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Toward a Social Psychological Analysis of Politicized Collective Identity: Conceptualization, Antecedents and Consequences

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Politicized Collective Identity

A Social Psychological Analysis

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This article develops a social psychological model of politicized collective identity that revolves around 3 conceptual triads. The 1st triad consists of collective identity, the struggle between groups for power, and the wider societal context. It is proposed that people evince politicized collective identity to the extent that they engage as self-conscious group members in a power struggle on behalf of their group knowing that it is the more inclusive societal context in which this struggle has to be fought out. Next, 3 antecedent stages leading to politicized collective identity are distinguished: awareness of shared grievances, adversarial attributions, and involvement of society at large. This sequence culminates in the final triad because the intergroup power struggle is eventually triangulated by involving society at large or representatives thereof. Consequences of politicized collective identity are discussed.

When President de Klerk of South Africa announced in 1990 that the government was prepared to negotiate with the African National Congress about a peaceful transition to a nonracial, democratic society, quite a few White South Africans were shocked, especially among the Afrikaner population. They felt besieged, and some even threatened violent action to halt the transition process. Indeed, some violent attacks took place, but as the transition proceeded, Afrikaner violence ceased. The opponents of the transition among the Afrikaners eventually flocked together to form what became the Freedom Front. They felt that the interests of the Afrikaners were threatened in the new South Africa and therefore engaged collectively in the political struggle at the national level (see Klandermans, Roefs, & Olivier, 1998; Roefs, Klandermans, & Olivier, 1998).

On April 2, 1995, thousands of farmers marched through the ancient streets of Santiago de Compostela, the provincial capital of Galicia, Spain's most northern province. They were protesting on the doorstep of the provincial government. They demanded that the provincial and national government raise the milk quota given to Galician farmers and that the government, rather than the farmers, pay the fines for overproduction of milk. At about the same time, Dutch farmers were dumping dung on the doorstep of the Ministry of Agriculture in The Hague. Later that year, they occupied a provincial mag-

istrate where the so-called manure rights were registered. Their protests were aimed at the government's manure regulations that, in effect, forced farmers to reduce their stocks or to invest in alternative means of manure processing. In both Spain and the Netherlands, farmers were fighting provincial and national authorities because they felt that their interests had not been represented properly by their governments. In fact, over the past decades, farmers all over Europe have engaged in similar collective action.

In 2000, the cities of Amsterdam in the Netherlands and Frankfurt in Germany were witnessing collective action by people opposing the expansion of the Schiphol airport and the Rhein-Main airport, respectively. The battle was between the environmental movement and the people living beside the airport on the one hand and airport and civic authorities on the other hand. The conflicts oscillated between escalation and de-escalation, and the people involved were mobilized and demobilized time and again. One moment airport and civic authorities were confronted with activists occupying a runway or talking to travelers at the airport, and the next moment these authorities were confronted with activists appealing to members of parliament or the minister of transportation. One moment activist organizations or their representatives were confronted with the police attempting to evacuate and arrest them, and the next moment they sat in consultative meetings with airport and civic authorities.

These examples are drawn from very different cultural, national, and political contexts, but they all share three critical themes. First, the protagonists in these scenarios acted not as single individuals but as members of social groups. Second, these groups and their members were involved in power struggles. Third, the power struggles were about control in the wider societal context so that besides the immediate antagonists, these struggles also involved third parties such as societal authorities or the general public. We suggest that it is possible to derive from these themes the critical constit-

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uents of a social psychological conceptualization of politicized collective identity.[1]

The remainder of this article is divided into four major sections. In the first section, we explore in more detail the three themes indicated above and thus provide a conceptual backdrop against which we then suggest a social psychological definition of politicized collective identity. In the second section, we turn to the antecedents of politicized collective identity and try to answer the question, How is collective identity politicized? In the third section, we show that politicized collective identity has important and unique consequences that differentiate this form of collective identity from other forms. In the final section, we summarize our main conclusions and suggest novel and promising directions for future research.

Conceptualizing Politicized Collective Identity
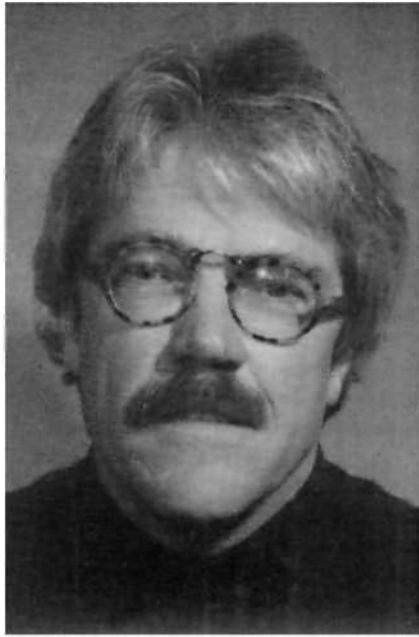
Collective Identity

Most, if not all, social behavior takes place in the context of social groups or structured systems of social groups. Accordingly, scholars stress the role of people's group memberships in social behavior (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986; Turner & Onorato, 1999). In particular, it is suggested that salient group memberships direct people's attention to their collective (or social) as opposed to their individual (or personal) identities, which then regulate their social behavior. There is much empirical evidence corroborating the role of collective identity as an important explanatory variable. For example, the concept of collective identity helps researchers to better understand when and why people stereotype themselves and others, discriminate against out-groups in favor of in-groups, and accept influence from in-group members but reject influence from out-group members (for reviews, see Brown & Gaertner, 2001). It has also been shown that collective identity influences people's justice concerns (Tyler & Smith, 1999) and their willingness to engage in social protest as well as other collective activities that aim at social change (De Weerd & Klandermans, 1999; Klandermans, 2000; Simon et al., 1998). Collective identity thus plays an important role as an "intervening causal mechanism in situations of 'objective' social change" (Tajfel, 1978, p. 86). In short, it affects the struggles within society.

Before we elaborate on the concept of collective identity, a few comments on our terminology are in order. First, social psychologists, especially European social psychologists (cf. Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992, p. 302), have traditionally used the term *social identity* to refer to the identity that people derive from their memberships in social groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). However, we prefer the attribute *collective* to the attribute *social* in this expression to preclude the misinterpretation that, by implication, any other form of identity (e.g., individual identity) would necessarily be *asocial*. As has been shown elsewhere (Simon, 1999), such an implication would be false and was certainly never intended by the original social identity theorists (see Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987, p. 46). Second, especially in the social cognition literature, the term *self* is typically preferred to the term *identity*. This is so because the former term seems to better connote the plasticity and malleability of the "working self" as a context-dependent cognitive representation or process (Markus & Kunda, 1986; McAdams, 1997; Sherman, Judd, & Park, 1989; Simon, 1997). In the present analysis, however, we focus on relatively enduring memberships in real-life social groups, which are in turn typically embedded in structured and rather stable systems of intergroup relations. As a consequence, those group memberships tend to provide a fair degree of social–contextual invariance and thus a rather stable and comprehensive sense of who one is. To indicate this shift in emphasis, we use the term *identity* instead of *self*. Finally, we want to clarify that *collective identity* is used in this analysis as a *(social) psychological* concept and not as a sociological concept in a Durkheimian sense (Durkheim, 1895/1976; Rucht, 1995). That is, collective identity in the present sense is the identity of a person as a group member and not the identity of a group as a sui generis entity. It is collective in the sense that the person shares the source of his or her identity (i.e., the relevant group membership), and therefore also the ensuing identity, with other people. After these terminological clarifications, we can now elaborate on the definition of collective identity.

In the most basic social psychological sense, identity is a place in the social world. A place is a metaphorical

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[1] In this article, we focus on large-scale social groups that play a role at the societal level. We are convinced, however, that analogous phenomena can be observed with, and analogous analyses applied to, smaller groups within less inclusive social contexts, such as work groups within a company, faculties within a university, or even subdisciplines within a psychology department.

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expression and stands for any position on any socially relevant dimension, such as gender, age, ethnicity, trait, attitude, and so forth (Simon, 1998b, 1999). In contrast to individual identity (I or me), collective identity (we or us) is a place that is shared with a group of other people. It is thus a more inclusive identity (Turner et al., 1987). Especially in modern society, people have access to multiple shared places in the social world. Although they are shared with other people, not all of these multiple places are necessarily shared with exactly the same group of other people. As a consequence, there is a potential for multiple, partly overlapping, or crosscutting and even conflicting collective identities.

However, not all collective identities of a person are salient at the same time. Which specific collective identity becomes salient while others remain dormant depends on which socially shared place or group membership moves into the psychological foreground, which is in turn a joint function of person variables ("readiness") and more immediate social context variables ("fit"; Turner et al., 1987). For example, depending on people's unique prior experiences or life histories, they are likely to attach differentially strong emotional or value significance to a particular group membership (e.g., ethnicity) so that they are differentially predisposed or ready to define themselves in terms of the respective collective identity (Simon, 1999). In addition to such interindividual variation, there may also be intraindividual variation over the life span to the extent that people go through different stages of collective identity development (e.g., see Cross, 1995, for a model of Black identity change). Moreover, group membership or collective identity salience also depends on the immediate social context because a particular in-group/out-group categorization is more meaningful in some social contexts than in others

(Oakes, Haslam, & Turner, 1994). For example, in all likelihood, a male–female categorization is more meaningful or fits better in a situation in which male and female students discuss issues of abortion or rape than in a situation in which they discuss issues of drug abuse. In the former case, the students should be particularly likely to define themselves in terms of their collective male or female identity, and this tendency should further intensify if their in-group is outnumbered by the out-group so that the in-group is particularly distinctive in the immediate social context (Simon, 1998b).

Collective identity, like identity in general, serves important psychological functions for the person, and satisfaction with one's collective identity critically depends on the extent to which it successfully fulfills these functions. Five collective identity functions seem particularly important. They relate to basic psychological needs, namely, belongingness, distinctiveness, respect, understanding (or meaning), and agency (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Brewer, 1991; Fiske, 2000; Maslow, 1970; E. R. Smith & Mackie, 1995; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). For instance, collective identity confirms that one belongs to a particular place in the social world. At the same time, it also affords distinctiveness from those other social places (or people) to which one does not belong. It further signals that one is like other people, though not necessarily like all other people, so that one can expect respect, at least from these similar others (which in turn is a necessary precondition for self-respect or self-esteem). Moreover, collective identity provides a meaningful perspective on the social world from which this world can be interpreted and understood. Finally, collective identity signals that one is not alone but can count on the social support and solidarity of other in-group members so that, as a group, one is a much more efficacious social agent ("Together we are strong!").

Several social psychological processes operate in the service of these collective identity functions. For instance, stereotyping and self-stereotyping processes at the cognitive level and conformity processes at the behavioral level accentuate intragroup similarities and intergroup differences (Oakes et al., 1994; Turner et al., 1987). In addition, prejudice processes at the affective level and discrimination processes at the behavioral level induce group members to see their in-group in a positive light vis-à-vis relevant out-groups and to secure a privileged position for their in-group (Brown, 1995). As a consequence, these processes strengthen group members' sense that they belong to a distinct, cohesive, and superior social group that provides them with mutual respect, a meaningful understanding of the social world, and the collective strength to act efficaciously.

To summarize, collective identity is a more inclusive self-definition that is focused on a particular group membership. In combination with several mediating social psychological processes (e.g., stereotyping, conformity, prejudice, and discrimination), it serves important functions related to basic psychological needs (e.g., belongingness, distinctiveness, respect, understanding, and agency)

and thus contributes ultimately to a meaningful social existence.

The Struggle for Power

Groups do not exist in a social vacuum. They are embedded in intergroup relations or systems of intergroup relations, which are in turn characterized by differentials or asymmetries on sociostructural dimensions (Farley, 1982). One important sociostructural dimension is power, and power asymmetries are a typical characteristic of many, if not most, intergroup relations (Ng, 1982; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1985, 1991). From a social psychological perspective, power is generally viewed as a relational construct that describes a social relationship in which one party has, or is perceived to have, the ability to impose its will on another to achieve desired outcomes (Haslam, 2001, p. 210). Power can be based not only on the ability to allocate material rewards or punishments but also on the possession of immaterial resources such as information, expert knowledge, and status or reputation (French & Raven, 1959). In short, someone has power to the extent that he or she can control his or her own and other people's outcomes (Dépret & Fiske, 1993; Fiske, 1993; Jones, 1972; see also Moscovici, 1976; for a comprehensive, multidisciplinary review, see Ng, 1980). By the same token, the power of a social group has typically been defined as the degree of control the group has over its own fate and that of out-groups (Sachdev & Bourhis, 1985).[2]

As we indicated above, intergroup power relations, like all power relations, are rarely symmetrical. Instead, social groups often differ in the degree of control they have over their own outcomes, the outcomes of relevant out-groups, or both. They have differential power. These power differentials or asymmetries can be more or less explicit (Ng, 1980) and are often, but not necessarily, linked to intergroup asymmetries on other important sociostructural dimensions such as group size or social status (Simon, Aufderheide, & Kampmeier, 2001). More important for the present discussion, power asymmetries are a frequent source of intense intergroup conflict. For instance, the more powerful group, by virtue of its superior outcome control, is in a better position to achieve desirable outcomes and to avoid undesirable ones than is the less powerful group. The likely result is an outcome distribution that favors the more powerful group. This should be so even if that group does not engage in active discrimination against the less powerful group but simply follows its own self-interests. However, this may in fact be too optimistic because research indicates that more powerful groups are quite willing to use the power asymmetry to actively discriminate against less powerful groups (Ng, 1982; Sachdev & Bourhis, 1985, 1991). In any case, less powerful groups should be dissatisfied with the unfavorable outcome distribution and thus should be motivated to work or even fight for a redistribution of the specific outcomes and ultimately for a redistribution of intergroup power unless easy individual exit or legitimizing ideologies undermine their members' collective identity (Ellemers, 1993; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). But the struggle for power is

not limited to intergroup relations with an established power asymmetry. On the contrary, when the power structure is unclear or unstable, the struggle for power and the ensuing conflict may be particularly fierce because each group is tempted to secure for itself the lion's share or at least to prevent the other group from getting it. Finally, the struggle for power may intensify for yet another reason. In addition to, and on the basis of, its primary instrumental value related to direct outcome control, power is likely to acquire a secondary psychological value in that powerful groups typically enjoy more respect and are (perceived as) more efficacious social agents than powerless (or less powerful) groups. Consequently, the respect and agency functions of collective identity are likely to additionally spur the intergroup competition for power.

All this is not to say that the struggle for power excludes the possibility of intergroup cooperation. On the contrary, opponents may realize that neither party is strong enough to defeat the other and conclude that a power sharing arrangement might therefore be the best solution. This was, for example, the case in South Africa when in 1990 the African National Congress and the government of President de Klerk agreed to collaborate on a peaceful transition to a nonracial, democratic society. It should be noted, however, that this agreement was already the result of a power struggle during which the African National Congress had empowered itself to the point where the government was no longer able to oppress it.

The Societal Context

We have argued that social groups are often involved in power struggles in that they try to establish, change, or defend a power structure. We now need to make explicit an important, but often neglected, aspect of power struggles between social groups. That aspect is the societal embeddedness of intergroup power struggles and of their immediate protagonists. As a consequence, such power struggles also have repercussions for the overall power structure of the more inclusive societal context. By the same token, they are not merely bipolar conflicts between two opposing groups, but additional groups or segments of the wider society are involved as well. This calls for (at least) a triangulated or tripolar approach to power struggles. Typically, the following three parties are likely be involved: two antagonistic parties or groups, one of which may be an elite or authority, and the general public (or representatives thereof) as the third party, which each of the two antagonistic groups tries to control or otherwise enlist for its own particularistic interests. These three social entities need not be conceived of as mutually exclusive. On the contrary,

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[2] In keeping with our emphasis on the intergroup context, this definition of group power focuses on intergroup power relations. This is not to deny the existence of intragroup power relations (i.e., group members' dependency on other individual in-group members or on the in-group as a whole) or of potentially important links between intra- and intergroup power relations. However, though certainly interesting, a more comprehensive analysis considering these different types of power relations and their links is beyond the scope of this article.

each of the two antagonistic groups (e.g., a particular social movement and its countermovement) should be anxious to stress that it is an important part of the more inclusive general public or population so that its own interests appear to be compatible with, if not identical to, the "common" interest. By the same token, each group can be expected to strive for hegemony, claiming that their own position is or should be prototypical or normative for that more inclusive "in-group," whereas the position of the other group is discredited as beyond the latitude of general acceptance (Mummendey & Wenzel, 1999).

Until now, this tripolar approach has had little direct impact on social psychological research. Especially the laboratory and field work prompted by social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986) has traditionally focused on bipolar intergroup relationships (for an exception, see, e.g., Wagner, Lampen, & Syllwasschy, 1986). However, two other influential theoretical frameworks are directly compatible with such a tripolar approach. In fact, they inspired the analysis presented in this article in important ways. The first framework is Mugny's (1982) theory of "the power of minorities." Mugny argued that the social context in which the diffusion of minority influence takes place consists of (at least) three social entities. These are the (numerical) minority, the population that the minority tries to influence, and a powerful third group that tries to counteract the minority influence. This latter group may itself be a numerical minority but one that enjoys an institutionalized power advantage vis-à-vis the (counternormative) minority and the population ("the silent majority"). Any attempt by the minority to influence the population operates against the backdrop of an antagonistic relationship between the minority and the powerful group and a relationship of domination of the population by the powerful group. It is impossible to review all pertinent empirical evidence here, but this tripolar approach to minority influence has certainly made an important contribution to overcoming the reductionism that characterized the traditional study of social influence processes (see Moscovici, Mucchi-Faina, & Maass, 1994; Turner, 1991).

The second framework that goes beyond an analysis of simple bipolar intergroup relations is Turner et al.'s (1987) self-categorization theory. It is an extension of social identity theory in that it makes use of, and further develops, key assumptions of that theory so as to provide a comprehensive explanation of how individuals are able to act as a group. Two assumptions are of particular relevance to the present discussion. One states that self-representation or identity can be construed at different levels of abstraction related by means of class inclusion. For example, one's identity as a resident of the city of Berlin is more abstract than, and thus includes, one's identity as a resident of a specific neighborhood in Berlin. At the same time, one's identity as a German citizen is even more abstract and includes both the city identity and the neighborhood identity. The other relevant assumption postulates that groups are compared and evaluated in terms of the next more inclusive group or social category that includes both. For instance, residents of different neighborhoods in Berlin

would thus be compared and evaluated with respect to attributes that characterize residents of Berlin in general (e.g., witty). By the same token, residents of Berlin would be compared with, and evaluated relative to, say residents of Cologne or Munich with respect to attributes that characterize German citizens in general (e.g., efficient). The important point is that intergroup relations are embedded in the context of even more inclusive or shared group memberships, and this is likely to bring into play third parties such as representatives of the more inclusive in-groups.

In conclusion, both the minority influence and the self-categorization frameworks recommend an extension of the conceptual arena to also take into account the role of third parties. With respect to power struggles between social groups, we can then derive from both frameworks that the general public, its institutions, or its representatives are likely to be involved as a third party. In short, these struggles are struggles between social groups for power within society, which brings us to the political dimension of group behavior or, for that matter, of collective identity (Reicher, 1995).

Politicized Collective Identity

Politics is typically defined as the constrained use of power by people over other people (Goodin & Klingemann, 1996, p. 7; see also M. Weber, 1919). The struggle between social groups for power within society can therefore be understood as political group activity. Accordingly, we suggest that politicized collective identity can be understood as a form of collective identity that underlies group members' explicit motivations to engage in such a power struggle. At this point, it may be helpful to distinguish between political repercussions of collective identity and politicized collective identity proper. In many cases, behavior or action in terms of collective identity might have political repercussions in that it also affects the power structure within society. However, these political repercussions may or may not be intended by the collective actors. Take, for example, a religious group that "simply" wants its children to be taught in its own schools. It is not difficult to imagine that this acting out of a specific collective identity may have wider political repercussions in that it may challenge the educational system of society at large and, more generally, the power relations between church and state, although such challenges were not intended by the religious group in the first place.

In the case of a politicized collective identity, however, group members should intentionally engage, as a mindful and self-conscious collective (or as representatives thereof), in such a power struggle knowing that it is the wider, more inclusive societal context in which this struggle takes place and needs to be orchestrated accordingly. To borrow from Marxian terminology, it is politicized collective identity that turns the social group from "a group of itself" ("Klasse an sich") into "a group of and for itself" ("Klasse an und für sich") in the political arena (see Esser, 1993, p. 116).

Antecedents of Politicized Collective Identity

Our central thesis in this article is that the collective identity of members of a particular group is politicized to the extent that those group members (self-)consciously engage in a power struggle on behalf of their group. We argue that group members need to be mindful of their shared group membership, their common enemy or opponent, and especially the wider societal context that is affected by and affects this power struggle. Awareness of the wider societal context of the power struggle in turn implies the acknowledgment of the role of third parties such as the general public or authorities that politicized group members should try to control, influence, or otherwise enlist for their collective interests.

Politicized collective identity is not an all-or-nothing or on–off phenomenon. Instead, politicization of collective identity and the underlying power struggle unfold as a sequence of politicizing events that gradually transform the group's relationship to its social environment. Typically, this process begins with the awareness of shared grievances. Next, an external enemy is blamed for the group's predicament, and claims for compensation are leveled against this enemy. Unless appropriate compensation is granted, the power struggle continues. If in the course of this struggle the group seeks to win the support of third parties such as more powerful authorities (e.g., the national government) or the general public, collective identity fully politicizes. The attempt to involve these parties in the power struggle inevitably turns the issue into a matter of public or general interest. This final step also results in a transformation of the group's relationship to its social environment because involving a third party implies recognition of society or the larger community (e.g., the city, region, country, or European Union) as a more inclusive in-group membership.

Awareness of shared grievances, adversarial attributions to blame opponents, and the involvement of society by triangulation are, in our view, the three critical ingredients of the process of politicization of collective identity. Accordingly, we propose that it is possible to capture and organize the most important social psychological antecedents of politicized collective identity in a sequence of three broad consecutive steps or stages proceeding from awareness of shared grievances, through adversarial attributions, to the involvement of society by triangulation. As depicted in Figure 1, the conceptual triad of collective identity, power struggle, and societal context discussed in the preceding section provides the theoretical platform on which this sequence unfolds. In the next three subsections, we examine in more detail each of the three steps and how they build on each other. Although we concede that this is an idealized or ideal-typical sequence and that in reality the three stages and the associated processes may often overlap, interact, and feed back on each other, we demonstrate that the suggested succession and the resulting triangular model are of high heuristic value for a systematic understanding of the antecedents of politicized collective identity.

Figure 1

A Triangular Model of Politicized Collective Identity (PCI)
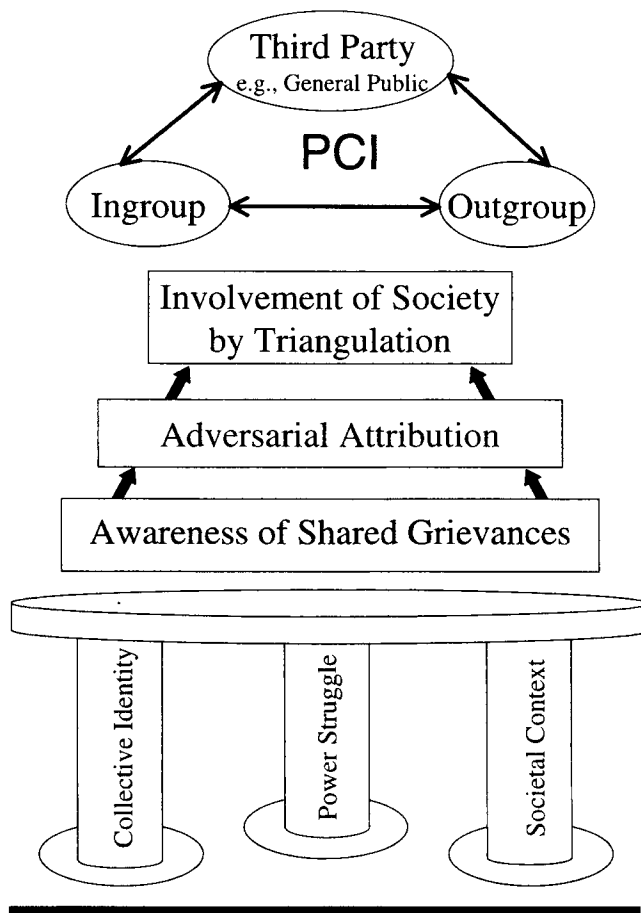
Awareness of Shared Grievances

A solid body of social psychological theorizing and research suggests that feeling aggrieved as a group is a necessary first step for people to engage in a power struggle on behalf of their group and thus a necessary step toward politicized collective identity (Klandermans, 1997; Lalonde & Cameron, 1994; H. Smith, Spears, & Oyen, 1994; Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984; Wright, Taylor, & Moghaddam, 1990). Shared grievances can take on different forms. Klandermans (1997) identified illegitimate inequality, suddenly imposed grievances, and violated principles as important grievances, to which threatened privileges could be added as a fourth type.

Feelings of illegitimate inequality or injustice typically result when social comparisons reveal that one's in-group is worse off than relevant out-groups. In keeping with self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987), relevant out-groups are out-groups that are construed at the same level of abstraction as the in-group and nested in the same more inclusive social entity that defines the current

frame of reference. This shared higher order group membership (e.g., shared nationality in the case of East and West Germans) not only ensures the comparability of the (lower order) in-group and out-group but also implies that, by virtue of this commonality, both groups are entitled to equal treatment so that any inequality is likely to be perceived as injustice, at least as long as group members do not embrace legitimizing myths or ideologies (Gamson, 1992; Major, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Wenzel, 2000). The concept of suddenly imposed grievances was proposed by Walsh (1988) in his study of protest in response to the accident in the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor. The discovery of toxic waste in a neighborhood, the announced establishment of an unwanted industry, or the closure of a company can also suddenly impose serious grievances on a group of people (Aarts, 1990; Boender, 1985; Szasz, 1994). Moreover, Kriesi's (1993) work on new social movements in the Netherlands points to the violation of principles or values as an important source of shared grievances. He described how in the Netherlands cultural transformations resulted in the emergence of a new middle class with its specific principles and values (e.g., nonviolent conflict resolution, egalitarianism, ecological consciousness) and how these changes have fostered the emergence of new social movements, such as the peace movement, the antiapartheid movement, and the environmental movement. It seems reasonable to assume that it was the violation of these "new" principles that led to shared grievances in the form of moral indignation and ultimately to collective protest on the part of many members of the new middle class. Although they are defending very different principles, supporters of the antiabortion movement may in this sense be similar to the supporters of the new social movements because both seem to be aggrieved by a violation of their specific principles. Finally, members of a group can feel aggrieved because they feel their privileges are threatened. The extreme-right Whites in South Africa may be a case in point.

It is important to reiterate that, for collective identity to politicize, these grievances must be experienced as widely shared among in-group members. Collective identity itself should be a facilitating factor here because it fosters homogenization and (self-)stereotyping processes that in turn transform "your" and "my" experiences into "our" experiences (Simon & Hamilton, 1994; Turner et al., 1987). Collective identity thus heightens the awareness of shared grievances. Conversely, shared grievances also reinforce collective identity in that special treatment or events affecting primarily the in-group (e.g., its material living conditions, values, principles, or privileges), but not other groups, enhance the social–contextual fit or salience of "us–them" distinctions (Simon, Pantaleo, & Mummendey, 1995; Turner et al., 1987). The causal relationship between collective identity and awareness of shared grievances is therefore bidirectional.

Adversarial Attributions

Awareness of shared grievances or suffering is not enough to become politicized as a group. As a next step, an external opponent or enemy, such as a specific out-group, an authority, or "the system," must be blamed for the group's predicament (Ferree & Miller, 1985; Major, 1994). Internal attributions of blame (i.e., blaming oneself or the in-group) generate feelings of shame or guilt that may spur individual or collective action to redress the adverse situation (Frijda, Kuipers, & Ter Schure, 1989; Landman, 1993; Weiner, 1995), but they do not politicize. On the contrary, they usually depoliticize because individual or collective deficiencies are made responsible for one's grievances. Adversarial attributions, however, are a further step on the way to politicization because group members then hold an external opponent responsible and become angry at "them" for what they are doing to "us."

Gupta's (1998) analysis of the predicament of the African-American community supports the proposed role of adversarial attributions. He argued that despite widespread grievances among African-Americans, the notion of a "common enemy" has been diluted in the post-civil rights era, which in turn undermined collective rebellion. He noted that even the Million Men March of 1995 contributed to this dilution because its main message was not the struggle against the dominant White group as the enemy. Instead, it focused on African-Americans' personal responsibilities and thus fostered internal attributions.

As with shared grievances, a bidirectional causal relationship can be assumed between collective identity and adversarial attributions because they tend to reinforce each other. Collective identity fosters (self-)stereotyping processes, and stereotypes provide easy and simple explanations for complex social events (e.g., "Jews are greedy and responsible for our nation's economic problems"; Tajfel, 1981). Thus, stereotypes lend themselves to group-based attributions in general and to in-group-serving attributions in particular, resulting in adversarial attributions from which "we" emerge as the innocent victims or good guys and "they" as the perpetrators or bad guys (Hewstone, 1990; Pettigrew, 1979). Conversely, adversarial attributions to an external enemy or opponent enhance the salience of "us–them" distinctions and thus the salience of collective identity.

Involving Society by Triangulation

A group that shares grievances and holds an external enemy or opponent responsible is likely to demand corrective action or compensation from that opponent. If the opponent complies with such claims, no politicization of collective identity takes place. However, if the claims are refused and the aggrieved group does not give in, the interaction becomes more confrontational, and politicization continues. This is not to say that increased confrontation as such is responsible for a politicized collective identity. Many fierce intergroup confrontations exist that do not provide the members of the antagonistic groups with a politicized collective identity (e.g., confrontations between fans of competing soccer teams or confrontations between members of different street gangs). Instead, we hold that the collective identity of the members of an aggrieved group who engage in adversarial attributions finally politicizes to the extent

that these group members try to transform the confrontation into a more comprehensive power struggle forcing society at large to take sides either with their in-group or with their opponent. This implies that they acknowledge or even stress their identity as a member of that society because only by virtue of their membership in this more inclusive group or community are they entitled to societal support for their claims (Wenzel, 2000). This insight is nicely captured in a recent statement made by the then leader of the parliamentary faction of the German socialist party, Gregor Gysi, who, shortly before his resignation, admonished his party that "[we] have to become part of society—if we want to change it" ("Words of the Week," 2000, p. 2). In a similar manner, Klandermans et al. (1998; see also Roefs et al., 1998) observed that, while their ethnic identity as Afrikaners politicized, supporters of the Freedom Front in South Africa also maintained a strong national identity. In more general terms, politicized collective identity is always also nested identity in that it presupposes identification with the more inclusive social entity that provides the context for shared grievances, adversarial attributions, and the ensuing power struggles for social change (or resistance to such change).

Two less abstract scenarios shall help to illustrate this final step to a politicized collective identity. For instance, university students may become aware of their shared grievances (e.g., high study load for students but insufficient tutoring by professors). They make adversarial attributions for their grievances by blaming professors' selfish preferences for research over teaching. They make claims demanding that their professors devote more time to tutoring them than to doing research or writing books and articles. The interaction between students and professors becomes more confrontational as the latter refuse to comply with their students' claims. The conflict escalates, and the students engage in an open power struggle with their professors in which the students finally organize exam boycotts and public demonstrations. They thus involve society at large. More specifically, they triangulate the conflict by forcing third parties such as the ministry of education, the media, or the general public to take sides.

In another scenario, a conservative group of indigenous inhabitants of a particular country may realize that because of immigration their own values and principles are increasingly questioned as absolute truths and construe this loss of cultural hegemony as shared grievances. They make adversarial attributions by blaming "uncultured aliens" for their grievances and demand that immigrants assimilate "our" culture or stay away from "us." Finally, they triangulate the power struggle by collecting signatures from the general public for a petition against any legislation that would give immigrants equal rights. They thus involve society or the general public as a third party and force it to take sides.

For both scenarios, we would argue that collective identity is not fully politicized until after the last step that triangulates the power struggle by involving society at large, or representatives thereof, as a third party. Moreover, in this last politicizing step, both groups of protagonists

acknowledge that their specific collective identity (i.e., as students or conservatives) is part of a more inclusive societal identity, which simultaneously allows and constrains the politicization of their more specific collective identity.

Additional Variables and Possible Extensions

It is important to note that we do not wish to maintain that, beyond the variables discussed so far, no other variable may play a (facilitating or inhibitory) role in the politicizing process. On the contrary, we would like to argue that it is a distinctive strength of our ideal-typical model that it enables us to incorporate such additional variables to gain a more systematic understanding of their role in the politicizing process. The role of leaders may be a case in point. Following Reicher and Hopkins (1996a, 1996b), leaders can be understood as "entrepreneurs of identity" that facilitate the various steps of the politicizing process. To the extent that they epitomize the collective "we," they are able to facilitate the propagation of collective frames that help group members to interpret shared grievances, to identify an external enemy, and to define the wider societal context including the third party. This should be so because, by virtue of the shared group membership, the attitudes and actions of the leader are rendered normative for ordinary group members who should feel compelled to follow the leader's example to verify their collective identity (Haslam, 2001).

Group members' social dominance orientation (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) may be another variable the influence of which can systematically be examined in light of our model of politicized collective identity. We have already indicated that legitimizing myths or ideologies could obstruct, or at least inhibit, the politicizing process. Specifically, hierarchy-enhancing myths can undermine the awareness of shared grievances, foster internal attributions as opposed to external or adversarial attributions, or discourage group members from transforming the in-group/out-group confrontation into a more comprehensive power struggle involving society at large. Research suggests that people high on social dominance orientation are more likely to endorse (hierarchy-enhancing) legitimizing myths than people low on social dominance orientation so that social dominance orientation could play an inhibitory role in the politicizing process. However, research also demonstrates that members of low-status groups are generally lower on social dominance orientation than members of high-status groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). At the same time, given their relatively disadvantaged social position, members of low-status groups typically have more reason to politicize than members of high-status groups. Taken together, it follows that social dominance orientation and legitimizing myths should not be insurmountable obstacles to a politicized collective identity for those who need it most. This is not to say that high-status or privileged groups cannot develop a politicized collective identity. Extreme-right Whites in South Africa are a case in point. As for all groups, the first step to politicized collective identity is awareness of shared grievances, which, for high-status groups, most likely means awareness that their status

and the associated privileges are threatened. For high-status groups, the reappraisal of relative status and associated beliefs (including legitimizing myths) should therefore be part and parcel of this politicizing step.

In addition to incorporating other potentially relevant variables, the present model also lends itself to an analysis of politicizing processes that transcend national boundaries. The model was developed primarily with a focus on politicized collective identities that are nested in a more inclusive national identity. In other words, it is the nation that provides the major societal context and thus the arena for the triangulated power struggle. Typical examples are peace activists who confront the federal government and seek the support of the churches in their struggle against nuclear arms or environmental activists who struggle against local airport authorities and try to persuade the federal government to limit the growth of an airport. Other struggles, however, although they also involve politicized collective identities, increasingly transcend national boundaries. The Palestinian–Israeli conflict can serve as an instructive example. In fact, two levels of that conflict may be distinguished, but in each case, our model of politicized collective identity can guide the analysis. First, there is the intergroup relation between the minority of Arab Israelis and the Jewish majority within Israel. Here, the collective identity of the minority politicizes to the extent that Arab Israelis feel oppressed, blame the Jewish majority for it, and attempt to achieve equal treatment as Israeli citizens by involving Israeli society at large (e.g., the general public, the media, the government). Analogously, the collective identity of the Jewish majority begins to politicize when its members feel that their privileges are threatened by the attempted social change. In any case, the state of Israel is the critical political arena, and it is this state, albeit not its Zionist version, in which even the minority claims membership and in which its politicized collective identity is nested. The second level of the conflict involves the larger body of the Palestinian people, and here the power struggle is situated in the international arena. Nevertheless, analogous steps to politicized collective identity can be identified in line with the model presented in this article. Grievances shared by the Palestinian people as a nation are blamed on Israel as the occupying power or external enemy, and the power struggle for or against a Palestinian state is triangulated by involving a third nation as an ally or mediator (e.g., the United States). At the same time, the international community represented, for example, by the United Nations serves as the most inclusive polity in which all protagonists claim membership and in which their respective politicized collective identities (as Palestinians or Israelis) are nested.

Consequences of Politicized Collective Identity

Like all forms of identity, politicized collective identity affects how people perceive the social world and act on and in it. As a specific form of collective identity, politicized collective identity obviously entails many of the consequences identified in social psychological analyses of col-

lective identity in general (for reviews, see Brown & Gaertner, 2001; Oakes et al., 1994). Thus, it should foster (self-) stereotyping processes at the cognitive level, prejudice processes at the affective level, and conformity and discrimination processes at the behavioral level. As many of the politicizing steps or processes discussed above feed back positively on collective identity and strengthen it, the politicization of collective identity should intensify these consequences. For example, when out-groups turn into opponents during the politicization process, group members may be more willing to act on their biased perceptions and evaluations and engage in hostile behavior with the explicit objective of causing their opponents to incur costs (Klandermans, 1997, pp. 156–158; Mummendey & Otten, 1998; H. Weber, 1989). By the same token, politicized collective identity should be particularly well equipped to fulfill the various collective identity functions (i.e., the belongingness, distinctiveness, respect, understanding, and agency functions).[3] In many respects, politicized collective identity is therefore intensified collective identity with quantitatively stronger effects than its nonpoliticized counterpart.

In addition to such general intensification effects, however, we propose that there are also more specific consequences of politicized collective identity. In particular, our conceptualization of politicized collective identity suggests two additional categories of consequences. One category concerns the psychological functions of politicized collective identity. Although, as we noted above, politicized collective identity may generally be superior to other forms of collective identity in fulfilling important psychological functions, more specific predictions can be derived as well. Thus, we hypothesize that this superiority is most marked with respect to the understanding and agency functions. This should be so because the politicization process furthers both reasoning about and acting in and on the social world. Reasoning about the social world is most apparent when group members make adversarial attributions concerning their shared grievances. At that stage, group members' collective self-understanding is sharpened in relation to other groups, and meaning is given to group members' common fate in terms of a shared explanation or ideology (e.g., "We, females, are victims of sexist oppression."). In the social movement literature, this process is often described as consciousness raising (Johnston & Klandermans, 1995). The growing awareness of shared grievances and a clearer idea of who or what is responsible for those grievances reflect a distinct cognitive elaboration of one's worldview providing group members with a meaningful perspective on the social world and their place in it. Further along the politicization process, the agency function is served particularly well by group mem-

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[3] This assumption does not imply that politicized collective identity necessarily is a very prevalent form of collective identity. Politicization is an effortful process that also entails numerous costs for the individual group member (e.g., opportunity costs, victimization by discrimination and oppression) so that, overall, politicized collective identity may often not be the most attractive option.

bers' active struggle for social change (or resistance to such change). Even if ultimately unsuccessful or defeated in the triangulated power struggle, having forced society or its representatives to take sides confers recognition as a social agent on group members (e.g., "We made a difference—or at least we tried."). At the same time, their collective self-understanding is further promoted during the power struggle as group members can construe a meaningful role for themselves in the wider societal and historical context, be it as heroes or martyrs.

So far, the understanding and agency functions are underresearched functions of collective identity because social psychological research on intergroup relations has focused more on the role of the belongingness, distinctiveness, and respect functions of collective identity (Brewer & Pickett, 1999; Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Hogg & Abrams, 1993; Simon, 1999; Tyler & Smith, 1999). This asymmetry directly parallels the relative neglect of politicized collective identity by social psychologists. Both lacunae in the literature thus seem related, and there is therefore hope that an increased interest in politicized collective identity will also shed more light on the understanding and agency functions of collective identity.

The second category of more specific consequences concerns the unique behavioral consequences of politicized collective identity. These behavioral consequences are linked to the role of third parties in our conceptualization of politicized collective identity. We argued that the politicization of collective identity implies that bipolar power struggles between in-group and out-group are triangulated by involving society at large, or representatives thereof, as a third party. Politicized collective identity thus implies a cognitive restructuring of the social environment that is no longer defined exclusively in terms of a bipolar in-group/out-group confrontation. Instead, the social environment is further differentiated into opponents and (potential) allies, which also involves strategic reformulation of the conflict issue such that it also appeals to potential allies (Gerhards & Rucht, 1992; Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986). Politicized collective identity should therefore motivate not only collective action that is aimed at opponents but also attempts to directly or indirectly enlist third parties as allies. For example, politicized group members should be likely to engage in collective action directed at the government or the general public to force them to intervene or to take sides.

Although not specifically designed to test the validity of the conceptualization of politicized collective identity developed in this article, recent research on social movement participation indeed points to the unique explanatory power of politicized collective identity with respect to collective action (Simon et al., 1998; Stürmer & Simon, 2001; Stürmer, Simon, Loewy, Duhme, & Jörger, 2001). This research was conducted in several different social movement contexts, such as the older people's movement in Germany; the fat acceptance movement in Germany and the United States; and the gay movement, again both in the United States and Germany. In addition to the predictor variables typically examined in traditional social move-

ment research (i.e., perceived individual and collective costs and benefits of participation), indicators of collective identification processes were also included as predictor variables. More specifically, two levels of collective identity were considered. One concerned the broader social categories from which the social movements in question typically recruit their members (i.e., older people, fat people, and gay people), whereas the other targeted the more politicized social movements themselves or their specific organizations (i.e., the Gray Panthers, the fat acceptance movement, and the gay movement). Intention to participate as well as actual participation in collective action directed primarily at the general public or the government (e.g., public campaigns and demonstrations, sit-ins, and other forms of civil disobedience) served as the main dependent variable or criterion. Multiple regression analyses revealed that identification with the broader recruitment category made no unique contribution to the prediction of behavioral intentions or actual participation, whereas identification with the more politicized social movement organization had a reliable and unique (positive) effect in all cases (with one exception discussed below). In addition to correlational data from cross-sectional designs, data from experimental and longitudinal designs further corroborated the causal role in social movement participation of the more politicized form of collective identity (Simon et al., 1998; Stürmer & Simon, 2001).

However, this longitudinal research also demonstrated that collective identity at the level of the broader recruitment category, which was ineffective as a unique predictor of collective action in prior research, can politicize under the appropriate conditions to such an extent that it also reliably predicts collective action (Stürmer & Simon, 2001). More specifically, gay respondents' identification with gay people in general did not predict (self-reported) participation in collective action organized by the German gay and lesbian movement in the following year. Interestingly, more than two years after the identification measurement, the German gay and lesbian movement started an initiative requesting legislation to allow same-sex marriage. As this initiative encountered fierce opposition from the conservative political parties in Germany, the movement launched a public campaign in support of same-sex marriage. Stürmer and Simon (2001) reasoned that this climate would promote a general politicization of gay identity and therefore conducted follow-up telephone interviews with former respondents and recorded their (self-reported) participation in collective action organized in support of the campaign for same-sex marriage. As expected, identification with gay people measured almost three years before the telephone interviews now reliably predicted movement participation.

In addition to action aimed directly at a third party such as the general public or the government, politicized collective identity should also motivate strategic action that appears to target an immediate out-group or antagonist but that can meaningfully be understood only if its intended indirect effect on the third party is taken into account. Many social movement activities provide illustrative ex-

amples. Although militant civil rights activists have often selected their segregationist or racist opponents (e.g., all-White schools or companies) as immediate targets of their disruptive collective actions, the strategic or ultimate goal of such actions was obviously to provoke the attention of and intervention by third parties such as the general public, the media, or the federal government (McAdam, 1982). Moreover, in such scenarios, politicized group members not only plan and strategically implement their own behavior to involve a third party and to force it to take sides, they may also intentionally provoke and instrumentalize the reaction of the immediate target for the same purposes. Thus, striking workers can deliberately provoke an over-reaction from their employers to induce the government to intervene or the general public to take sides with the workers. In a similar manner, protesters can provoke police brutality to win the support of the general public. In more extreme cases such as terrorism, activists have even tried to provoke authorities (e.g., the police or the government) to engage in oppressive action or legislation, hoping that such oppression will generate anger and solidarity on the part of potential allies or the general public.

In conclusion, the important point is that politicized collective identity is likely to motivate actions aimed both directly and indirectly at a third party that easily evade our analysis if we rely exclusively on a nonpoliticized conceptualization of collective identity limited to bipolar in-group/out-group relations. As the above examples illustrate, we would even be unable to adequately understand many seemingly simple in-group/out-group interactions because they often contain a critical strategic component, the meaning of which becomes accessible only if the analytical context is extended to include third parties. Finally, the reactions of third parties must remain a conundrum as long as we do not analyze their antecedents in the context of politicized collective identity. It is therefore the concept of politicized collective identity that directs intergroup researchers' attention to a number of unique behavioral phenomena and that provides a refined perspective for a better understanding of the complexities of intergroup behavior.

Conclusion and Future Directions

The aim of this article was to contribute to a social psychological analysis of politicized collective identity. We suggested that a stable theoretical platform on which such an analysis can be erected rests on three critical pillars (see Figure 1). These are collective identity, the struggle for power, and the wider societal context of that power struggle. On the basis of that platform, we proposed that people evince politicized collective identity to the extent that they engage as self-conscious group members in a power struggle on behalf of their group knowing that it is the wider, more inclusive societal context in which this struggle has to be fought out. We further suggested that politicized collective identity unfolds through a sequence of antecedent processes or stages. In an attempt to sketch an ideal-typical sequence, we distinguished and elaborated on three stages of the politicization process, namely, awareness of shared grievances; adversarial attributions; and involvement of

society at large, or representatives thereof, as a third party in addition to the immediate out-group or opponent. The politicization sequence thus culminates in a triangulation of the power struggle, and it is this stage in which politicized collective identity is expected to be in full blossom.

Finally, we pointed out that this triangular model immediately lends itself to the prediction of important consequences of politicized collective identity. For example, because the politicization process tends to reinforce collective identity, politicized collective identity often has qualitatively similar, but more intense, effects than collective identity in general. Moreover, our model led us to predict that politicized collective identity should be particularly well equipped to fulfill certain psychological functions for the group member, namely, to provide him or her with a meaningful framework to understand his or her social world as well as with the feeling of being an efficacious social agent. Perhaps most interesting, we were also able to deduce predictions concerning unique behavioral consequences that most clearly differentiate politicized collective identity from other forms of collective identity. These predictions revolve around the actions directly or indirectly (strategically) aimed at the third party that becomes involved in the power struggle during the politicization process (as well as around the reactions of that third party).

In concluding this article, we need to emphasize again that it is not, nor was it intended to be, a review of the extant theoretical and empirical work on collective identity as it relates to political behavior. Such attempts are equally worthwhile and have appeared elsewhere (e.g., Huddy, in press; Stryker, Owens, & White, 2000). They are an important complement to the present article that puts forward a new theoretical perspective on politicized collective identity in general and on the process of its politicization in particular. This perspective is rooted in, and grew out of, an articulation of our work on the social psychology of self and identity, intergroup relations, and social movements (Klandermans, 1997; Simon, 1998a, 1999). It draws explicitly and often also implicitly on other scholars' work on social psychological processes and phenomena that play an important role as antecedents or constituents of politicized collective identity (e.g., identity, self-categorization, perceived justice, causal attribution, power). Naturally, we have not been able to fully discuss the intricacies of these processes or phenomena, which are all highly interesting and important social psychological topics in their own right. Such a heroic deed was fortunately not necessary in the present context because excellent discussions of those topics already exist elsewhere (e.g., Hewstone, 1989; Ng, 1980; Oakes et al., 1994; Turner et al., 1987; Tyler & Smith, 1999).

We thus hope that the model of politicized collective identity presented in this article proves useful in generating a fruitful scientific debate about the conceptualization, antecedents, and consequences of politicized collective identity. We are especially confident that it will help to explore several promising new directions of empirical research. In particular, we hope that future empirical research will be

devoted to a careful scrutiny of the hypothesized process of politicization, its various stages and the suggested sequence, the specific psychological functions of politicized collective identity for the individual group member, and the unique behavioral consequences of politicized collective identity with particular emphasis on strategic collective action in triangulated social contexts.

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