, although our main focus in this chapter is SCT. We cannot, of course, do justice to the full scope of either approach, nor to the large empirical literature each has generated (for recent reviews, see Haslam *et al.*, 2010a, 2010b; Reicher *et al.*, 2010. For a collection of classic articles, see Postmes and Branscombe, 2010). Instead, we concentrate on exploring the implications of one key

The authors thank Vivian Vignoles for his helpful comments on an early draft of this chapter. In particular, the use of the labels "content distinction" and "framing distinction" to clarify our argument are his suggestion.

point: that concerning the concept of social identity itself. Specifically, we will argue that understanding how social identity, as distinct from personal identity, underpins psychological group formation is absolutely indispensable to a social psychology of identity, social action and social change.

Personal versus social identity: two perspectives

If there is one particularly well-known fact about the SIA, it is probably that this family of theories posits that we all possess social identity based on our group memberships on the one hand, and personal identity relating to our individuality on the other. Yet, the implications of this apparently straightforward proposition are often misunderstood. Furthermore, the usefulness of the distinction between personal and social identity is questioned by key presentations of IPT, in which the "distinction between social and personal identity is abandoned" (Breakwell, 2001, p. 227) and rejected as a "misleading detour" (Breakwell, 1986, p. 18). This appears to mark a crucial point of difference between the two approaches that merits closer inspection.

In addressing these contrasting perspectives on the distinction between personal and social identity, let us consider some background to Tajfel's notion of social identity in early accounts of SIT. Many readers will be familiar with the following routinely quoted definition of social identity given by Tajfel (1978): "For the purpose of this discussion, social identity will be understood as that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his [*sic*] knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (p. 63). Less often quoted, however, are the sentences that immediately follow: "It will be clear that this is a limited definition of 'identity' or 'social identity.' This limitation is deliberate and it has two aims. The first is not to enter into endless and often sterile discussions as to what 'is' identity. The second is to enable us to use this limited concept in the discussions of theory and research which follow" (p. 63).

Thus, it is clear that Tajfel had no interest here in developing a comprehensive theory of "identity" per se. Rather, as he went on to explain, his concern was specifically with understanding intergroup behavior and social change. He was interested in identity insofar as it was instrumental to that goal. Tajfel's most fundamental contention in this work was that, in order to understand intergroup phenomena such as conflict, stereotyping and prejudice, one needs a theoretical perspective that not does assume people to be "randomly interacting individual particles" (Tajfel, 1972, p. 16) and that instead recognizes that they can act on the basis of

understanding themselves as group members. For this reason, the notion of social identity was brought into play: people know that they belong to some groups and not to others and this matters to them. Awareness that one is part of a collective allows one to act as part of a collective, and this point is crucial to any convincing account of social change: an issue of paramount concern to Tajfel along with many of his European contemporaries (Israel *et al.*, 1972; see also de la Sablonnière and Usborne, this volume). The notion of "*social* identity" in this early work, defined in terms of group membership, brackets off broader questions about self and identity from those that are directly about the way certain aspects of our identity connect us to others through group membership and therefore underpin intergroup behavior.

SIT, then, is a theory of intergroup relations rather than a theory of self and identity, and we find no specification of the relationship between personal and social identity in Tajfel's work. It is in SCT that the notion of social identity is fleshed out and integrated into a broader and more comprehensive theory of the self and the social group (Turner, 1999; Turner *et al.*, 1987) and where the nature and importance of the distinction between personal and social identity is more thoroughly theorized and explored. It is therefore SCT that will be principal focus in this chapter, even though SIT might appear to have more in common with IPT in certain respects (such as the specification of motivational aspects and on various kinds of identity threat). It is interesting to note that IPT is described as an attempt to replace the "black box" model of identity in Tajfel's work with a more comprehensive theory of identity (Breakwell, 1993). This alone is reason to contrast it with SCT, particularly given that IPT abandons the notion of social identity as conceptually distinct from personal identity.

SCT conceptualizes identity in terms of self-categories that are generated through social interaction. Self-categories are "social contextual definitions of the perceiver" (Turner *et al.*, 1994, p. 458) in that they represent the perceiver in relation to others and do so fluidly in line with the perceiver's changing social reality. At different times a person may self-categorize more as a unique individual, distinguishing between "me" and "not me" (personal identity), or as a group member, distinguishing between "us" and "them" (social identity). Moreover, different groups that individuals belong to become the basis for self-categorization (i.e. become salient) at different times, depending on the immediate context and frame of reference.

Individual and group are different levels of abstraction at which self-categorization may occur throughout the course of this ongoing variation (Turner *et al.*, 1987; Turner *et al.*, 1994). Both are cognitive

representations of the perceiver's social relationships generated through an interaction between the social world and the principles of normative and comparative fit. Detailed accounts of these principles can be found elsewhere (e.g. Turner, 1999, Turner and Reynolds, 2001) but, in short, comparative fit maximizes what is called the "meta-contrast ratio" (the extent to which a category maximizes between-category differences and within-category similarities in a given frame of reference), while normative fit refers to the extent to which between-category differences are congruent with expectations, stereotypes and so forth about the groups involved. Both personal and social identity, then, are "social" in a broad sense: they are contextually generated, relational, interpretations of self (Turner *et al.*, 1994).

The distinction that SCT draws between different levels of inclusiveness or abstraction at which self-categorization takes place should not be confused with one between identity "elements" (Vignoles *et al.*, 2006) that are based on group labels ("female," "Scottish") on the one hand and those that refer to traits or idiosyncratic descriptors of an individual ("tall," "big-eared") on the other. The latter could be termed a *content* distinction, which is different from the *framing* distinction that is emphasized by SCT (Turner *et al.*, 1994). "Scottish," for example, may serve to categorize either a group (in contrast to other groups) or an individual (in contrast to other individuals) depending on the frame of reference. Though referring to group membership, as part of a constellation of identity elements (e.g. Scottish, female, young, short sighted, British, Dundee United supporter), "Scottish" informs a representation of "me" in contrast to others. Similarly, as Simon (1997) points out, almost any attribute could function hypothetically as a group-level self-categorization. For example, wearing spectacles could do so if it became a signifier of a dangerous intellectualism that merits persecution. Thus, any of a person's numerous characteristics may become the basis for either personal or social identity, depending on how they position that person in relation to others in a particular social reality and how these social positions and relationships interact with the principles of comparative and normative fit. In this vein, it has been argued that the collective self involves a single self-aspect becoming dominant, while personal identity entails the combination of many such aspects into a unique configuration (Simon, 1997, 2004). The diminution in salience of all but one aspect corresponds to a representation of self in which intra-category differences become secondary to intra-category similarities. In contrast, a configuration of many self-aspects specifies the individual as unique, corresponding to personal identity.

Early accounts of SCT imply a variable activation of stored categories within a hierarchically organized cognitive structure, that is,

a "self-concept," with different categories being activated in turn as the social environment changes (e.g. Turner *et al.*, 1987). However, subsequent accounts of SCT dispense with the notion of an enduring self-concept by arguing explicitly that self-categorization is an ongoing interpretative process rather than a "switching on" of stored categories (e.g. Turner *et al.*, 1994). In SCT, then, self can be defined as situated, reflexive cognition rather than as an enduring cognitive structure.

This does not mean that we simply forget about categorizations that are no longer salient, nor does it deny that some categories have more prior importance and meaning to some people than to others. People do not engage in every moment of categorization with total amnesia and detachment (Reicher *et al.*, 2010). These points are represented in SCT by the notion of "perceiver readiness" (sometimes referred to as "accessibility"), which constitutes all the factors from the perceiver's side that constrain categorization in a given context (Turner, 1999; Turner *et al.*, 1987, 1994). The concept of perceiver readiness has rarely been fully unpacked in SCT, because the main concern of the theory is with how categorization is responsive to contemporaneous social reality and the role of social identity in group processes. Perceiver readiness is more linked to one's history of social relations, although perhaps the various identity motives that have been proposed over the years (for an overview, see Vignoles *et al.*, 2006) including the "identity principles" included in IPT could help explain what elements of the past are retained for the present. That is, elements that satisfy an individual's motives for distinctiveness, continuity and so forth may be more likely to retain chronic importance and thus be more "accessible" in the categorization process.

Still, whatever cognitive structures, processes and motives underlie self-categorization, these are not "self" or "identity" in SCT terms unless and until they function as self-categories in context. In other words, self is defined functionally rather than structurally: what qualifies a given cognition as self is its reflexive quality, i.e. being a representation of the perceiver, rather than whether it arises from a particular kind of mental activity or resides within a particular knowledge structure (Turner *et al.*, 1994, 2006).

This understanding contrasts markedly with IPT, in which "identity structure" is a core theoretical construct (Breakwell, 1986, 2001). Identity structure comprises a content dimension, consisting of an array of self-defining attributes ("identity elements") organized hierarchically and in terms of their relative centrality and so forth, as well as a value dimension, which refers to the positive or negative value associated with each of these elements. IPT emphasizes that these identity elements, their organization and their valence undergo revision throughout the lifespan as a result of changing social structures and social influence.

It is this identity structure and the "identity processes" through which such revision takes place that together constitute "identity" in IPT terms (Breakwell, 1986). Thus, identity is conceived as an enduring cognitive structure that moves through time, subject to development and change along the way. In short, in IPT, particular cognitive structures and processes constitute identity (Breakwell, 1986), while for SCT, the cognitive system as a whole functions to produce identities in context (Turner *et al.*, 1994).

This theoretical difference may seem arcane, but it has some important corollaries. Not least, it helps us to understand why IPT views the theoretical distinction between personal and social identity to be ultimately unsustainable, while in SCT it is crucial. When conceptualized as a person's defining properties held within a cognitive structure, personal and social identity elements indeed cannot be straightforwardly distinguished because the distinction depends not on the elements themselves (a content distinction), but on the abstractness of categories in context (a framing distinction). Because SCT defines identity in terms of situated interpretations of self (as "me" or "us"), rather than as elements of a stored self-concept, the framing distinction does not depend on a content distinction: a point that has become clearer as the specification of SCT has developed (e.g. Simon, 1997; Turner, 1994 *et al.*). Thus, Breakwell's (1986) critique of the *content* distinction between personal and social identity does not require us to discard the *framing* distinction that unpins the Social Identity Approach. It is within SCT's functional conception of identity, rather than IPT's structural conception, that the distinction between personal and social identity is valid.

But why insist on the conceptual distinction between personal and social identity if these are merely different levels of inclusiveness at which the on-going process of self-categorization can occur? Our answer entails two related arguments. First of all, it is social identity, not personal identity, that makes group behavior possible (Turner, 1982). Secondly, understanding group processes is indispensable to understanding society. These arguments are not new, having been made throughout the history of the SIA (Reicher *et al.*, 2010). However, our aim in the remainder of this chapter is to bring together and explicate their implications for the main focus of this volume: identity, social action and social change.

Social identity makes group behavior possible

SCT's account of the consequences of social identity salience begins with the notion of depersonalization, which is the process whereby people come to perceive themselves and others more in terms of their group

membership and less in terms of their individuality (Turner *et al.*, 1987). This entails a perceptual shift in that category members are seen as more similar to one another and more different from outgroup members, than is the case when personal identity is salient. This also means that we see group members, including ourselves, in terms of the characteristics and norms associated with that category – a process referred to as self-stereotyping – and that we will seek to conform to these norms. It is through these processes of depersonalization and self-stereotyping that some level of behavioral uniformity can emerge, although of course this uniformity will rarely be total. There is no claim that members' awareness of their individually or differences between them are obliterated by self-categorization as a group member – although the differences that interest people in such circumstances are those which relate to group concerns. To what extent do people accord with group norms? Such a focus is associated with increasing conformity to group norms.

Of course, conformity to norms would not lead to collective behavior unless those norms really are shared between group members. We therefore need to ask how group members arrive at a common understanding of what is normative within the group and what kind of action should follow from this. According to SCT, group members are not only interested in but also expect to agree on matters that are relevant to the group, so depersonalization introduces a dynamic toward seeking consensus (Turner, 1991). Thus, we look to fellow ingroup members in order to validate our own perspective. And, in particular, we look to prototypical members of the group because it is their judgments and actions that should be most indicative of how group members in general should respond (Haslam *et al.*, 2011).

The group prototype here is not some fixed essence or set of traits that somehow resides either within the group or as an inflexible stereotype in the minds of its members. Category prototypes are generated in context not only intra- but also inter-psychically: through debate and discussion. And the balance of discussion is responsive to features of that context. A particularly striking example of this can be found in crowd research; where the relationship between a crowd and the police is antagonistic, it is the most confrontational members of the crowd who are seen as prototypical and therefore influential (Reicher, 1996). Conversely, where police are able to position themselves as facilitators of legitimate goals of the crowd (such as to hold a demonstration or enjoy a football match) then confrontational individuals or subgroups within the crowd will be viewed as peripheral and hence unable to influence others (Stott *et al.*, 2007). Prototypicality, then, is a function of the wider intergroup context within which the categories are embedded. The idea

that social identity salience opens the door to these processes of social influence, rather than mechanistically activating stored attributes in a person's head as in social cognition theories of the self (e.g. McConnell, 2011), is crucial to understanding how the SIA views a range of social phenomena.

A further piece of the jigsaw in accounting for how social identity makes group behavior possible concerns solidarity. To the extent that people share a social identity, they will be more inclined to act in cooperation and support of one another (Haslam *et al.*, 2011a) and also to develop organization and leadership which ensures effective and efficient coordination (Haslam *et al.*, 2011b). In short, social identity is at the root of the processes that turn an aggregation of individuals into psychological group: people who have a shared view of reality, who work toward the same goals and who assist and cooperate with one another.

There may be further pieces still to be developed. For instance there is emerging evidence that shared social identity may not only accentuate the factors which allow people to come together and coordinate their activities but also attenuate the factors which keep people apart and impede co-action. At the very simplest levels, social identity overcomes the barriers of personal space (Novelli *et al.*, 2010). As our on-going research suggests, it may do this by lessening one's disgust at the smells and secretions of ingroup members. We have not yet exhausted the ways in which shared social identity makes group behavior possible (Turner, 1982; Turner *et al.*, 1987).

Identity, social action and social change

To bring together the points that we have discussed so far, the processes described by SCT lead us to a view of social identity as being simultaneously a *product* of our social reality – our lived social relations – and a *means to shape* that reality. Categorization is not merely a way to interpret one's social world, to simplify it in some way or to satisfy individual psychological needs. Rather, it has the potential to transform social relations. Categorization can therefore be seen as a way of acting on the world, directed toward future desired realities (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001a, 2001b). This dynamic, bi-directional relationship between categorization and social reality has broad implications for the study of social action and social change. As we aim to show in the eight points below, the processes flowing from self-categorization as "us" rather than as "me" are at the heart of a number of key issues that any social psychology of social action and social change must address. As a result of discarding these, we argue, IPT will struggle to expand from its concern with personal change

to a consideration of collective social change (see de la Sablonnière and Usborne, this volume).

Identity links social structure to social action

The first point is foundational to the social identity tradition as initiated by Tajfel in his Social Identity Theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Put simply, identity is what enables us to act in terms of our social position, because it is a representation of ourselves in social relations. Thus, feeling and acting in terms of group membership is underpinned by an interpretation of oneself as a member of a group in relation to other groups. This means that intergroup relations, whether they are relations of conflict, hierarchy or cooperation, become something that matter to us.

The SIA is not the only perspective in social psychology to recognize the significance of group memberships and intergroup relations in underpinning human experience and action. Other notable examples include Realistic Group Conflict Theory (Esses *et al.*, 1998; Sherif *et al.*, 1961) and Social Dominance Theory (Pratto *et al.*, 2006; Sidanius and Pratto, 1999). However, these tend to assume that sociological categories and designations are equivalent to social identities, with no examination of the social processes through which the former lead to the latter. Researchers working from an IPT perspective, too, have incorporated groups into their theorizing and similarly seem to adhere to an instrumental model of groups, whereby groups are structural entities entailing various kinds of interdependence between their members (e.g. Breakwell, 1993; Lyons, 1996). From this point of view, groups and intergroup relations are seen as part of the structural backdrop that shapes identity processes, while mobilization is understood as one of the coping strategies people use to deal with threatened identities. We would argue, however, that emergent properties of groups, including norms, collective memory, group interests and intergroup relations entail a discontinuity between individual and group behavior that cannot be understood without the very distinction between personal and social identity that IPT discards (Breakwell, 1986, 2001). Without a mechanism for the emergence of psychological groups, one is left with only the extremes of Allportian individualism (whereby groups are the mere aggregation of individual psychology and interpersonal relations) on the one hand, or some variant of the "group mind" thesis on the other (see Asch, 1952).

In contrast, this longstanding question of the emergence of group behavior is precisely what SCT was developed to address (Turner *et al.*, 1987). It is self-categorization that makes the difference, for example,

between a category of individuals who are subjugated in the same way and a *group* whose members have a shared understanding of this common subjugation and represent themselves as a group on that basis. It mirrors the famous Hegelian and Marxist distinction between the group in itself and the group for itself. The question of how the transition from the former to the latter occurs is the critical issue of not only psychology but also politics – and perhaps explains why the SIA has proved so successful beyond the boundaries of academic psychology (Haslam *et al.*, 2010b).

Only where a structural position becomes a self-representation can it lead to a sense of group interest and collective action. The concepts of "group" and "group interests" that are so fundamental to all theories of intergroup relations are therefore inseparable from social identity. The argument is not that social identity processes lead to something other than self-interest: it is that self has to be defined before one can even have interests (see Hopkins and Kahani-Hopkins, 2004).

Power is a dynamic product of social identity processes

In turn, the ability to exert one's will through others by influencing or controlling them depends on psychological group formation (Turner, 2005). Turner describes three ways that this can happen: first of all, convincing others that a judgment or course of action is correct (persuasion) is a process of social influence whereby people look to prototypical group members to infer norms and consensual judgments of the group (Turner, 1991). Secondly, group norms are needed to confer legitimate authority on particular positions and individuals, so that people can be directed without necessarily being persuaded. Thirdly, the use of rewards and punishments to coerce those who do not accept one's authority usually still depends on persuasion and authority at least to some degree, because it requires the cooperation of coercive agents and forms of social organization through which rewards and punishments are administered. This puts social identity and group formation at the heart of the operation of power, because the definition and content of social categories will determine who is prototypical and therefore persuasive, as well as who is able to wield legitimate authority (Haslam *et al.*, 2011b; Turner, 2005). This in turn moves us away from overly deterministic conceptions of social power (Reicher, 2004). In contrast, as we elaborate on below in the section "The psychological group enables shared knowledge," by rejecting the distinction between personal and social identity, IPT lacks the conceptual tools necessary for an adequate theorization of power and social influence.

Category definitions shape those who can be mobilized and the limits of collective solidarity

As we have seen, people act as a group when they self-categorize as a group. This means that the way in which a particular category is defined, in terms of who is clearly included within it and who is not, will affect the scope of mobilization. It has been noted frequently that national categories in particular can be defined in multiple ways, giving rise to a range of exclusive and inclusive national definitions depending on the criteria that are seen as necessary to count as a national group member (e.g. Pehrson and Green, 2010). The extent to which people feel committed to a national group and work toward its goals will therefore depend on whether they have what are seen to be the necessary criteria for belonging. In Wales, for example, being unable to speak Welsh is associated with lower identification as Welsh and less support for Welsh political autonomy compared to people who are fluent Welsh speakers (Livingstone *et al.*, 2011; study 1). This pattern is strongest in predominantly Welsh-speaking areas, where language ability is a more important criterion for inclusion in the national group (study 2). The definition of category boundaries therefore shapes the scope of mobilization (see also Reicher and Hopkins, 2001a, 2001b).

The inclusiveness of categorization also shapes the scope of group solidarity; that is, definitions of who else belongs in the category will inform who is able to benefit from group members' cooperation and assistance. A particularly powerful illustration of this can be found in the example of Bulgarian resistance to the deportation of Jews during the Nazi period (Reicher *et al.*, 2006). Bulgaria was unusual among the countries occupied by the Nazis in that attempts to deport Jewish people and transport them to the death camps largely failed because of collective opposition to the practice by Bulgarians. Examination of letters and speeches produced at the time by political and religious leaders reveal the extent to which the population was addressed in terms that stressed the identity of the Jews as fellow Bulgarians, deserving of Bulgarian help and solidarity. Experimental work also supports the claim that the inclusiveness of national group definitions affects the extent to which group members offer assistance to someone in need, depending on whether the definition includes that person as a fellow ingroup member or not (Wakefield *et al.*, 2011).

Category content shapes how *group members can be mobilized*

While the inclusiveness of social categories shapes who can be mobilized as a category member, the content of the categories – in particular,

the norms associated with them – shape what they can be mobilized to do. As we have said, group norms are not stored behavioral schemas or static group essences: they are generated in context. Of course, leaders and others do not have total freedom to construe anything they like as being normative of the group. One would have a hard time convincing a crowd of Scotland supporters at a football match to cheer for England, for example. Clearly, most of the groups that matter to us have histories, common understandings of their central values and so forth. However, these do not work like a script that determines action, but rather as the raw material from which different actions, goals, projects and so forth can be construed as either a way of realizing the group identity or as a subversion of it (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001b).

Research on the issue of voting among British Muslims illustrates this clearly. Analysis of material coming from debates about whether or not Muslims should participate in UK elections demonstrates how voting in a non-Muslim country could be characterized by groups with an anti- or pro-participation position as either forbidden or as a duty for Muslims (Hopkins and Kahani-Hopkins, 2004). Crucially, arguments for *both* positions drew examples from the life of the Prophet in order to construe their position not only as “right” in a general sense, but as an authentic expression of what it means to be a Muslim. Thus, while quite opposite norms were constructed regarding participation in the election, these norms could not be simply plucked out of thin air, but instead had to be grounded in something of authority for Muslims: Prophetic example. These norms were therefore constrained by the existing meanings and history of the group involved, while at the same time involving agency and creativity on the part of those seeking to mobilize British Muslims in a certain way. Similarly, national leaders draw flexibly on national history, heroes, stereotypes and even physical geography in order to construct versions of national identity that are consistent with their political projects (Reicher and Hopkins, 2001b).

Different ways of defining ingroup categories can also give rise to different perceptions of threat constituted by outgroups. For example, essentialist or racialized definitions of national ingroup are integral to a “defensive” racism in which immigration is construed as an existential threat (Hopkins *et al.*, 1997; see also Barker, 1981; Gilroy, 1987). Thus, “ethnic” national ingroup definitions are associated with a stronger relationship between national identification and hostility toward asylum seekers (Pehrson *et al.*, 2009a; see also Pehrson *et al.*, 2009b). Or, to take another example, certain idyllic constructions of the countryside as integral to British identity support an interpretation of a foxhunting ban as an attack on British nationhood itself (Wallwork and Dixon, 2004). All of

this means that consequences of social identity processes are contingent on particular meanings and definitions of social categories. One cannot make generic claims about what kind of behavior such processes will produce in isolation from these meanings.

The representation of social categories is an arena for struggles to shape the future

That the representation of social categories plays a purposeful and functional role in intergroup relations has been central to the SIA since the formulation of SIT (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). For example, Tajfel (1978) describes the social functions of stereotypes, such as explaining and legitimizing hierarchical intergroup relations. Similarly, the social mobility and social change belief systems, comprising perceptions of stability, legitimacy and permeability, are viewed as a function of a "shifting pattern of social contexts, ideologies, beliefs and attitudes in a constantly changing social environment" (p. 267). Thus, the SIA has always emphasized that the operation of social identity processes are contingent on shared representations of social reality. Indeed, attempts to extract de-contextualized psychological mechanisms from the framework (such as ingroup favoritism, for example) have encountered conceptual and empirical difficulties precisely because they ignore the interactionist metatheory of the approach (Oakes, 2002; Reicher, 2004; Turner, 1999).

The arguments we have described above about the role of social categories for leadership, power and social influence build on SIT by contributing toward a more sophisticated account of how social representations can be "world-making," shaping the future as well as reflecting the past and present (Elcheroth *et al.*, 2011). Because of this world-making potential, we can expect the meanings and definitions of social categories to be struggled over, as different category constructions are associated with different agendas to shape group behavior in certain ways. There is no single way that a given social reality will inevitably be categorized. This makes the construction and contestation of categories of paramount importance to both social stability and social change.

The psychological group enables shared knowledge

The acceptance or rejection of social representations by group members has been explored from an IPT perspective by Breakwell (1993), who suggests that groups shape the apparent credibility of sources of information as well as rendering individuals susceptible to group pressures such

as the threat of censure and rejection. At a descriptive level, these points are uncontroversial. However, because the IPT account is not grounded in a theory of social influence, its utility in addressing these issues is limited. For example, the notion that "acceptance" may be a means of avoiding censure by the group as well as a result of judging information sources to be credible ignores a critical distinction between persuasion and control, which, whilst formulated in a number of ways, can be found throughout the social influence literature (for reviews, see Turner, 1991, 2005). In contrast, because the SIA incorporates a distinctive understanding of social influence, it provides a helpful basis for addressing how both consensus and divergence are produced through group processes. As we have explained, to the extent that a social identity is salient, group members expect those with whom they share a social identity to agree with them and will actively seek such agreement (Turner, 1991). Self-categorization renders group members responsive to norms, which guide group members as to both what to believe (e.g. "capitalism is immoral") and *who* to believe (e.g. "doctors are an appropriate source of medical advice").

The SCT account does not imply that conformity is inevitable. For example, some individuals may not share a social identity with the majority. They may self-categorize in terms of a dissenting subgroup, for example. This is where it becomes vital to distinguish groups as part of the structural context (as in IPT) on the one hand from psychological groups on the other. Where there is a failure to establish consensus through persuasion alone, control and coercion may enforce some level of conformity, but this risks further diminishing any possibility of persuasion because the arbitrary use of coercion undermines shared identity (Turner, 2005). Meanwhile, group members who do not conform may seek to establish a new consensus through minority influence, by depicting themselves and their position as more prototypical and consonant with high-order norms than that of the majority (Turner, 1991).

In short, psychological group formation underlies the emergence of consensual ways of interpreting and representing the world as well as the means by which majority positions are resisted. Without the notions of social identity and depersonalization that underlie this, IPT runs the danger of accounting for social influence primarily in terms of individual "needs" being met by the group (e.g. a need for information or a need to avoid censure) and treating intra-group power relations as structural givens. Within this kind of "dependency" conception of social influence, there is a unidirectional flow of influence from the knowledgeable and powerful to the ignorant and powerless and social change becomes barely conceivable (see Turner, 1991, 2005).

Social representations are a source of stability in self-categorization and social relations

Because of its emphasis on the contextual variability and fluidity of self-categorization, the Social Identity Approach (particularly SCT) has been portrayed as failing to grasp the enduring importance of certain social identities, such as ethnicity and nationality, or the weight of history in shaping their meaning (Huddy, 2001). To speak of identities being "stable" or not, however, really depends of the kind of timescale that one has in mind. The salience of one's nationality, for example, might vary substantially over just a few minutes of watching the evening news. However, over longer periods of time, it is much more stable as nationality retains its potential to become salient whenever it fits the context. If asked one's nationality every year, one will probably keep giving the same answer (or at least a very limited range of possible answers), so it is stable in that sense. Across the lifespan, it could change, especially if one emigrates. Then again, if we are interested in a macro-level of analysis and consider time periods spanning several generations, we may find some continuity in some national identities, but also significant transformation in their prevalence and meaning. Therefore, to discuss whether identities are stable or variable in the abstract is meaningless. We need to be more specific. We also need to distinguish between theoretical and empirical variability (Turner *et al.*, 1994).

The flux described in SCT refers to the process, not the outcome, of self-categorization. There is no reason why a fluid self-categorization process cannot produce stable self-categories to the extent that the context itself is stable and completely different sources of contextual stability are relevant at micro- and macro-contextual levels and timeframes. To put it slightly differently, if there is fixity in group representations (e.g. stereotypes) it should be understood as deriving from fixities in our social system and not (mis)used to suggest that people have fixed cognitive systems.

We live in a world constituted by socially constructed categories such as gender, ethnicity, "race," nationality and so forth, along with the various institutions and practices that enact and concretize these categories. Ethnicity is a social fact, in that it is a function of other people believing that we have an ethnicity and acting on that basis (Searle, 1995). The practices and institutions that designate people as having particular ethnicities and continue to treat them as such over time could be described as "structural," but we need to take care in what we mean by this. Category memberships, such as ethnicity, are *effectively* objective from the point of view of an individual, but they are what Searle calls

"ontologically subjective," meaning they are contingent on social processes and therefore others' subjectivity. The reason our ethnicities will not change the moment we categorize ourselves as something different is that such social facts do not depend on the mental processes of any one individual. Such macro-level categories can and do change, but this requires a collective-level process, such as when a marginalized group acts collectively to challenge the meanings of a social category that stigmatizes or excludes them.

Although expressed in slightly different terms, what we are describing here should be familiar to those acquainted with SIT. Among the ways that members may act collectively as a subordinated group in an unstable, impermeable and illegitimate social system is by challenging the meanings of the categories themselves, including their impermeability (Tajfel, 1978). In other words, while the permeability of group boundaries is a "structural" feature of the societies, it is contingent on representation and subject to transformation through human agency. In short, the fluidity of self-categorization processes do not imply unstable identities, because the context in which self-categorization occurs is underpinned by social representations that are irreducible to the cognitive processes of any one individual. There is therefore no contradiction between the highly fluid psychological process of self-categorization and the empirical reality of stable, consequential social categories across time.

Social power and mobilization give meaning to particular identity combinations

The observation that people have multiple identities – that is, cross-cutting group memberships and relationships that can serve to define who they are – has always been a part of the SIA, as it has to other social scientific theories about identity. One of the more fraught issues is whether people can hold multiple identities in mind at the same time.

IPT has approached this matter with the suggestion that holding multiple identities inoculates individuals against certain forms of identity threat (Breakwell, 1986). On the other hand, certain identity combinations might be experienced as personally threatening where these identities are potentially incompatible. Jaspal and Cinnirella (2010), for example, propose the addition of a psychological coherence principle to the IPT framework as a way of accounting for the way their participants sought to reconcile their gay and Muslim identities.

The SIA has struggled with this matter, sometimes seeming to suggest that there is a strict "either/or" character to the salience of different categories, at other times suggesting that people often think of themselves

in different terms in the same context (Turner *et al.*, 1994). Perhaps, though, a more fruitful line of investigation would be to focus on the significance and consequences of identity combinations in terms of intra- and intergroup processes. The social identity literature already contains some strong hints as to the direction this could take (see also Amiot and Jaspal, this volume).

To take one example, Turner (2005) has argued that while persuasion depends on a shared social identity, the use of coercive force against in-group members undermines such shared identity. One way that leaders might seek to prevent their use of coercion from undermining persuasive power is to portray the targets of coercion as belonging to an outgroup. So, politicians seeking to use measures such as heavy surveillance and detention without trial against members of the Muslim community in Britain may seek to call the "Britishness" of their targets into question, thus maintaining their persuasive power among the non-Muslim population, or even enhancing it. Characterizing Muslims as only marginally British (and therefore un-prototypical) is one way they might do this.

Conversely, a minority group may seek to gain the solidarity of the majority by portraying themselves collectively as fellow ingroup members (see Subašić *et al.*, 2008). Thus, they may seek to enact a "dual" or "hyphenated" identity (such as "British Muslim") in order that their minority status is no longer a mark of otherness. Strategies such as the articulation of "being British in a Muslim way" and so forth can be viewed in these terms (Hopkins, 2011). Given that the success of such enactment is likely to depend on a combined effort, we can expect a dual identity like "British Muslim" to itself function as a self-category providing the basis for collective action (Simon and Grabow, 2010), as well as validation by others both within and outside the group (Klein *et al.*, 2007). In short, we suggest processes of leadership, influence, enactment and collective action and not just the need to satisfy intrapsychic identity motives, as fertile ground for research on multiple identities.

Some final remarks: psychology is not enough

Our aim has been to highlight the various ways in which social identity makes a variety of group processes possible and argue that these processes in turn lie at the heart of society itself. We do not deny that IPT may also have wide application and provide valuable insights on a range of topics. In particular, we have said that the notion of "perceiver readiness" is fairly unelaborated in SCT, whereas IPT researchers have taken more interest in intra-individual motivational constraints. What we do

argue, however, is that theorizing group processes without distinguishing appropriately between social and personal identity cannot work. Thus, we have critiqued IPT's abandonment of this distinction and argued that, because of this, the approach does not theorize social action and social change adequately. In making this argument, we are emphatically not implying that SCT and related theories offer anything like a final account of the social phenomena they are applied to. On the contrary, the very nature of the approach means that substantive claims about behavior without contextual analysis are inimical to it. In this sense, one could say that the theory is incomplete and deliberately so. By the same token, one could also say that it may act as a bridge between psychology and the other social sciences. As an invaluable guide as to the relationship between social categories and social reality, the SIA is the beginning, not the end, of analysis.

REFERENCES

Asch, S. (1952). *Social psychology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Barker, M. (1981). *The new racism: conservatives and the ideology of the tribe*. Frederick, MD: University Publications of America.

Breakwell, G. M. (1986). *Coping with threatened identities*. London: Methuen.

Breakwell, G. M. (1993). Social representations and social identity. *Papers on Social Representations*, 2, 198–217.

Breakwell, G. M. (2001). Social representational constraints on identity processes. In K. Deaux and G. Philogene (eds.), *Representations of the social: bridging theoretical traditions* (pp. 271–284). Oxford: Blackwell.

Elcheroth, G., Doise, W., and Reicher, S. (2011). On the knowledge of politics and the politics of knowledge: how a social representations approach helps us rethink the subject of political psychology. *Political Psychology*, 32, 729–758.

Esses, V. M., Jackson, L. M., and Armstrong, T. L. (1998). Intergroup competition and attitudes towards immigration: an instrumental model of group conflict. *Journal of Social Issues*, 54, 699–724.

Gilroy, P. ([1987]2002). *There ain't no black in the union jack: the cultural politics of race and nation*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Haslam, S. A., Ellemers, N., Reicher, S., Reynolds, K. J., and Schmitt, M. T. (2010a). The social identity perspective today: the impact of its defining ideas. In T. Postmes and N. R. Branscombe (eds.), *Rediscovering social identity: core sources* (pp. 341–356). New York: Psychology Press.

Haslam, S. A., Ellemers, N., Reicher, S., Reynolds, K. J., and Schmitt, M. T. (2010b). The social identity perspective tomorrow: opportunities and avenues for advance. In T. Postmes and N. R. Branscombe. *Rediscovering social identity: core sources* (pp. 357–379). New York: Psychology Press.

Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D. and Levine, M. (2011a). When other people are heaven, when other people are hell: how social identity determines the nature and impact of social support. In Jetten, J., Haslam, C., and Haslam, S. A.

(eds.), *The social cure: identity, health and well-being* (pp. 157–174). London and New York: Psychology Press.

Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D., and Platow, M. J. (2011b). *The new psychology of leadership: identity, influence and power*. London: Sage.

Hopkins, N. (2011). Dual identities and their recognition. *Political Psychology*, 32, 251–270.

Hopkins, N., and Kahani-Hopkins, V. (2004). Identity construction and British Muslims' political activity: beyond rational actor theory. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 43, 339–356.

Hopkins, N., Reicher, S., and Levine, M. (1997). On the parallels between social cognition and the "new racism." *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 305–329.

Huddy, L. (2001). From social to political identity: a critical examination of social identity theory. *Political Psychology*, 23, 127–156.

Israel, J., Tajfel, H., and Psychology, E. A. E. (1972). *The context of social psychology: a critical assessment*. London: Academic Press.

Jaspal, R., and Cinnirella, M. (2010). Coping with potentially incompatible identities: accounts of religious, ethnic and sexual identities from British Pakistani men who identify as Muslim and gay. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49, 849–870.

Klein, O., Spears, R., and Reicher, S. (2007). Social identity performance: extending the strategic side of SIDE. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 11, 28–45.

Livingstone, A. G., Manstead, A. S., Spears, R., and Bowen, D. (2011). The language barrier? Context, identity, and support for political goals in minority ethnolinguistic groups. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 50, 747–768.

Lyons, E. (1996). Coping with social change: processes of social memory. In G. M. Breakwell and E. Lyons (eds.), *Changing European identities: social psychological analyses of change* (pp. 31–40). Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

McConnell, A. R. (2011). The multiple self-aspects framework: self concept representation and its implications. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15, 3–27.

Novelli, D., Drury, J., and Reicher, S. (2010). Come together: two studies concerning the impact of group relations on 'personal space'. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 49, 223–236.

Oakes, P. (2002). Psychological groups and political psychology: a response to Huddy's "critical examination of social identity theory." *Political Psychology*, 23, 806–824.

Pehrson, S., Brown, R., and Zagefka, H. (2009a). When does national identification lead to the rejection of immigrants? Cross-sectional and longitudinal evidence for the role of essentialist in-group definitions. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 48, 61–76.

Pehrson, S., and Green, E. G. T. (2010). Who we are and who can join us: national identity content and entry criteria for new immigrants. *Journal of Social Issues*, 66, 695–716.

Pehrson, S., Vignoles, V., and Brown, R. (2009b). National identification and anti-immigrant prejudice: individual and contextual effects of national definitions. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 72, 24–38.

Postmes, T., and Branscombe, N. R. (2010). *Rediscovering social identity: core sources*. New York: Psychology Press.

Pratto, F., Sidanius, J., and Levin, S. (2006). Social dominance theory and the dynamics of intergroup relations: taking stock and looking forward. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 17, 271–320.

Reicher, S. (1996). The Battle of Westminster. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 26, 115–134.

Reicher, S. (2004). The context of social identity: domination, resistance and change. *Political Psychology*, 25, 921–945.

Reicher, S., Cassidy, C., Wolpert, I., Hopkins, N., and Levine, M. (2006). Saving Bulgaria's Jews: an analysis of social identity and the mobilisation of social solidarity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 36, 49–72.

Reicher, S., and Hopkins, N. (2001a). Psychology and the end of history: a critique and a proposal for the psychology of social categorization. *Political Psychology*, 22, 383–407.

Reicher, S., and Hopkins, N. (2001b). *Self and nation: categorization, contestation and mobilization*. London: Sage.

Reicher, S. D., Spears, R., and Haslam, S. A. (2010). The social identity approach in social psychology. In M. S. Wetherell and C. T. Mohanty (eds.), The *SAGE Handbook of Identities* (pp. 45–62). London: Sage.

Searle, J. R. (1995). *The construction of social reality*. St Ives: Penguin.

Sherif, M., Harvey, O. J., White, B. J., Hood, W. R., and Sherif, C. W. (1961). *Intergroup cooperation and competition: the Robbers Cave experiment*. Norman, OK: University Book Exchange.

Simon, B. (1997). Self and group in modern society: ten theses on the individual self and the collective self. In R. Spears, P. Oakes, N. Ellemers and S. A. Haslam (eds.), *The social psychology of stereotyping and group life* (pp. 318–335). Oxford: Blackwell.

Simon, B. (2004). *Identity in modern society. A social psychological perspective*. Oxford: Blackwell.

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

Simon, B., and Grabow, O. (2010). The politicization of migrants: further evidence that politicised collective identity is a dual identity. *Political Psychology*, 31, 717–738.

Stott, C., Adang, O., Livingstone, A., and Schreiber, M. (2007). Variability in the collective behaviour of England fans at Euro2004: policing, intergroup relations, identity and social change. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 37, 75–100.

Subašic´, E., Reynolds, K. J., and Turner, J. C. (2008). The political solidarity model of social change: dynamics of self-categorisation in intergroup power relations. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 12, 330–352.

Tajfel, H. (1972). Experiments in a vacuum. In J. Israel and H Tajfel (eds.), *The context of social psychology* (pp. 69–119). London: Academic Press.

Tajfel, H. (1978). *Differentiation between social groups*. New York: Academic Press.

Tajfel, H., and Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. Austin and S. Worchel (eds.), *The psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–47). Monterey, CA: Brookes Cole.

Turner, J. C. (1982). Towards a cognitive redefinition of the social group. In H. Tajfel (ed.), *Social identity and intergroup relations* (pp. 15–40). Cambridge University Press.

Turner, J. C. (1991). *Social influence*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Turner, J. C. (1999). Some current issues in research on social identity and self-categorization theories. In N. Ellemers, R. Spears and B. Doosje (eds.), *Social identity: Context, commitment, content* (pp. 6–34). Oxford: Blackwell.

Turner, J. C. (2005). Explaining the nature of power: a three-process theory. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 35, 1–22.

Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P., Reicher, S. D., and Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: a self-categorization theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Turner, J. C., Oakes, P. J., Haslam, S. A., and McGarty, C. (1994). Self and collective: cognition and social context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20, 454–463.

Turner, J. C., and Reynolds, K. J. (2001). The social identity perspective in intergroup relations: theories, themes and controversies. In R. Brown and S. L. Gaertner (eds.), *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: intergroup relations* (pp. 133–152). Oxford: Blackwell.

Turner, J. C., Reynolds, K. J., Haslam, S. A., and Veenstra, K. E. (2006). Reconceptualizing personality: producing individuality by defining the personal self. In T. Postmes and J. Jetten (eds.), *Individuality and the group: advances in social identity* (pp. 11–36). London: Sage Publications.

Vignoles, V. L. (2004). Modelling identity motives using multilevel regression. In G. M. Breakwell (ed.), *Doing social psychology research* (pp. 174–204). Oxford: Blackwell.

Vignoles, V. L., Regalia, C., Manzi, C., Golledge, J., and Scabini, E. (2006). Beyond self-esteem: influence of multiple motives on identity construction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90, 308–333.

Wakefield, J. R. H., Hopkins, N., Cockburn, C., Shek, K., Muirhead, A., Reicher, S., and van Rijswijk, W. (2011). The impact of adopting ethnic or civic conceptions of national belonging for others' treatment. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 37, 1,599–1,610.

Wallwork, J., and Dixon, J. A. (2004). Foxes, green fields and Britishness: on the rhetorical construction of place and national identity. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 43, 21–39.

6 Identity and social representations

Glynis M. Breakwell

Why the focus on social representations?

It is necessary to explore how social representation processes relate to identity processes (Breakwell, 2001a, 2001b, 2010a, 2011). Why? Social Representation Theory is a theory about the social construction of meaning – it explains how society explains. It theorizes the ways in which society creates models, narratives, rhetoric and arguments that interpret – make sense of – new information (where information is conceived of in the broadest possible sense, ranging from scientific discoveries to reports of macro-socio-economic or cultural movements). Social representations are the ever-evolving products of this effort to understand the changing world around us. Social representations are an essential, all-pervasive part of the fabric of the social world which individuals experience. Consequently, individual identities are developed in the context of an abundance of social representations.

IPT argues that the individual engages, consciously or unconsciously, in a dynamic process of constructing an identity and that this process is continual. Every new experience is interpreted in relation to the existing identity content and evaluation. Each new experience could potentially call into question the legitimacy of the existing identity structure, challenging whether existing identity elements can remain unmodified. On the other hand, each new experience could potentially justify or enhance the existing identity structure. Social representations are fundamentally important in that they allot meaning and value to experiences. Insofar as the individual is aware of a particular social representation, it has the potential to influence the way in which an experience is interpreted and then affects the identity structure. For example, where the prevailing social representation of smoking is that it is hazardous to the health of the user and others close to the user, the experience of being a smoker and its meaning for identity is different from contexts where smoking has less negative connotations. The changes that have occurred in the social representations of smoking over a period of several decades can be plotted

against changes in the role that being a smoker (or, indeed, having stopped being a smoker) has to play in the individual identity. A social representation may also have the power to affect the interpretation of the experience even if the individual is not directly aware of the existence, or content, of a particular social representation since its existence will affect others who may influence the meaning of the experience for the individual. For example, an individual who moves from one cultural milieu to another may not immediately recognize that there are social representations in use that will inform and condition the behavior of others and then impact upon themselves. They may quickly become aware of these social representations but they may perceive the implications of the social representation before they come to understand the nature of the social representation itself. Migrant workers, especially ones who have no fluency in the language of their new host community, will be surrounded by social representations that operate to influence the behavior of others towards them. Some of these social representations may be very specifically about the migrant labor force (e.g. that it is underpricing native workers and explains unemployment levels). Some may be not targeted at the migrant in any way directly but are still alien to the prior experience of the migrant (e.g. concerning the appropriate behavior for women of child-bearing age in public). Very often, these social representations will become tangible when the migrant breaches expectations built upon them. Yet, before they become manifest to the migrant, they will be impacting upon the way in which he or she is treated and, in all probability, as a consequence upon self-evaluation and the assimilation of identity content. The indirect effects of social representations for identity construction and maintenance are more numerous and perhaps as a result more significant, than any direct effects. The indirect effects may be more significant simply in numerical terms but also because the individual has less opportunity consciously to use coping strategies to control them.

While the importance of social representations for identity should be emphasized, it is also important to consider the impact in the reverse direction. Identity processes do influence the operation of social representation processes. This is another reason for IPT researchers to focus upon social representation processes. The rest of this chapter analyses various interactions between identity and social representation processes.

The relationship between social representations and the individual

How does the individual relate to social representations? In Social Representations Theory (SRT; Moscovici, 1988) social representations

can be both products and processes. As a product, a social representation is defined as a widely shared set of beliefs, a systematic framework for explaining events and evaluating them. As a process, social representation is the whole package of activity (communication, exchange, argumentation) in which individuals and groups engage to make sense of changes in their physical and social environment. According to Moscovici, social representation operates with two prime processes: objectification and anchoring. Objectification entails translating something that is abstract into something that is almost concrete, gaining a density of meaning which ultimately makes it a common and "natural" part of thinking about the object. Anchoring entails categorizing a new object into pre-existing cognitive frameworks in order to render them familiar (reducing the strange and unfamiliar object to the level of an ordinary object set in a familiar context).

SRT states that objectification and anchoring are not individual processes. They are processes that normally involve social interaction and the establishment of shared meaning and consensus through communication among people. This does not mean that everyone holds absolutely identical social representations (Rose *et al.*, 1995). It suggests, however, that the members of a discrete subculture would share certain common core elements of the social representations current in their subculture. Individuals within the subculture might then hold representations that incorporate some elements that are not shared.

Breakwell (2001a) distinguished between "personal representations" and social representations. A personal representation is used to refer to the manifestation of a social representation at the level of the individual. Social representations are deemed social because they are generated in social interaction, they are shared by a number of individuals, they refer to social phenomena, they are manifested in social artifacts (e.g. norms, rituals or literature) and they serve social functions for the communities that evolve them. They have an existence independent of their presence in any *one* individual's cognitions. However, while their existence is not solely or exclusively dependent upon being present in the thoughts, feelings or actions of an individual, nevertheless, they may be expressed in individual cognitions, emotions and behavior. To the extent that a social representation is present in an individual's cognitions, emotions or behavior, it exists as a personal representation.

Abric (1994) has argued that social representations comprise a central core (an indispensable combination of basic underlying components linked in a specific constellation and tied systematically to a set of values and norms associated with the group espousing the social representation) and the peripheric elements (the way in which the representation

is articulated in concrete terms depending upon context). Abric argues that the core is resistant to change but that the peripheric elements are responsive to changing context. By adapting, the peripheric elements can protect the core from having to change. Following Abric might lead one to conclude that individuals will be different from each other in the personal representations which they hold not in the core but in the peripheric elements. Empirically, problems in differentiating core from periphery make testing this hypothesis difficult. It is, however, worth pursuing. To do so, would, of course, demand an operational definition of peripheric elements that does not depend upon the extent to which they are included consensually in the representation.

In any case, the social representational world is complex and dynamic. It may be unproductive in practice to think about the individual in relationship to a single social representation. In reality, the individual would never be affected by a single social representation. Moscovici (1961), in moving away from the Durkheim's notion of collective representation, emphasized the multiplicity of social representations that exist in modern societies and their capacity for change. It would seem reasonable to assume that, in this complex world of different and changing social representations, any one individual would rarely have access to all the social representations that are operating and might not have access in its entirety even to a single social representation. Individuals will have different roles in the social process of construction, elaboration and sharing of the representation. Essentially, this is to suggest that each individual is uniquely positioned in relation to the process of social representation and the constellation of products of social representation.

Why is it that some components of a particular social representation are incorporated into an individual's personal representation and others are not? Breakwell (2001a and 2001b) suggested it might help to think about the individual's relationship to any social representation as being described along a number of dimensions, as follows.

1. *Awareness*: individuals will differ in their awareness of the social representation. Some individuals will simply not know that there is a social representation in existence; others will know only part of its scope; and yet others will be virtually fully aware of its structure and content. For instance, awareness of the available social representations of Superstring Theory (which – for the unaware – is a set of attempts to model in one theory gravitation, electromagnetism, strong nuclear force and weak nuclear force and thus resolve the alleged conflict between classical physics and quantum physics) will differ across people. Awareness is likely to be determined, in part,

by previous personal experience, which, in turn, will be controlled to some extent by membership of different groups or communities. Exposure to a social representation will be affected by social category memberships. But awareness will also be determined by the significance of the object of the representation. If the object changes in significance owing to some change of social or physical circumstances, awareness of existing social representations will alter. For example, news of popular uprisings overseas may raise awareness of alternative social representations of the nature of the regime in power there. So, for instance, the so-called "Arab Spring" protests that began in 2010 may have triggered in Western Europe a different social representation of the political regimes in Egypt, Syria and subsequently in other states.

2. *Understanding*: individuals will differ in the extent to which they actually understand the social representations of which they are aware. There is ample evidence that individuals are capable of reproducing all or part of a social representation even though they cannot explain how or why its elements fit together and, if challenged, they cannot justify it. For instance, people may be aware of some aspects of one or more of the social representations of climate change but a large proportion would not claim to understand the underlying science or arguments surrounding the data on which the social representations rely (Leiserowitz, 2006).
3. *Acceptance*: individuals will differ in the extent to which they believe or accept a social representation even if they are fully aware of it. Typically, people can say: this is what is generally believed but, nevertheless, this is what I believe. For instance, I might know that other people commonly believe that regular physical exercise improves health but I believe that exercise causes more harm than good. The point is that people can know (in the sense of being able to reproduce at will) not only contradictory social representations of the same target but also be able to identify at the same time a separate representation of it which is their own. This personal representation may be unique only in the specifics and may share many of the common features of the social representation but it is personalized. The extent to which the personal representation echoes the social representation reflects in part the degree to which the latter is accepted. The importance of being able to resist wholesale acceptance of the social representation so that it appears individualized should not be ignored. While seeking identification with others through communality of understandings and interpretations at one level, people also simultaneously seek distinctiveness and differentiation through resistance to the social

representation. The personalizing of social representations is part of a process of establishing and protecting an identity. Personalizing may not be possible in the case of some social representations, particularly those that are hegemonic (this is considered later).

4. *Assimilation*: the individual does not accept (to whatever extent it is accepted) the social representation in some clinically detached way. Once accepted, the social representation has to be assimilated. It will be assimilated in an active and agentic manner. It will be assimilated to pre-existent systems of personal representation (developed originally on idiosyncratic cognitive biases and capacities). This substratum of already extant personal representations will differ across individuals and the ultimate shape of the new personal representation will be influenced by it differentially for each individual. Just as social processes ensure that the new social representation is anchored in prior social representations, at the individual level cognitive and emotional processes ensure that it is anchored in prior personal representations. In fact, there must be an intimate connection between the social processes of anchoring and objectification and their parallel individual processes. The social communication that ensures novel events and ideas are interpreted in terms of existing systems of meaning is generated by individuals using prior knowledge mediated through cognitive and conative (i.e. affective) networks. The social exchange can produce understandings that no single participant to the interaction might be able to create but at some level even these emergent representations are limited in some ways by the capacities of the individuals involved to anchor and objectify.
5. *Salience*: the salience of a social representation will differ across people and for the same person across time and contexts. The salience of the social representation, for instance, may increase if the community that generates it is important to the individual. In the case of researchers, if the agencies that provide research funding (and are thus very important to researchers) develop a new way of evaluating research (e.g. perhaps they argue that research has to have social or economic impact to be worthwhile), then the researchers are likely to consider this new representation of "valuable research" salient. Similarly, salience may increase if the social representation becomes relevant to the individual's ongoing activity. For example, in Western industrialized communities there is a complex media representation of "whistleblowers" working in public services. The existence of the social representation of "whistleblowers" would be likely to become more salient for an individual facing the decision about whether or not to report a breach of professional conduct. At the level of the

community, if the object for social representation is non-salient it is likely that the social representation will be difficult to elicit, simple, undifferentiated and relatively unconnected with other components of the community's belief system. At the level of the individual, the salience of the social representation will be likely to influence how accurately and completely personal representation mirrors it. There is, however, no empirical evidence for this yet.

It is notable that some of the dimensions that shape the personal representation are potentially non-volitional (e.g. awareness and understanding), whereas others are volitional (e.g. acceptance). However, this distinction may be rightly regarded as arbitrary. Even those which appear volitional are largely predisposed by prior social experiences and constrained by identity considerations.

Types of social representation

The scope that the individual has for developing an idiosyncratic personal representation depends in part upon the type of social representation concerned from which it is derived. Moscovici (1988) identified three types of social representation:

Hegemonic representations – these are shared by all members of a highly structured group without them having been produced by the group; they are uniform and coercive. Perhaps the simplest example of this sort of representation would be the system of beliefs, attitudes and values that characterize a cult – "doomsday" cults that prophesy catastrophe and destruction commonly have complex hegemonic representations that explain why, when and how the end will come for everyone.

Emancipated representations – these are the outgrowth of the circulation of knowledge and ideas belonging to subgroups that are in more or less close contact – each subgroup creates and shares its own version. These representations are freed in the sense that the subgroup is at liberty to elaborate and shape them based on the access that they have to sources of information. For a single issue, there can be a number of emancipated representations – take, for example, the way different subgroups will interpret a news report that horse meat is being passed off as beef and sold in processed foods. The social representations generated may have many dimensions and each subgroup can select or emphasize different dimensions. These social representations are not necessarily conflicting; they do not serve the interests of conflicting parties directly.

Polemical representations – these are generated in the course of social conflict or controversy and society as a whole does not share them, they are determined by antagonistic relations between its members and intended to be mutually exclusive. Take, as an example, the representations that evolve in a community when a new potentially hazardous construction (e.g. a waste disposal facility) is proposed, subgroups within the community will be active in constructing alternative interpretations of the hazard and the implications it will have for them. Some

may be positive about the development, others negative. To the extent that they are reflective of antagonism in the community, they are polemical representations and help to justify the position taken by subgroups.

It is debatable whether these are actually different types of social representation or just different and inevitable phases in the overall life-span of a social representation. Polemical representations can develop into hegemonic ones over time. Nevertheless, this tripartite classification does suggest that individuals and communities, in some cases, can choose between social representations and use them creatively for their own purposes. The three types of social representation that Moscovici proposes offer differing degrees of freedom for the individual to construct a personal representation. The hegemonic representation supposes little individual variation. The emancipated representation supposes individual variation based upon differential exposure within group contexts. The polemical representation supposes individual variation based upon participation in the prevailing intergroup conflict.

It is the scope for personalizing representations, which emerges when emancipated or polemical representations prevail about an object, that is one of the necessary conditions for innovation and change. This assertion is not meant to trivialize or ignore the real differentials between individuals in their power to maintain or to proselytize their personal representations. One of the things this perspective emphasizes is that personal representations will be perpetually under pressure to change from the social representations that surround them. Individuals that are personally powerful (through position, expertise or some other route) are more likely to be able to retain their own personal representations and to be able to influence the development of social representations. Examples may immediately spring to mind from history – from the same era, one might think of Hitler, Stalin and Churchill – but clearly it is only surmise that these individuals actually maintained personal representations in the face of counter-representations. The evidence is circumstantial not direct. In fact, more generally, the role of the individual in mediating emancipated and polemical representations remains to be examined empirically.

Any examination of the degrees of freedom available to the individual in deriving a personal representation begins to highlight the need to understand the role of the individual in constructing a social representation. Since a social representation is defined as a set of understandings shared by a number of people then, to the extent that any individuals demure from the shared understanding, the status of the social representation changes. It may be that the social representation itself changes in content. It may be that it simply changes its adherents (moving from

one set of people to another). It may be that it changes its significance – becoming less used and less prominent. The important thing here is that the processes encircling the creation of personal representations also flow back to influence the social representations. The intimacy of their relationship cannot be overestimated.

Stickiness of social representations

Before looking at the effects of identity processes upon the development of personal representations and participation in social representation processes, it might be useful to consider another characteristic of social representations that is important. While the tripartite classification of social representations as hegemonic, emancipated and polemical emphasizes variability in the processes of their production and descriptions of core and peripheral elements indicates something of their structure, there is a more holistic characteristic that differentiates between social representations. For want of a more elegant descriptor, I would call this their stickiness. Stickiness is just a shorthand term. Stickiness refers to their tendency to attract adherents (users/believers/communicators) and their ability to resist being shaken off or ignored. Stickiness is a descriptor that can apply to all three types of social representation.

Stickiness may be derived from a host of sources. It could be associated with who promulgates the social representation (e.g. if it is emanating from a community that is distrusted or discredited, it may have low stickiness – take, for example, representations of food safety that originate from food-processing manufacturers). It could be associated with how the social representation is transmitted; that is, the channels through which it is promulgated or the way in which it is presented (some transmission routes are more trusted than others, e.g. reputable TV channels and programs; some are more immediate, e.g. through family and friends). It could be tied to how far the social representation has already achieved saturation in the particular social environment (e.g. in terms of the number of people accepting it, the length of time it has been active, the number of channels through which it is communicated, or how many times it has been presented). Additionally, stickiness could be associated with the extent to which the social representation is capable of triggering, or is aligned with, emotional arousal. An example of this later source of stickiness is provided by the way in which the London 2012 Paralympics was associated in the UK with a great upwelling of positive feeling for athletes with disabilities and with a marked shift in the social representation of such athletes – becoming more substantive, differentiated and evidenced as well as generally more accepting.