



## Theoretical Analyses

# Influence of Intragroup Dynamics and Intergroup Relations on Authenticity in Organizational and Social Contexts: A Review of Conceptual Framework and Research Evidence

Nadya Lyubomirova Mateeva<sup>\*a</sup>, Plamen Loukov Dimitrov<sup>b</sup>

[a] Department of Psychology, Institute of Population and Human Studies - Bulgarian Academy of Science, Sofia, Bulgaria. [b] Bulgarian Psychological Society, Sofia, Bulgaria.

## Abstract

Despite their shared focus on influence of groups on individual, research bridging intragroup dynamics and intergroup relations as predictors of authentic and inauthentic (self-alienated) experience, behavior and interaction of individuals in organizational and social contexts is surprisingly rare. The goal of the present article is to highlight how understanding the reciprocal dynamic relationship between intragroup processes and intergroup relations offers valuable new insights into both topics and suggests new, productive avenues for psychological theory, research and practice development – particularly for understanding and improving the intragroup and intergroup relations in groups, organizations and society affecting authentic psychosocial functioning. The article discusses the complementary role of intergroup and intragroup dynamics, reviewing how intergroup relations can affect intragroup dynamics which, in turn, affects the authenticity of individual experiences, behaviors and relations with others. The paper considers the implications, theoretical and practical, of the proposed reciprocal relationships between intragroup and intergroup processes as factors influencing authentic psychosocial functioning of individuals in organizational and social settings.

**Keywords:** group dynamics, intergroup relations, authenticity

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\*Corresponding author at: Institute for Human Studies, Bl. 6, Fl. 5, Acad. Georgi Bonchev Street, Sofia 1113, Bulgaria. E-mail: [nadia@gyuvetch.bg](mailto:nadia@gyuvetch.bg)



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## Authentic Psychosocial Functioning of the Individual

Artists, clergy, philosophers, psychologists and psychotherapists have long sought to define who one "really" is in his/her psychosocial functioning as an individual nested in social groups, organizations, communities and society. According to [Baumeister \(1987\)](#), concern over distinguishing between private concealment of one's self from that which was observable in others emerged as an area of interest around the XVI-th century. Ensuing themes depicting "true" versus "false" selves of people provided a varied range of possibilities for characterizing one's real self. Determining whether one's self was in fact true or false ranged from numerous considerations of evaluative referents that included, but were not limited to, one's faith, piety, heart, or virtue ([Heidegger, 1962](#); [Kernis & Goldman, 2005, 2006](#); [Mills, 1997](#); [Taylor, 1992](#)).

Although the construct of one's true self has been conceptualized in diverse ways, many historical and contemporary perspectives consider knowledge of one's self as a meaningful component of one's true self (Harter, 2002; Park, 1999). For instance, the playwright Anton Chekhov once stated "Man is what he believes." From this perspective one's true self is intimately linked with his/her self-knowledge, private self-identity and his/her self-reflective capacity (Ferrara, 2004; Guignon, 1993). But, this is not a case for accuracy per se. It is a case for the impact of one's perceptions, self-understanding and self-reflection, irrespective of accuracy.

To further complicate accuracy in conceptualizing one's true self, early psychodynamic perspectives championed by Freud (1901) and psychoanalysis affirmed the role of unconscious motives and ego-defense mechanisms in shaping the authentic vs. inauthentic psychosocial functioning of the individual. In this view, one's true self may even be obscured by one's own neurotically driven self-deceptions and ego-defensive distortions of internal and external realities (Mills, 1997).

Subsequently, existential and humanistic psychologists highlighted the role of one's true self and authentic experiences, behaviors and interactions of the individual in illuminating healthy personality adjustment, psychosocial functioning and life-span development of people (Guignon, 1993; Heidegger, 1962; Park, 1999). Maslow (1968) suggested that authenticity occurred when individuals discovered their true inner nature and actualized their inherent potentialities by sufficiently satisfying higher order psychological needs. That is, after gratifying their physiological needs, individuals then turn toward satisfying their "being" or growth-oriented needs. Focusing on one's psychosocial growth-oriented needs presumably results in fuller knowledge and acceptance of one's true, or intrinsic nature, furthering one's path toward self-actualization (Maslow, 1968).

In this view, authenticity depends upon knowledge and understanding of one's core needs, coupled with self-actualizing tendencies to actively fulfill them in all aspects of individual's psychosocial functioning. Similarly, Rogers (1961) emphasized that authenticity emerges when congruence is achieved between one's private self-concept and immediate experiences, behaviors, and interactions with others in group, organizational and social contexts. Thus, being one's true self involves a sense of connectedness between one's self-knowledge and attendant experiences, behaviors and interactions of individual in his/her group, organizational and social settings. Accordingly, authenticity is rooted in one's self, but not as a static privately accessible self-representation. Rather, authenticity may be conceptualized as an ongoing psychodynamic process whereby one's potentials, characteristics, emotions, values, motivation, and so forth are discovered and explored, accepted, imbued with meaning or purpose, and expressed and actualized. When experiences, behaviors and social interactions of the individual are congruent with the true self, he/she becomes healthier and fully functional in psychosocial and mental health terms. In this view, healthy adjustment and development of the individual, both intrapersonally and interpersonally, may be the best markers for the presence of vital authenticity in individuals, and constructive climates (conditions, spaces, cultures) for authenticity expression and development in human groups, organizations and society.

Although much has been written about authenticity historically, very little empirical research has examined it and its determining forces directly. However, some research has focused on establishing what outcomes emerge when false or inauthentic selves are functioning. This research has typically examined behavioral and relational aspects of relatively inauthentic, self-alienating experiences in daily life. For example, false self inauthentic behaviors and interactions have been examined with respect to such varied topics as self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974), strategic self-presentations (Goffman, 1959, 1963) and voice (Gilligan, 1982; Harter, Waters, & Whitesell, 1997).

These areas of social psychological research share a common orientation in examining circumstances when individuals' own needs or motives are characteristically incongruent with the prevailing environmental context, climate or culture of their group, organizational and social settings. In addition, congruence between one's core self-aspects and his/her psychosocial functioning has been examined in various ways.

Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), for instance, has spawned research demonstrating the importance of need satisfaction in examining authenticity (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It proposed that individuals possess three fundamental intrinsic needs: autonomy (i.e., choice), competence (i.e., mastery) and relatedness (i.e., connectedness with others). These intrinsic needs are conceptualized as being most central to one's core or true self. Therefore, when these needs are satisfied (as opposed to being thwarted) in group, organizational and social context individuals will experience greater authenticity and healthier psychosocial adjustment and development. In support of this contention, Sheldon and Kasser (1998) reported that individuals whose life goals were highly concordant (i.e., congruent with their core needs, values, and interests) scored higher on a variety of psychosocial adjustment and mental health indices (incl., self-actualization, positive mood, vitality, self-esteem) than did individuals whose life goals were less concordant. In two independent longitudinal research projects, Sheldon and Kasser (1998), and Dimitrov and Mateeva (in press) found that individuals' psychosocial functioning and adjustment increased over time when life goals were high but not low in self-concordance, and people felt that their life planning was really functioning as an expression of their true selves, helping them "to enact their core experiences, values and desires on the psychosocial stage of their life dramas."

Similarly, Goldman, Kernis, Piasecki, Hermann, and Foster (2003) found that individuals' psychosocial functioning, adjustment and development, as measured by autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose in life, self-acceptance, and positive relationships, increased to the extent that their life goals "reflected who they really are as a person" (p. 3). Such findings suggest that the immediate and long-term benefits of life goal pursuits are enhanced when these life goals and life scripts represent one's authentic or core self. Taken together, these findings indicate that authenticity is linked to effective and healthy psychosocial functioning, adjustment and development of human beings (Dimitrov & Mateeva, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Mateeva, 2011, 2012a, 2012b; Mateeva & Dimitrov, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c, 2012d).

However, as a distinct personality variable authenticity has not received much attention before year 2000. To fill this gap, Kernis and Goldman (2005, 2006) and Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, and Joseph (2008) developed the first two psychometric tools to measure individual differences in authenticity. These inventories were based on multicomponent conceptions of authenticity of psychosocial functioning of the individual. Authenticity, finally, has been operationalized as "the unobstructed operation of one's core or true self in one's daily enterprise" (Goldman & Kernis, 2002, p. 18; Kernis, 2003, p. 1). Specifically, authenticity involves the following discriminable components: 1) *self-awareness*, 2) *unbiased processing*, 3) *authentic behavior or action*, and 4) *relational authenticity*.

The first component, *self-awareness*, refers to having maximal knowledge, recognition and trust of one's own motives, feelings, desires, and self-relevant feelings and cognitions. It includes, but is not limited to, being aware of one's strengths, weaknesses, trait characteristics, emotions, inner conflicts, and their roles in behavior. An important aspect of this component is that awareness is not reflected in self-concepts wherein inherent polarities are unrecognized or denied (i.e., that have been characterized as internally consistent; Campbell, 1990). That is, self-awareness does not simply reflect recognition of one's self as "introverted" or "neurotic", for example. Rather,

self-awareness represents recognition of existing polarities inherent in one's self-concept, or, as Perls put it, being aware of both "figure" and "ground" in one's personality aspects (Perls, Hefferline, & Goodman, 1951). Therefore, self-awareness involves knowledge and acceptance of one's multifaceted and potentially contradictory self-aspects (i.e., being both introverted and extraverted, neurotic and emotionally stable), as opposed to rigid acceptance of only those self-aspects deemed internally consistent with one's overall self-concept.

The second component of authenticity involves the *unbiased processing* of self-relevant information. Unbiased processing reflects objectivity in assessing one's positive and negative self-aspects, attributes, qualities, and potentials. Stated differently, unbiased processing involves "not denying, distorting, exaggerating, or ignoring private knowledge, internal experiences, and externally based evaluative information" (Kernis, 2003, p. 14). Deviations from objective self-reflections are considered to largely involve ego-defense mechanisms and may therefore be a marker for maladjustment. For instance, Dimitrov (2008), Dimitrov & Mateeva (2012b), and Ungerer, Waters, Barnett, and Dolby (1997) found that maladaptive or immature ego defenses that involve greater reality distortion and/or failure to acknowledge and resolve distressing emotions relate to numerous psychological and interpersonal difficulties, including poor adjustment to work and family roles. Similarly, it was found that individuals who repressed traumatic events, felt less authentic and experienced lower levels of psychological health than did those who actively talked/wrote about their troubling experiences. Thus, sustained tendencies to process self-relevant information without openly, objectively and honestly attending to it is likely to result in diminished psychosocial adjustment and mental health.

The third component of authenticity involves *authentic behavior or action*. Authenticity reflects acting in accord with one's values, preferences, and needs as opposed to acting merely to please others or to attain rewards or avoid punishments, or acting "falsely". Theoretically, authentic behavior involves behavior that reflects self-determination (i.e., autonomy and choice), as opposed to controlled and conformistic behavior that is contingent upon meeting introjected or external goals and demands (Kernis, 2000). Kernis (2003) suggests that authentic behavior reflects sensitivity to the fit (or lack of) between one's true self, the dictates of the group, organizational and social environments, and an awareness of the potential implications of one's behavioral and sometimes, really existential choices. Moreover, authenticity is not reflected in a compulsion to be one's true self at all costs, but rather in the free, spontaneous and natural expression of one's core feelings, motives, and inclinations in the environmental contexts one encounters (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

And finally, the fourth component of authenticity involves one's *relational orientation* toward others. That is, relational authenticity involves the extent to which one values and achieves openness and truthfulness in one's interpersonal and social relationships, in one's social roles enactments. Relational authenticity also entails wanting and allowing others to see one's true self, both the good and bad qualities. Toward that end, an authentic relational orientation involves an effective process of self-disclosure such that others learn who you really are (Kernis & Goldman, 2005, 2006). An authentic relational orientation should therefore foster the development of mutual intimacy and trust (e.g., more secure attachment). In short, relational authenticity means being genuine and not fake in one's social roles and relationships with others.

Recent investigations have demonstrated that individual's situational and dispositional authenticity appears to be linked pervasively to greater psychosocial adjustment, well-being and mental health. Goldman and Kernis (2002) found that higher scores in personal authenticity related to higher levels of global self-esteem and lower levels of contingent self-esteem.

Authenticity was also linked with hedonic benefits, in that higher authenticity scores were associated with greater subjective well-being, as measured by greater reported levels of life-satisfaction and positive affectivity and lower negative affectivity. In a longitudinal study examining dispositional authenticity, life goal pursuits, and adjustment, [Goldman et al. \(2003\)](#), hypothesized that higher authenticity scores would be related to healthier life goal pursuits, subjective well-being, psychological well-being, and personality and interpersonal adjustment. [Goldman et al. \(2003\)](#) proposed that individuals' life goal pursuits would provide opportunities for competence, self-determination, expressing one's true self, and positive feelings, especially for individuals who are high in authenticity. These researchers found that higher authenticity scores were related to life goal pursuit ratings that reflected greater self-concordance, self-worth benefit, fun, relative importance, efficacy, absorption and lower reported levels of pressure.

With respect to subjective and psychological well-being, [Goldman et al. \(2003\)](#) found also that higher authenticity ratings were positively correlated with all six subscales of [Ryff's \(1989\)](#) multicomponent measure of well-being. Specifically, higher authenticity scores were related to greater autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relationships with others, purpose and meaning in life, and self-acceptance. Furthermore, the pattern of findings concerning subjective well-being replicated [Goldman and Kernis \(2002\)](#) by linking higher authenticity ratings with greater life-satisfaction and positive affectivity, and less negative affectivity. In addition, authenticity was related to healthier personality and interpersonal adjustment. For instance, authenticity was positively correlated with global self-esteem and a secure attachment style, but negatively related to preoccupied and fearful attachment styles.

Other findings indicated that higher authenticity scores related to less self-enhancement and self-serving motives for social comparison, self-monitoring, and contingent self-esteem ([Goldman et al., 2003](#); [Wood et al., 2008](#)). Consequently, greater levels of authenticity seem to reflect a "stronger sense of self" ([Kernis, Paradise, Whitaker, Wheatman, & Goldman, 2000](#)). That is, higher authenticity scores were linked with more secure ([Kernis & Goldman, 1999](#)) forms of self-esteem (high general self-esteem level coupled with low contingent self-esteem). In addition, greater authenticity in individuals was related to less dependence on others as a source for self-evaluation (i.e., lower social comparison and contingent self-esteem) and in determining what behaviors one should consider enacting (i.e., low self-monitoring and higher spontaneity).

Consistent with the notion of authenticity being related to a stronger sense of a free self, authenticity has also been found to relate to indices of self-organization that affirm efficacy and adaptability in one's self-concept. Specifically, [Goldman et al. \(2003\)](#), found that higher authenticity scores were positively related to the identity integration scale of [O'Brien and Epstein's \(1988\)](#) multidimensional measure of self-esteem. This finding indicated that higher levels of authenticity was associated with individuals' beliefs that they were efficacious, autonomous and self-reflective at assimilating new information and directing life experiences and existential choices.

Similarly, [Kernis & Goldman \(2005, 2006\)](#) found that authenticity was related to interpersonal behavioral aspects of self-organization, as assessed by [Paulhus and Martin's \(1988\)](#) measure of functional flexibility. Specifically, participants rated eight trait pairs that were derived from the interpersonal circumplex ([Wiggins & Holzmuller, 1978, 1981](#)), and reflected bipolar semantic opposites (e.g., warm and cold). Each trait attribute was evaluated separately on a unidimensional scale assessing the extent to which one feels (1) *capable* of being ... (e.g., warm) when the situation requires it, (2) *difficulty* in enacting the behavior, (3) *anxiety* in performing the behavior, and (4) the tendency to *avoid* situations demanding such behaviors.

Kernis et al. (2000) found that higher authenticity scores were related to greater psychosocial functional flexibility. Specifically, participants with higher authenticity scores were more likely to report that they were capable of enacting these interpersonal and social role behaviors, and perceived less difficulty, anxiety, and avoidance of these interpersonal and social behaviors in different organizational and social contexts. Thus, greater personal authenticity may perhaps foster unique adaptive benefits in overall psychosocial functioning of individuals in groups, organizations and society (Dimitrov & Mateeva, 2012a, in press; Mateeva, 2011, 2012a; Mateeva & Dimitrov, 2012a, 2012b; Wood et al., 2008).

That is, possessing an organized set of self-knowledge for a repertoire of potential interpersonal and social roles behaviors can inform one's decision to enact a particular behavior in different and dynamic situations in the group, organizational, and social contexts. Similarly, individuals' awareness of how much difficulty and anxiety they experience when they enact certain behaviors may enhance their interpersonal and social adjustment by enabling behavioral choices to be made on well-informed self-knowledge.

In sum, authenticity has been pervasively linked with broad indices of interpersonal and social adjustment of the individual, and it appears to involve aspects of self-esteem and self-organization that are characterized by a stronger sense of being an autonomous self. Research in the USA and Bulgaria clearly demonstrated that authenticity was linked with meaningful aspects of healthy psychosocial functioning and development of the individual. Specifically, higher personal authenticity was associated with diverse markers of (1) a stronger sense of self (e.g., secure and high self-esteem, clarity and consistency in one's self-concept organization), (2) global psychosocial adjustment (e.g., role experiences that are satisfying and expressive of one's true self), and (3) psychological adjustment to existential challenges (e.g., greater life satisfaction and psychological adjustment to developmental tasks of human life at all stages of the life course) (Dimitrov & Mateeva, in press; Wood et al., 2008).

All these empirical evidences suggest that personal authenticity influences psychological and social adjustment, functioning and development both directly and indirectly by its effects on either a stronger sense of free and effective (autonomous) self or one's own social roles experiences. However, the big question remained unanswered so far, is what factors in one's life and social environment influence the authentic psychosocial functioning of the individual, and how exactly.

## **Ingroup Dynamics and Intergroup Relations and Their Influence on Authentic Psychosocial Functioning**

Modern social psychology is commonly defined as the study of the ways that people interact with and are influenced by others in their lives. Traditionally, social psychology has made the individual the primary focus of analysis, examining the processes within a person that shape the way he or she behaves in response to others, real or imagined, in group, organizational and social settings. Even the area of intergroup relations has largely emphasized the role of intrapsychic processes, such as individuals' stereotypes and prejudice (Dovidio, Newheiser, & Leyens, 2012). Steiner (1974) observed that for a long period of time and to a great extent social psychology had "turned inward". It had largely renounced or postponed its concern for studying how larger social systems (society, communities, and organizations) influence the individual, and had centred its attention on internal states and processes: dissonance, attitudes, attributions, but at same time lacked any insight on the importance of key intrapersonal variables like self-congruity, authentic vs. inauthentic (self-alienated) experiences, behaviors and interactions of people in groups, organizations and society.

Interest in the dynamics of larger groups as a system of nested subgroups and its influence on its individual members had waned and research was generally focused on intraindividual events or processes that mediated responses to social situations in groups, organizations and broader social contexts. Since then, new theoretical developments, such as Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and Self-Categorization Theory (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), have transformed the study of intergroup relations, bringing the group dynamics back into prominence as a source of powerful effects on authentic vs. inauthentic psychosocial functioning of people in groups, organizations and societies.

This article considers a particular aspect of the role of groups in intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics in organizations and society for the individual's authentic psychosocial functioning, one that goes even beyond the collective processes highlighted by work in social categorization and identity (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2010; Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2010) - the relationship between intragroup dynamics and intergroup relations as factors influencing individual's authenticity.

Traditionally, and still currently, the study of intergroup relations represents one of the most vibrant topics in social psychological research. Research on intergroup relations in organizational and social context focuses on social identity formation, symbolic and realistic conflict between groups in organizational and social meta-systems, and interventions that can reduce intergroup conflicts in organizations and society, which are one of the major factors for inauthentic feelings, actions, and communication of their individual members (LeVine & Campbell, 1972; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The study of intragroup dynamics of interpersonal processes and relations - within-group dynamics - continues to be an active and productive area of research in social psychology of small groups and applied research on effectiveness of group work (e.g., teamwork, group training and group psychotherapy). Work on intragroup dynamics in small groups has emphasized the importance of group-dynamics transformative factors, group leadership, influence and power within the group, interpersonal attractiveness, loyalty, group cohesiveness, cooperation, sense of group belongingness, and performance for understanding the individual member's authentic or inauthentic (self-alienating, depersonalized) psychosocial functioning (Dimitrov & Mateeva, 2012a, 2012b; Levine & Moreland, 2002).

Yet, despite the fact that many research projects claim they are devoted to studying intergroup relations and group dynamics effects on intrapersonal processes and behavior, cross - fertilization between fields of research has been limited. Only 365 articles retrieved in Google Scholar include both terms, intergroup and intragroup, in the paper abstract, and only 138 in the title - a small fraction of the research in these two areas. And none of them (!) is addressing the question, how intergroup relations and group dynamics in organizations and larger social systems (communities, large social groups, and societies) contribute to the dynamics of individual's authentic psychosocial functioning. Indeed, the scholarly traditions in the areas of intergroup and intragroup processes have developed in distinctive directions. Two recent chapters on the history of psychology, one on intergroup relations research (Dovidio et al., 2012) and one on small group dynamics research (Levine & Moreland, 2012), that appeared back to back in the same volume had only five common references out of a total of 464 works cited. The different conceptual and empirical trajectories of these areas of study may have occurred as a consequence of a number of factors. Current work in these areas reflects the dominant influence of different historical figures in social psychology. The popularity of different paradigms (e.g., the minimal group paradigm, group analysis, psychodrama, group psychotherapy and group relations) may seem, at least on the surface, more appropriate for one topic rather

than the other. The historical emphasis in the social-psychological study of intergroup relations influence on intra-individual processes, such as attitudes and stereotypes, may have deflected research on this topic from the types of relational processes that are critical to authentic vs. inauthentic (self-alienated) functioning of the individuals in group, organizational and social settings.

Also, as the areas diverged, researchers studying either intergroup or intragroup dynamics may have developed different assumptions about the priority of these processes. For example, in contexts that emphasize intergroup comparisons in organizations and society, people tend to direct their attention to between-group distinctions and functional intergroup relations. Researchers who are primarily interested in this phenomenon may then, either consciously or inadvertently, see intragroup dynamics, studied in depth predominantly in psychotherapeutic and organizational contexts as of limited importance. Nevertheless, there are obvious links between the areas in the context of our research interest to transformative factors which influence individual's authentic vs. inauthentic functioning in group, organizational and social contexts (Dimitrov & Mateeva, 2012a, 2012b, *in press*; Mateeva & Dimitrov, 2012a, 2012b). Processes such as social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and social justice (Tyler & Blader, 2000) are fundamental to psychosocial functioning of humans and thus to both intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics in organizations and society.

This article contends that understanding the reciprocal relationship between intragroup dynamics and intergroup relations, as containing complex transformative factors influencing person's authentic vs. inauthentic psychosocial functioning, offers valuable new insights into both topics and suggests new, productive avenues for psychological research, theory and practice development using the multicomponent concept of authenticity. Admittedly, this work draws on existing major social-psychological theories (e.g., Self-Categorization Theory, Social Dominance Theory) and selectively on empirical research evidence supporting this perspective.

The purpose of this article is also to serve as a reminder of the untapped potential, practically and theoretically, of integrating intragroup dynamics and intergroup relations perspectives in understanding how authenticity/inauthenticity of individual's intrapersonal experiences, behavior and communication with others is shaped in group, organizational, and social settings. The article builds upon previous research to illustrate how the fusion of intragroup and intergroup dynamics offers unique contributions to the study of authentic psychosocial functioning of the individuals and identifies new scholarly and professional practice directions. The article next briefly reviews key findings from dominant conceptual frameworks in the field of intergroup relations in organizations and society: social cognition, social identity, and functional relations. It then discusses the complementary role of intergroup and intragroup dynamics, reviewing how intergroup relations in organizations and society can affect small group dynamics, and then discussing how intragroup dynamics can shape both individual's psychosocial functioning and intergroup relations in his/her organizational and social settings. The final section of the article considers the implications, theoretical and practical, of the proposed reciprocal relationships between intragroup dynamics and intergroup processes as containing key transformative forces influencing person's authenticity or self-alienation in organizational and social contexts.

### **Social Cognition, Social Identity, and Functional Relations Between Groups**

Social cognition, specifically in terms of thinking of oneself and of others as members of groups (social categorization) rather than as distinct individuals, is a major determinant of intergroup tensions and potentially conflict between groups. Categorization is an universal facet of human experience in group, organizational and social settings and is essential for efficient and authentic psychosocial functioning. However, categorization often com-



promises both accuracy and authenticity for ease, affective comfort or speed of processing and analysis (Fiske & Taylor, 2007). When people or objects are categorized into groups, differences between people belonging to different groups are accentuated while differences between members of the same group are minimized (Tajfel, 1969). Furthermore, these similarities and differences are often viewed as inherent to the nature of the groups (Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2010) and generalize to additional dimensions (e.g., character traits or personality dispositions like neuroticism or authenticity, for instance) beyond those facets that originally differentiated the categories (Allport, 1954).

In terms of social categorization, recognition of one's membership in some groups (ingroups) but not others (outgroups) arouses, often spontaneously, fundamental psychological biases and distorts person's authentic functioning (e.g., authentic emotional experience, self-expression, private and public behavior, interpersonal perceptions and relationships). Cognitively and emotionally, people start to process information about ingroup members more selectively and deeply than about outgroup members (Van Bavel, Packer, & Cunningham, 2008), and individuals seem to have better memory for information about ways ingroup members are similar and outgroup members are dissimilar to them (Wilder, 1981). Emotionally, people are biased to feel more positively about ingroup than outgroup members (Otten & Moskowitz, 2000). They are pushed to perceive outgroup members as less human and authentic than ingroup members (Leyens et al., 2003) and start claiming that they value their lives less (Pratto & Glasford, 2008).

Individuals are also seeming more generous and forgiving in their attributions about the behaviors of ingroup members relative to outgroup members (Hewstone, 1990). The processes involved in the social categorization of people into ingroups ("we") and outgroups ("they") are sufficiently basic that such self-serving biases and defensive distortions are also prevalent among nonhuman primates, such as capuchin and rhesus monkeys (de Waal, Leimgruber, & Greenberg, 2008; Mahajan et al., 2011).

In addition, according to the original formulation of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), people's feelings of self-esteem are closely tied to their group life - induced social identities. Because social identity is commonly enhanced by emphasizing the "positive distinctiveness" of one's group (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), people typically value defining characteristics of their group more than the distinguishing features of other groups. To maintain the positive distinctiveness of their group, people engage in inauthentic and self-alienating ingroup favoritism and inauthentic outgroup derogations, and they are inclined to compete with and discriminate against other groups to gain or maintain advantage for their ingroup.

A large literature using the minimal group paradigm, in which people are classified into subgroups on the basis of dimensions that have little meaning in everyday life (e.g., preferences of artists) demonstrates how the processes shape inauthentic attitudes and actions towards others, even in the absence of interaction with ingroup or outgroup members. These and related findings have expanded Social Identity Theory beyond its original focus on self-esteem to make a more general framework about intragroup dynamics and intergroup processes as determinants of authentic vs. inauthentic psychosocial functioning of individuals in organizations and society (Abrams & Hogg, 2010).

Self-Categorization Theory (Turner et al., 1987) was derived from Social Identity Theory, which places strong emphasis on motivational dynamics, to consider more fully the cognitive-affective processes of social categorization (Abrams & Hogg, 2010). Self-categorization leads to the representation of the self and others in group-prototypic more or less inauthentic for the individual group members ways - the "cognitive-affective representation of features that describe and prescribe attributes of the group" (Hogg & Terry, 2000, p. 123). Group prototypes capture simil-

arities among ingroup members and accentuate selectively, in a biased way, differences between the ingroup and specific outgroups.

One fundamental premise of Self-Categorization Theory is that the ways people categorize themselves and others are highly context-dependent and quite often lead to inauthentic experiences and behaviors of group members. For instance, ingroup prototypes can change as a function of the outgroup involved in the social comparison in ways that distinguish the ingroup from the outgroup independently from the authentic perceptions of individuals in these groups. It happens a lot in organizational and social settings. The nature of the inauthentic group prototype that is activated in some organizations and communities then affects the salience of inauthentic ingroup standards, shaping intragroup dynamics of interpersonal relations, such as conformity, perceptions of deviance, and false leadership, and establishes inauthentic, self-alienating intergroup orientations in organizations and society, such as stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. This theory thus offers an integrative perspective on intergroup and intragroup processes as determinants of inauthentic, self-alienating and depersonalizing experiences, attitudes, behaviors and interactions of the individual as a loyal member of an organizational or societal system.

Whereas social categorization and social identity form the psychological foundation for intergroup bias, particularly ingroup favoritism (Brewer, 2000), the functional nature of the social relationship between groups represents a catalyst for outgroup derogation and overt intergroup conflicts which contribute together for individual's socially-imposed inauthentic feelings and conformist behaviors. Sherif's Robbers Cave study (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961) represents the classic illustration of the importance of functional relations between groups for both group dynamics and personal authenticity or inauthenticity. In this study, 12-year - old boys attending summer camp were randomly assigned to two groups. These groups engaged in a series of competitive athletic activities, with the winning group receiving prizes, that generated overt intergroup conflict, including name-calling and fistfights between boys who used to be close friends before the experiment. Since then, social psychology has devoted considerable attention to the influence of competition and intergroup threat in organizational and social settings emanating from another group on intergroup relations (Realistic Group Conflict Theory; LeVine & Campbell, 1972).

Integrated Threat Theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2000) distinguishes different types of threat: realistic threat and symbolic threat. Realistic threat represents any threat to the welfare of one's ingroup from some outgroup, such as physical, material or emotional well-being and political or economic power; symbolic threats encompass any threat to the worldview or mentality of one's ingroup, such as perceived group differences in values, beliefs, morals, and standards. Realistic and symbolic threat both contribute directly and independently to intergroup bias and induce inauthenticity in smaller groups and their individual members' psychosocial functioning (Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006).

As further evidence of the importance of functional relations between groups for the understanding of authentic vs. inauthentic individual functioning, Sherif et al. (1961) also demonstrated that whereas intergroup competition in organizational and social settings increased conflict, intergroup cooperation could reduce conflict and improve intergroup relations. In particular, introducing superordinate goals, outcomes that are mutually desired but require intergroup cooperation to achieve, was the most effective way in organizations and communities not only for ameliorating conflict but also for establishing stable positive relations and friendships across group lines in these organizations and communities.

There is currently a substantial literature documenting how promoting intergroup cooperation in organizations and social communities, such as through introducing cooperative learning exercises, corporate retreats, intercultural

fest, diversity training, and psychosocial rehabilitation programs (Aronson, 2004; Cooper & Slavin, 2004), reduces intergroup bias and affects in a positive way the intragroup dynamics in all groups and more authentic personal experiences and behaviors of their individual members. While social cognition, social identity, and functional relations between groups remain active and productive areas of research on intergroup relations, what remains relatively understudied is the influence of intragroup dynamics - such as the dynamics of group formation processes - on intergroup relations in organizations and society. Indeed, an often overlooked aspect of the Sherif et al. (1961) study was that there was an initial stage exclusively devoted to subgroup development. Sherif et al. explicitly discussed this phase as important because it permitted the formation of separate subgroup identities, for leaders and group values to emerge, and conformity pressures within the subgroups to operate as factors affecting the individual's authentic experiences and functioning in the both small and large group settings of the experiment. However, the researchers did not directly test (or even discuss) the very likely possibility that the inauthentic intergroup processes they observed might have been dependent on the existence and nature of prior crystallized inauthentic identities and established relationships within the smaller subgroups. They also did not consider theoretically how their intergroup interventions could change the dynamics among the members within each subgroup.

### **Intergroup Relations and Intragroup Dynamics as Factors for Individual's Authentic vs. Inauthentic Functioning**

Perhaps because of the emphasis in Sherif et al.'s (1961) account, the Robbers Cave study is typically portrayed exclusively as research on intergroup relations. However, it also illustrated how intergroup relations can influence intragroup dynamics and intrapersonal orientations of participants. As Sherif et al. (1961) observed in the extensive use of group names (Eagles & Rattlers) to refer to others while the groups were in competition, external threat increased people's sense of inauthentic social identity and its distinctive qualities and symbols (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999). The increased (and somewhat inauthentic) national identification in the United States after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 was, for example, visibly evident: 25% of Americans were flying US flags prior to 9/11, but 65% were flying the flag shortly after the terrorist attacks (Morin & Deane, 2002). One reason is that people rely on an inauthentically enhanced sense of shared social identity to reduce in an ego-defensive manner their authentic personal feelings of uncertainty and fear (Hogg, 2010), which are aroused by perceived threat. Another reason is that enhanced to inauthentically high levels social identity resulting from real or potential threat in organizations and society has direct instrumental value for defending individual's psyche against anxiety and other unpleasant feelings. Feelings of common connection in the face of commonly perceived or imagined real or symbolic threat promotes more prosocial behavior, cooperation, social support and conformity among those experiencing the threat (Dovidio & Morris, 1975) and increases individual efforts on behalf of the group, and thus enhances group productivity beyond the authentic levels of individual's initial commitment and self-interest (Worchel, Rothgerber, Day, Hart, & Butemeyer, 1998).

External threats can also facilitate greater but inauthentic inclusiveness among subgroups within a society or organization that may originally have been seen as less prototypical of the group, organization or society. Davies, Steele, and Markus (2008), for instance, found that priming US participants with the 9/11 terrorist attacks increased their extra-endorsement of multicultural inclusion of racial and ethnic groups already associated with an American national identity but increased inauthentically the emphasis on assimilationist policies for "foreign" groups. Feelings of shared threat of terrorism also increased white Americans' positive attitudes towards black Americans and sensitivity and moral outrage expressed at discrimination of black Americans within US society (Dovidio et al., 2004). As the distinct responses to American and foreign groups in the Davies, Steele, & Markus (2008) study suggest, experience of threat does not universally increase acceptance of others within a society or a group. Be-

cause of the greater efficiency and coordination required within a group to defend against outside threat, there is increased emphasis on inauthentic conformity and lower tolerance for ambiguity under these conditions.

Terror Management Theory (Greenberg, Landau, Kosloff, & Solomon, 2009) posits that inauthentically high adherence to group, organizational, and social values reduces the terror humans experience in response to mortality salience by enhancing individuals' feelings of security and self-esteem and, in turn, providing meaning and organization to person's life in their contexts. Arousing mortality concerns (e.g., by having people write about death compared to dental pain) reduces inauthentically the tolerance of deviance from group norms by individuals or subgroups within the organizations and society. Perhaps relatedly, endorsement of authoritarian values, such as power, toughness, and support for traditional values, increases within a society during times of external threat. In the United States, for example, comic book characters portraying inauthentically greater strength and stronger endorsement of American values were more popular during historical periods in which people felt that their economic well-being and way of life were more threatened than during periods of prosperity and social stability (Doty, Peterson, & Winter, 1991; Sales, 1973). After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, many Americans and Canadians became more suspicious of foreigners, and opposition to immigration, regardless of where immigrants came from, increased dramatically (Esses, Dovidio, & Hodson, 2002). During this period, Americans became more hawkish in their attitudes towards international affairs and more strongly supported restrictions to civil liberties (e.g., the Patriot Act), which made them feel more secure. Moreover, the increased support for these policies associated with the war on terror occurred more strongly for people who were authentically low in authoritarianism measures (Hetherington & Suhay, 2011); under threat, their attitudes aligned inauthentically with those high in authoritarianism, who already held these positions.

Self-Categorization Theory further illuminates the interrelationship between intergroup and intragroup dynamics in determining authentic vs. inauthentic (self-alienating) functioning of individuals. From this perspective, greater external threat (real or symbolic) increases the nature and salience of the group prototype and the importance of individual's conformity to it. Deviance from it is punished by the group, and ingroup members who negatively deviate from that prototype, trying to remain authentic ("true to their one's self"), may be responded to even more negatively than outgroup members who behave similarly ("the black sheep effect"; Marques & Paez, 1994).

In general, groups function ideally to provide security, materially and psychologically, by maintaining or inducing inauthentic, depersonalizing modes of individual experiences and behavior. However, they exist in a social space inhabited by other groups. Relations with other groups affect the meaning and importance of imposed group identity and the ways people interact within groups. Thus, intergroup relations significantly determine the dynamics within groups which, in turn, affects group members' individual authenticity a lot. And, of course, there is also the reciprocal influence of intragroup dynamics on intergroup relations in organizations and society.

### **Intragroup Dynamics and Biased Intergroup Relations**

Based on previous research we must acknowledge the profound effect of activating an inauthentic social identity instead of supporting the expression of authentic personal identity on the ways people think about, feel about, and act towards themselves and others in groups, organizations and society (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). What needs to be emphasized, however, is that the nature of intragroup dynamics - the ways people interact with one another and the emergent values, norms, and structure of a group - further influences both group members' individual psychosocial functioning and intergroup relations in organizations and society in large.

First, we have to consider the fundamental difference in the ways individuals and groups orient to each other and the processes that underlie this difference. Second, drawing on cross-cultural comparisons, it is important to discuss the influence of within - group structure on intergroup attitudes in organizational and social settings. Third, given the universal role differentiation and hierarchical structure among subgroups within larger groups (e.g., societies), we have to examine the relations between intragroup psychodynamics of perceptions and intergroup relations as factors affecting individual's authentic psychosocial functioning.

### Exchanges Between Individuals and Groups

Whether people interact with others in the context of interindividual or intergroup exchanges has a profound influence on their orientations toward more authentic or more inauthentic feelings, thoughts, attitudes, behaviors and relations with others. People are less cooperative and more competitive when they act as members of a group than when they act as individuals (Wildschut & Insko, 2007). Groups are greedier and less trustworthy than individuals (Insko et al., 2001). As a consequence, relations between groups tend to be more competitive and less cooperative than those between their individual members. Insko, Schopler, and their colleagues described this consistent difference as the "interindividual-intergroup discontinuity effect", which explains clearly how both group dynamics and intergroup relations in organizations and society may affect individual's authentic psychosocial functioning (Insko et al., 2001).

This effect involves more than activating an inauthentic social identity rather than allowing room for expressing authentic personal identities of group members. It occurs because of the ways in which group members interact with one another. One explanation for the discontinuity effect on authenticity of person's experiences, behaviors and interactions posits that groups are motivated by real or imagined fear of the outgroup. Specifically, competition is likely to be greater in intergroup than in interindividual contexts of organizations and society because of fear that outgroups are more untrustworthy than individuals in them (Insko et al., 2001). Insko et al. argue, however, that a longer term approach can increase trust, and increasing trust in groups, organizations and society would generally reduce competition getting closer to its self-congruent levels.

In support of this reasoning, when groups expected to interact multiple times in a prisoner's dilemma game, they expressed greater trust of the outgroup and made fewer competitive choices than when they expected to interact only once (Insko et al., 2001). Another explanation for the interindividual-intergroup discontinuity effect, which has also received empirical support, focuses on greed as a motivator of competition between groups. Because greed is non-normative, greedy decision-making would be expected to occur more strongly when there is social support within the ingroup for such decisions (Schopler & Insko, 1992). Indeed, statements reflecting greed were more common in discussions about social dilemmas between groups than between individuals and were associated with lower levels of authentic cooperation between groups than between individuals (Schopler et al., 1995). In addition, encouragement by a confederate to exploit the other group produces greater competitiveness (Schopler & Insko, 1992), whereas statements by a confederate advocating cooperation and articulating the long - term disadvantages of competition elicit greater cooperativeness compared to control conditions (Schopler et al., 1994).

Procedural interdependence, which refers to the process by which members within a group achieve consensus (Wildschut, Pinter, Vevea, Insko, Schopler, 2003), is also a critical determinant of cooperative intergroup behaviour. Wildschut and colleagues hypothesized that procedural interdependence would exacerbate the effect of greed on competitive behaviour, because any inauthentic group decision or group choice cannot be attributed to any single member of the group. Group discussions can also activate normative pressure to act rather inauthentically in favour of one's own group, as dictated by the ingroup-favouring norm (e.g., Wildschut, Insko, & Gaertner, 2002).

Furthermore, anticipating an interaction with an outgroup activates fear and distrust of that outgroup (Wildschut, Insko, & Pinter, 2004). In a review of the literature, Wildschut et al. (2003) concluded that when group members had to achieve consensus, as opposed to making self-congruent, authentic individual decisions, they were more competitive although feeling consciously or unconsciously more inauthentic and alienated. While the substantial body of work firmly established the interindividual - intergroup discontinuity phenomenon and identified moderating factors and underlying processes of influencing individual's authentic functioning, the particular goals and needs that members of groups experience at different stages of within - group development may also have strong effects on their individual psychosocial functioning and intergroup orientations.

### **Group Structure, Styles of Interaction and Culture**

Structure is a defining element of any group (e.g., as compared to the simultaneous presence of individuals), and there are a number of forces that tend to maintain and reinforce this structure. Studies of animal societies (Wittemyer & Getz, 2007) as well as of human groups (Worchel & Shackelford, 1991) demonstrate the critical value of differentiated roles to effective group functioning. Groups with members who have well-defined, accepted, and complementary roles are better able to manage scarce resources (Harris, 2006), more effective in routine activities (Peterson, Mitchell, Thompson, & Burr, 2000), and better able to respond to unexpected situations (Firestone, Lichtman, & Colamosca, 1975). All group members thus potentially benefit from these coordinated efforts and as a result their individual experiences, behaviors, and interactions are perceived as authentic self - expression in group, organizational, and social settings.

Effective group structures that facilitate group performance and success, which brings associated rewards and resources to the group, also tend to be quite stable. Understanding differences in how relations are structured within a group, organization, or society culture may thus inform cross-cultural differences in intergroup relations. Yet, studies of cross-cultural differences in intergroup bias are surprisingly rare. In one study, Shin, Dovidio, and Napier (2013) proposed that the individual - vs. group-orientation dimension of culture may be particularly relevant to intergroup orientations. In individual-oriented group, organizational and social cultures, individual rights, individualism, self-determination, authenticity, and the pursuit of self-interest are emphasized (Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997). Group-oriented group, organizational, and social cultures stress interdependence between the self and ingroups, roles, positions, and hierarchical relations within a group, group decisions, collectivism, and group norms (Triandis, 1994). Because individual-oriented, some cultures promote personal responsibilities, authentic choice and self-expression, personal preference, initiative, and distinctive efforts, uniqueness and self-authenticity are important cultural norms or values in these group, organizational and social (even national) cultures. In contrast, group-oriented, group, organizational and societal cultures emphasize roles, positions, and duties within hierarchical relations and interdependence among collectivistic in-group members (Gardner & Seeley, 2001; Markus & Kitayama, 1991); therefore behavioural conformity, self-alienation and inauthenticity in service of the group interest and priorities are important cultural norms or even values in these group, organizational and social cultures.

These different cultural norms and values, uniqueness and authenticity, on one hand, behavioural and relational conformity and inauthenticity, on the other hand, likely lead to cultural differences in patterns of intergroup bias towards groups who violate the cultural norms and values and subgroups whose characteristics (for instance, racial, ethnic, educational, gender, psychological, etc.) define them as outside the core cultural membership. Goffman (1963), in his classic work defined these as stigmas relating to "blemishes of character" and "tribal" outgroups. Shin, Dovidio, and Napier (2013) drawing on data from the World Values Survey (World Values Survey

Association, 2005) compared the intergroup bias among respondents from four different countries with group-oriented, collectivistic cultures (China, South Korea, Taiwan, & Vietnam) versus that of respondents from nine different individual-oriented, individualistic cultures (Canada, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Participants from group-oriented cultures demonstrated higher levels of inauthentic biases towards a range of outgroups than did respondents from individual-oriented cultures, and these effects were mediated by less support for uniqueness and authenticity within the culture. Moreover, the greater intergroup bias displayed by members of group-oriented cultures than individual-oriented cultures was somewhat stronger towards individuals and subgroups that violated within-group standards of behavior (i.e., heavy drinkers, homosexuals, outgoing dissidents and social critics) than towards others representing different racial or ethnic backgrounds (i.e., people of a different race, immigrants). Thus, the ways different cultures structure relations and interactions within the groups, organizations and society have direct implications for the ways their members orient themselves towards members of other groups.

### Subgroup Differentiation and Hierarchy

Differentiation of roles, interactions and positions within groups is almost inevitably associated with role and hierarchical structure of the group as a whole. Moreover, hierarchy and role differentiation within groups are not simply a status - ordering of individuals; it often involves stable or dynamic coalitions of group members ("pairing" subgroups) and represents emotional and power differentials among these subgroups. Far - reaching cross - cultural evidence demonstrates that such emotional, role and power disparities between subgroups are characteristic of human groups, organizations and societies, regardless of their era, culture, or form of government (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). Because within-group hierarchies, interpersonal attraction - based "pairs" and group roles differentiations, almost by definition, benefit some individuals and subgroups more than others, those higher and lower in status tend to have different orientations with regard to the structure of the relations and interactions within the group.

Intragroup relations within groups large enough to have subgroups thus inevitably and inherently involve intergroup dynamics inducing inauthenticity. Members of the different subgroups will tend to have different inauthentic feelings, needs, motivations and communication styles depending on their position in the group structure. Members of subgroups higher in their status in the group structure (e.g., managers in organizations, powerful politicians and statesmen, celebrities, or members of high status, ethnic minority or majority groups in society) tend to be extra-motivated to support and defend the status quo even if it requires them to feel, act and communicate in very inauthentic for them personally ways. Those lower in their status in group structure (i.e., low-paid and unqualified workers in organizations, disempowered communities and ethnic minorities with disadvantaged status in society) are typically additionally motivated for change in the social structure of their groups, organizations and society, even if it requires them to feel, act and communicate in somewhat inauthentic, "too revolutionary" for them personally, ways.

Therefore, the interplay between these two opposing forces, preservation versus change of the status quo, will be evident in most differentiated and hierarchical social systems (groups, organizations and societies) and will elicit lots of inauthentic feelings, behaviors, and relationships in members of both subgroups. One way that groups, organizations, and societies maintain their hierarchical and/or differentiated structures of social roles and relations is by developing group, organizational or social ideologies, myths, beliefs or theories and mentalities (e.g., beliefs about meritocracy among qualified professionals, or racial supremacy for racists and fascists) that justify status and roles differences within the group, organization or society.

According to System Justification Theory (Jost & Hunyady, 2002), people not only are ready to hold favourable and self- and ingroup- enhancing inauthentic perceptions and attitudes about themselves and their own groups, but they also want to hold such inauthentic perceptions, views and attitudes about the overarching social order (system justification). To do so, members of groups lower and higher in status often both adopt inauthentic system-justifying, more or less “false” ideologies and consciousness that rationalize, and thus reinforce and perpetuate, the role and power structure and corresponding disparities in groups, organizations, and society. For example, southern Italians, who have been traditionally poorer and viewed less favourably than northern Italians, frequently endorse negative stereotypes of their own group (Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, 2001). The same could be expected for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens from Roma ethnic origin, or Bulgarian immigrants in the USA and in EU countries.

Moreover, the more dependent individual group members feel on their group, organization, community and society for their social and material welfare and psychological well-being, the more motivated they are to view and accept in an inauthentic way the statuses of different subgroups within the group, organization, community and society as legitimate and just and to see the way group, organization, community and society are as the way they should be (Kay et al., 2009).

Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) further describes basic motivational process and points to the role of group, organizational and social inauthentic self-serving and system-justifying ideologies and mentality in the formation and maintenance of group, organizational and social structure. When social differentiations and hierarchies exist within a group, organization, and society, dominant subgroups are motivated to protect their advantaged status and systematically resist the social claims and movements of subgroups with disadvantaged status. Thus, within a larger group, organization, community or society there is frequently a tension between the authentic orientations of individuals who are members of lower status subgroups (disadvantaged/minority subgroups) and those of higher status subgroups (advantaged/majority subgroups). This intragroup dynamics of human relations represents a form of intergroup relations inducing inauthenticity.

Interpersonal and intergroup orientations often reflect complex, often mixed motives (e.g., involving self-interest and moral and justice-based concerns; Tyler, 2005), and it is possible that under some circumstances members of advantaged and disadvantaged groups may share the same inauthentic perceptions and motivations in support of the system structure of their common group, organization and society (Jost, Burgess, & Mosso, 2001; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). However, research often identifies systematic differences between subgroups that reflect group-based goals and inauthentic orientations towards the status quo. Thus, members of advantaged subgroups in groups, organizations and society are more tolerant and supportive of group-based structure than are members of disadvantaged groups, and are more likely to endorse self-serving ideologies and hold “false” mentality that legitimize group-based inauthenticity.

In contrast, disadvantaged subgroup members display greater support for ideologies and mentality that de-legitimize existing system structure (e.g., endorsement of human rights, humanitarianism in an exploitative or tyrannical social system) and have a greater self-congruent desire for egalitarian changes in the relationship between the subgroups (Saguy, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2008). The status of subgroups within a larger group, organization, community or society not only defines the roles and relations of their members, but also shapes members’ authenticity in experiencing and expressing their psychological needs, feelings, values, attitudes and personal identity.



According to the Needs-Based Model of Reconciliation (Shnabel, Nadler, Canetti-Nisim, & Ullrich 2008), members of disadvantaged subgroups typically experience feelings of powerlessness, lack of control, and loss of their honour, which pose a real or symbolic threat to their authentic personal identity as being capable, socially valuable and autonomous personalities. In contrast, when confronted with the facts about the social structure and their privileged position in it, members of advantaged subgroups are likely to suffer from a threat to their authentic personal identity as being acceptable, competent and moral. Therefore, whereas disadvantaged subgroup members are likely to experience an enhanced and often inauthentic feeling and need to increase their sense of power, advantaged subgroup members are likely to experience an increased and inauthentic need for acceptance, compliance and admiration. Bergsieker, Shelton, and Richeson (2010) have identified similar responses from white and black Americans in their interactions: blacks (the disadvantaged subgroup) had the inauthentic goal of being respected, but whites (the advantaged subgroup) had the inauthentic goal of being liked. The different feelings, needs and goals of members of high- and low-status subgroups produce different strategies in the nature of their inauthentic, artificial social discourses. When interacting with members of subgroups lower in the within-group structure, members of higher status subgroups tend inauthentically to avoid discussing certain topics that might threaten the legitimacy and stability of their advantaged position. Indeed, members of advantaged subgroups may unconsciously or strategically choose to promote inauthentic messages that obscure and draw attention away from group-based role and status differences and power (Jackman, 1994; Ruscher, 2001).

Saguy, Dovidio, and Pratto (2008) found that, when given a choice of topics to discuss, members of lower status subgroups preferred to talk about topics related to group differences, whereas members of higher status subgroups displayed greater desire to talk about topics addressing commonalities between the subgroups. In actual interaction between high - and low - status subgroup members, discussions typically gravitate in an clearly inauthentic, self-alienated way to commonality. Part of the reason is that discussing common ground relieves intrapersonal anxiety and relational tension between interactants in the immediate context, but another reason is because emphasizing common group membership potentially satisfies the ego-defensive needs for anxiety reduction of members of both groups. Drawing attention to commonalities blurs the authentic and anxiety - evoking boundaries between the subgroups and thus satisfies the high - status subgroup's need for moral acceptance by the low - status subgroup, which feels more respected. Emphasizing shared "false" group, organizational or social identity, rather than providing space for the expression of authentic subgroup or personal identities, enhances (inauthentic) feelings of shared status and power among members of low-status subgroups.

That's why it is important to see how emphasizing shared superordinate and at the same time inauthentic social identity in groups, organizations, and society is used to enhance "false" but necessary for system justification and anxiety - reduction harmony among subgroups but can also affect negatively both individual's authentic functioning including his/her relations towards other groups in the larger social system.

### **Common Social Identity, Intragroup Dynamics, and Intergroup Bias**

Focusing on common group connections between members of different subgroups within a larger group, organization, society, or culture facilitates harmony between the subgroups and can promote cooperation to achieve the larger goals of the collective. It would be perfect when common social identity is really an authentic expression of personal self-identities of all group members. In fact, it is not the case in most groups, organizations and societies.

The Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000, 2012), draws on the theoretical foundations of Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and Self-Categorization Theory (Turner et al., 1987). This strategy emphasizes the process of recategorization, whereby members of different subgroups are induced to conceive of themselves as a single, more inclusive superordinate “unreal” group rather than as two completely separate “real” subgroups. A common ingroup social identity can be achieved by increasing the salience of existing common superordinate social memberships (e.g., school attended, employing company, same nation) or by introducing other psychosocial factors (e.g., common goals or fate) shared by the different subgroups. When people conceive of others as ingroup members with common (more or less different from their personal and ingroup identities) social identity, the processes that produce cognitive, affective, and evaluative benefits for ingroup members become additionally extended to those who were previously viewed as members of a different subgroup (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2010).

Considerable empirical support has been obtained for the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2012). Inducing members of different subgroups in larger groups, organizations and society to see themselves within a common ingroup identity (more or less inauthentic compared to their original personal and real subgroup identities) promotes more positive attitudes towards members of other subgroups and helpfulness towards them, reduces anxiety evoked by perceiving and negotiating differences, and increases public rather than private self-awareness. These effects have been observed in studies including students attending a multi-ethnic high school, banking executives who had experienced a corporate merger, and college students from blended families whose households are composed of two formerly separate families trying to unite into one.

Other field research demonstrates that more salient common identity relates to more favourable intergroup attitudes for members of majority and minority racial and ethnic groups (Pfeifer et al., 2007) and across national groups (Klandermans, Sabucedo, & Rodriguez, 2004). Experimental evidence that a common ingroup identity improves intergroup attitudes comes from research employing both ad hoc and enduring groups, including children (Houlette et al., 2004) as well as adults, and conducted in the United States and other countries, such as Portugal (Guerra et al., 2010), Spain (Gómez, Dovidio, Huici, Gaertner, & Cuadrado, 2008), Germany (Kessler & Mummendey, 2001), and Poland (Bilewicz, 2007).

Group membership fundamentally shapes feelings of trust and perceptions of others' trustworthiness: ingroup strangers are perceived as more trustworthy than outgroup strangers (Foddy, Platow, & Yamagishi, 2009). Moreover, people may be even more influenced by the feelings, ideas and behaviors of others who formerly were associated with another subgroup but have become accepted as a “newcomer” sharing superordinate identity with the ingroup (Kane, Argote, & Levine, 2005). Emphasizing a common group identity also facilitates more cooperative and socially responsible behaviour in paradigms assessing various forms of cooperation, such as a commons dilemma (De Cremer & van Vugt, 1998; Kramer & Brewer, 1984; Wit & Kerr, 2002).

Large-scale cooperation between subgroups in the group, organization and society such as between people from different work teams, companies, ethnic and religious communities and nations, is particularly challenging to achieve because people tend not to develop trusting relationships with large aggregates of anonymous individuals, and they do not exhibit authentically substantial empathy for them (Cameron & Payne, 2011), which can increase the tendency to be authentically non-cooperative to them. As a consequence, large-scale intergroup relations tend to be highly biased in favour of ingroups based, for example, on ethnicity, nationality, or religion (Choi & Bowles, 2007).

Nevertheless, [Buchan et al. \(2011\)](#) found that a strong although quite inauthentic sense of common, global social identity was a critical predictor of cooperation cross-nationally even when participating individuals maintain their authentic non-cooperative personal attitudes to other nations. The degree to which participants from six different countries - Argentina, Iran, Italy, Russia, South Africa, and the United States - agreed to identify themselves with “the world as a whole” predicted the extent to which they would contribute to a global public good (a “world” account) relative to their local national or personal accounts. Furthermore, this effect of group identification occurred beyond the effects of perceptions of how much other participants, based on their authentic personal attitudes would also contribute to the world account. Thus, common group identity can overcome the parochial authentic self-interests that typically characterize the relations between individuals, groups, organizations, and even nations. It should be noted, though, that successful induction of a common (more or less inauthentic) group identity among members of different subgroups within larger groups, organizations and society does not necessarily eliminate social biases entirely; instead it may mainly redirect them towards other subgroups. That is, creating more intragroup harmony inducing inauthentic, “uniting” social identity may promote intergroup bias. When recategorization occurs and a superordinate ingroup identity is established, other outgroups subgroups at the same level of inclusiveness are likely to be recognized as relevant comparison subgroups.

Because of the need to establish, maintain, or enhance the positive distinctiveness of the superordinate identity, biases towards these subgroups are likely to be aroused. For example, consistent with the Common Ingroup Identity Model, east Germans who recategorized west Germans and east Germans within the superordinate national identity of “Germans”, relative to those who continued to use their authentic east - west German categorization schemes, displayed reduced bias towards east Germans. However, they also became more biased over time towards members of other countries ([Kessler & Mummendey, 2001](#)). Thus, “recategorization is a 2-edged process: although it reduces conflict at the subgroup level, it may initiate conflict at the common ingroup level” ([Kessler & Mummendey, 2001](#), p. 1099).

In general, intergroup cooperation is essential for the effective functioning of larger groups, organizations and societies, which are composed of multiple subgroups. As work on the interindividual-intergroup discontinuity effect reveals, however, authentic cooperation between groups is difficult to achieve. Inducing people to recategorize others within a common, more or less inauthentic, but superordinate ingroup identity, harnesses the forces of ingroup favouritism and authentic personal identity self-expression, and promotes “induced” cooperation with others formerly perceived primarily as outgroup members with very different authentic self-identity. However, creating a more or less inauthentic sense of commonly shared group identity may arouse intensive social comparisons with other groups and thus activate new forms of intergroup biases.

## Conclusions

Considering the role of intragroup dynamics offers additional insights in the intergroup relations that complement the invaluable perspectives of social cognition, social identity, and self-categorization as part of authenticity psychodynamics of individual’s psychosocial functioning. How people interact with members of their own group, as individuals or as subgroups, critically determines the experience and expression of their authentic feelings, thoughts, needs and goals, and likely their orientations towards other people and groups. How people think and feel about other groups and perceive intergroup relations can shape intragroup dynamics involving group identity, feeling of belongingness, and leadership choice, and dynamics of interactions of group members.

Our study was intended to draw attention to the relationships between intergroup processes and intragroup dynamics as factors influencing authentic vs. inauthentic personal psychosocial functioning and to stimulate greater conceptual and empirical integration of these related but still too - often disconnected fields of research.

The idea that intergroup and intragroup dynamics are highly relevant to each other is far from novel. The new aspect in our reflection on them is the finding that they affect, separately and in combination, the authenticity of individual's psychosocial functioning. For instance, although specific findings (Green, Glaser, & Rich, 1998) and theoretical accounts (Glick, 2005) related to scapegoating in groups, organizations and societies have been challenged and debated, there is converging evidence that aspects of intragroup dynamics associated with collective frustration shape intergroup stereotyping and prejudices, perceived by many individuals in these groups, organizations and societies as inauthentic compared to their own authentic personal attitudes, beliefs, and evaluation.

Tajfel (1981) hypothesized that whereas individual frustrations lead people to blame other individuals for their problems shared frustrations among members of a group produce blame directed at other groups through "social attribution" processes. One mechanism by which shared frustrations promote scapegoating through social attribution processes is the adoption of inauthentic ("false") group ideologies, myths, theories and mentality directed at specific groups – Roma people in central and south-eastern Europe, for example.

Drawing on work on the Stereotype Content Model (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002), Glick (2005) proposed that groups that have been previously stereotyped in ways that acknowledge their power and influence and have aroused envy are most likely to be the target of the emerging ideologies and theories that justify negative social action - e.g., "we are protesting against all politicians, because all they are corrupted". These inauthentic ideologies, self-deceptive myths, theories and mentalities often directly involve attitudes, beliefs and behavioral models relating to the dehumanization of the other group (Prunier, 2001) and the moral or psychosocial superiority of the ingroup - something observed often in partisan public policy debates of Bulgarian political parties, for example.

Thus, whereas classic views of scapegoating focused on individual frustration and action, more recent conceptualizations suggest the reciprocal relationship between intragroup dynamics and intergroup processes in larger groups, organizations and societies as determinants of authentic vs. inauthentic personal psychosocial functioning. Several theories of general group, organizational and societal organization, functioning, and bias, such as System Justification Theory (Jost & Hunyady, 2002) and Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) consider both intergroup processes and intragroup dynamics of authentic vs. inauthentic psychosocial functioning of individuals in group, organizational and social settings. These theories, in fact, suggest that the boundary between intergroup research and group dynamics research may be artificial, unnecessary, and conceptually misleading.

Social Dominance Theory, for instance, makes foundational assumptions about the universality of differentiation and hierarchy between groups as an essential element of organizational and societal functioning.

Self-Categorization Theory (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Turner et al., 1987) represent an even broader framework encompassing intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics as key determinants of individual's psychosocial functioning - being more or less authentic. It not only builds upon research demonstrating the roles of social categorization and social identity in intergroup bias, but also reveals how categorizing oneself as a member of a

group (e.g., political party member, corporate citizen, or just football club fan) activates group prototypes and de-personalized attraction and loyalty to other members of the group.

Self-Categorization Theory therefore offers novel insights into authentic vs. inauthentic phenomena of individual's psychosocial functioning and adjustment that have typically been considered solely within the field of intragroup dynamics, such as the effects of conformity, norms, and leadership on individual's authenticity. Moreover, focusing on the relation between intergroup processes and intragroup dynamics in groups, organizations, and societies suggests at least three new directions for understanding and improving intergroup relations to enhance more authentic psychosocial functioning and adjustment of people.

First, much of the research on intergroup relations considers the ingroup in a relatively static way. Indeed, when minimal group designs are used, this is intentional - the purpose of the minimal group paradigm is to strip the situation of functional relations. While researchers commonly focus on the absence of functional relations (e.g., cooperative or competitive) between groups, the minimal group paradigm also restricts relations within groups - it is as much a minimal intragroup paradigm as it is a minimal intergroup paradigm. Thus, as valuable as the minimal intergroup research has been in so many ways, it obscures the role of intragroup dynamics in determining both intergroup bias and authentic vs. inauthentic individual psychosocial functioning. Indeed, [Gaertner, Iuzzini, Witt, and Oriña \(2006\)](#) found that even while maintaining the minimal nature on intergroup relations and limiting the feasibility of intergroup comparisons, increasing intragroup elements, such as the perceived entitativity of the ingroup and attractiveness of the ingroup to its members, was sufficient to promote inauthentic ingroup favouritism and as a result inauthentic personal experiences and behaviours ([Rabbie & Horwitz, 1988](#)).

In addition, one of the most robust findings in the group dynamics literature involves are the stages of group development that apply to a wide range of groups. Building on the classic work on stages of group development by [Bennis and Shepard \(1956\)](#), [Agazarian and Gantt \(2003\)](#) developed a comprehensive framework that can be applied to groups ranging size, task, and complexity. The first phase involves the development of group authority. This phase is generally stressful, involving challenges in communication among members, the development of roles and acceptance or resistance to them, and the emergence of leadership and authority, which are not equally distributed across members. The second phase emphasizes the development of intimacy and trust within the group. The group prototype is securely formed, and group identity and membership are highly valued, while individuation and authenticity are discouraged. The third phase represents a focus on group interdependence. Members direct the energy to interdependence within the group, resisting influences from outside of the group. In this stage, the social reality defined by the group is relied on more than "objective" facts and personal authenticity. Where a group is in its stage of development can systematically affect the degree and nature of intergroup bias and inauthentic personal experiences and behaviors of group members. For instance, [Agazarian and Gantt \(2003\)](#) propose that group members communication in the first phase of group development, in which they strive to bond with the group and its members, often leads to members "externalizing conflicts onto 'them'" (p. 241). In the second phase, in which the goal is to develop intimacy within the group, group members emphasize similarities to other members of the group. In this stage, group members may be particularly likely to make the kinds of intergroup social comparisons, described in Social Identity Theory, that create feelings of positive distinctiveness and promote bias. When a group is in the third phase, in which interdependence is emphasized, group members may feel both empowered and psychosocially and morally superior, which can lead to overt discrimination towards other groups and towards subgroups that are viewed as deviant and obstacles to efficient group functioning ([Haslam & Reicher, 2007](#)).

Stages of group development (evolution of intragroup processes and relations) likely critically influence how the group and its members relate both to other groups (intergroup relations) and to their individual members' authenticity. In addition, intergroup orientations can systematically influence processes associated with stages of within-group dynamics and development. For example, intergroup circumstances that allow groups in the first, authority stage of development to identify (more or less inauthentically) a threatening outgroup can accelerate groups into the intimacy and interdependence stages. Of course, it is also possible that these intragroup processes related to stages of group development and intergroup relations in organizational and social settings can have reciprocal effects, increasing group cohesion and allegiance, and then reinforcing these by stimulating competition and conflict between groups in an organization or a society.

A second basic implication of considering both intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics as a tandem of authenticity building or breaking factors is that acceptance of subgroups seen as non-normative may be enhanced by framing difference as a benefit to group functioning.

In general, members of high-status subgroups in larger groups, organizations and societies tend to favour inauthentic assimilations of other subgroups and application of colour-blind standards for all (Verkuyten, 2006). Part of the reason may be that adopting this inauthentic social perspective legitimizes the privileged position of the high-status subgroups and reduces the likelihood of collective action by members of low-status subgroups if they are more aware about their authentic private or subgroup identities (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2007).

A seeming advantage of this perspective is that inauthenticity looks like facilitating efficient group, organizational and social functioning while minimizing social discord. Indeed, groups, organizations, and societies that adopt a colour-blind, inauthentic perspectives do perform well on tasks representing a clearly articulated problem and an obviously correct solution (social puzzles). However, groups, organizations, and societies that recognize and value the distinctive authentic perspectives and contributions of individuals and small subgroups that would otherwise be seen as low-status more effectively address complex tasks (social problems) characterized by many possible solutions (Alexander, Chizhik, Chizhik, & Goodman, 2009).

Diverse groups, organizations and societies which value and encourage authenticity of their members are better at solving complex problems that require divergent thinking (Antonio et al., 2004) and attending to a broader range of relevant information in analysis of issues (Sommers, 2006). Thus, when the focus is on intergroup relations, group differences on the basis of the room they make for expressing authentic experiences and attitudes of their individual members (organizational and social climates of authenticity) are typically threatening and anxiety provoking. However, when performance by the group, organization and society on complex problems is a primary concern, diversity and authenticity can be seen as group, organizational and societal assets. Intergroup interactions then represent opportunities for learning, understanding and development, rather than being realistically or symbolically threatening and inducing inauthentic experiences and social identities functioning as individual, group, organizational and social defences. In addition, successful, cooperative interdependence represents one of the most effective ways not only of improving intergroup attitudes but also of maintaining stable positive relations within groups, organizations and societies.

A third implication for analyses integrating intragroup dynamics and intergroup processes as factors for authentic vs. inauthentic psychosocial functioning of the individuals involves identifying more effective interventions to improve both intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics, and in such a way to affect positively the authentic psychosocial functioning of individuals.

Much of research on improving intergroup relations has been guided by Intergroup Contact Theory (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, 2011; Tausch & Hewstone, 2010). According to Allport's (1954) formulation, for intergroup contact to be successful at reducing intergroup conflict and inauthenticity of intergroup perceptions and relations, and ultimately achieving real intergroup harmony, the contact must involve (1) equal status within the contact situation; (2) authentic intergroup cooperation; (3) authentic common goals; and (4) authentic support of authorities, law, or custom.

Additional work has also emphasized the importance of authentic personalized interaction and the development of authentic cross-group friendships. There is extensive evidence for what is now termed Intergroup Contact Theory for improving personal attitudes towards a range of stigmatized groups, including homosexuals, people with psychiatric disorders, as well as racial and ethnic minorities (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, 2008, 2011). Nevertheless, despite these impressive results, the effects of contact for improving intergroup relations may be limited. Meta-analytic reviews reveal that intergroup prejudice is only a modest predictor of intergroup discrimination ( $r = .26$  to  $.32$ ; Dovidio, Brigham, Johnson, & Gaertner, 1996; Talaska, Fiske, & Chaiken, 2008). Dixon, Durrheim, and Tredoux (2007) have questioned the traditional focus of social psychological research on intergroup attitudes as the ultimate measure of positive intergroup relations without adequate attention to the impact of authentic attitudes on actual structural change towards equality. Dixon, Durrheim, and Tredoux accept that contact between subgroups in larger groups, organizations and societies may transform the interpersonal attitudes and stereotypes, but caution that it may leave unaltered the self-serving beliefs and self-deceptions that sustain mentality of racial and ethnic discrimination (Dixon, Durrheim, & Tredoux, 2007, p. 868).

Appreciating the role of intragroup dynamics suggests alternative ways of improving intergroup relations in groups, organizations and society efficiently, effectively, ethically and, well...authentically. Building on Self-Categorization Theory (Turner et al., 1987), Haslam, Reicher, and Platow (2011) considered how authentic vs. inauthentic social identity representations can be critical to both leadership and followership in groups, organizations and societies. They proposed, based on Self-Categorization Theory, that people are perceived to be qualified for group, organizational or social leadership positions to the extent that they are seen to be representative (or prototypical) of the ingroup, which quite often has nothing to do with their authentic personal qualities and self-identity.

Consistent with this proposition, empirical evidence demonstrates that only when a leader has a history of representing and advancing the interests of a contextually defined ingroup are followers highly motivated to help translate the leader's vision for the group into reality (e.g., Haslam & Platow, 2001). Particularly relevant to intergroup relations is the finding that when leaders in groups, organizations, and societies are viewed as ingroup prototypical, they are given greater latitude to display creativity by moving the group in new directions - directions that might otherwise be seen as inappropriate, objectionable or disloyal, never mind their authentic self-identities (Platow, van Knippenberg, Haslam, van Knippenberg, & Spears, 2006). Thus, in contrast to the kinds of individual - to - individual intergroup contact that is central to interventions based on Contact Theory or involving cooperative learning, leaders can have a profound, cascading influence in representing and potentially changing prototypic intergroup relations. While the change in intergroup orientation advocated by leaders may be limited to some degree by original prototypic intergroup relations, leaders can have substantial influence redefining not only intergroup attitudes but also the nature of intergroup relations.

Support for this perspective comes from Klev, Dobbin, and Kelly's (2006) analysis of the effectiveness of various interventions for facilitating the advancement of women and ethnic minorities in business setting. They found that

interventions aimed at developing authentic individuals' attitudes (e.g., diversity training) had minimal long-term effect, but visible (more or less inauthentic) endorsements of diversity by organizational and social leaders (e.g., in establishing a diversity office, committee or employment and staff promotion policies) produced significant increases over time of both women and ethnic minorities in management positions.

While the three examples just presented derive from existing bodies of work, bridging intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics can be even more transformative to authenticity of individual's psychosocial functioning by identifying the value of new perspectives and paradigms.

Such an approach is timely, practically as well as theoretically. Immigration, which nowadays is occurring at an unprecedented rate world-wide, involves complex issues of social identity transformation among members of immigrant groups and members of the host countries (Sam & Berry, 2010), as well as the relationship between the authentic values and attitudes held within the different groups (Bourhis, Montreuil, Barrette, & Montaruli, 2009; Pfafferott & Brown, 2006). Immigration essentially involves both intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics, and understanding these processes jointly can help inform social policies that benefit societies, organizations and groups within those societies, and individuals within those groups and organizations.

Integrating intragroup dynamics and intergroup processes as determining factors of authentic vs. inauthentic psychosocial functioning of people requires conceptual analyses that recognize and embrace the nested nature of these dynamic processes. New conceptual lenses also need to consider and theoretically exploit the bidirectional nature of intragroup dynamics and intergroup relations.

As discussed earlier, external threat (real, symbolic or even imagined) can change intragroup dynamics, increasing the salience of inauthentic social identity, promoting conformity to group standards, and decreasing authentic personal tolerance for deviance. Such intragroup processes may further facilitate the development of inauthentic group ideologies, myths, self-deceptive theories and mentality that justify antipathy and aggression towards members of other group while cloaking these actions with moral and normative justifications (Glick, 2005). Moreover, through the process of social identification, even members of the group who personally possessed other authentic orientations may be 'transformed' by such group-based ideologies and beliefs systems to engage actively in harm directed towards members of other groups (Haslam & Reicher, 2007).

Adopting this perspective highlights the importance of longitudinal analyses, which have been surprisingly rare in the study of intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics. Besides expanding traditional paradigms analytically and methodologically, a broader consideration of intragroup dynamics and intergroup processes in determining authentic psychosocial functioning of people can stimulate the adoption of new paradigms to study groups, organizations, and communities.

Much of social life of humans now occurs in electronically mediated ways. People are increasingly initiating and sustaining relationships with others 'on-line'; over 70% of respondents in a recent survey reported that had explored a relationship with someone they first met over the Internet (Stephure, Boon, MacKinnon, & Deveau, 2009). Developments in communication technology and in social networking media have profoundly changed the way people interact and the nature and authenticity of their social relationships. The meaning of 'friend' has been transformed (including making it a verb: 'to friend' someone), and electronic media have allowed social movements, including political revolutions, to develop with unprecedented rapidity. The study of 'virtual' social interactions is worthy of study in its own right and has many implications (e.g., for close relationships). However, it may be particularly



relevant to study of group processes because of the likely amplification of more or less authentic social identity influences as the 'social glue' of on-line communities.

While people may display inauthenticity and strong conformity to the norms of the on-line community, they may be largely freed from the social and reality constraints of their authentic self-identity imposed by the larger society that exists outside the virtual community. Communication technology allows members of affinity groups who are geographically isolated to interact regularly and act collectively, accelerates the development of intimacy, facilitates social coordination, and limits personal identifiability (Bargh & McKenna, 2004).

Consequently, electronic communication represents a particularly fertile area for studying the integrated dynamics of intergroup and intragroup processes and relations. Methodologically, investigating the joint operation of intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics as authenticity determinants in electronically mediated communication offers the advantages of a social petri dish, in which social relationships grow unusually rapidly, but in a domain that is increasingly expanding and natural (*in vivo*).

Examination of these processes over the Internet has precedent. Over a decade ago, Glaser, Dixit, and Green (2002) participated in exchanges in a White racist chat room on the Internet, experimentally manipulating the nature and proximity of racial threats (e.g., information about Blacks moving into white neighbourhoods). Inauthentic threats involving greater intimacy, for example relating to interracial marriage compared to job competition, aroused stronger advocacy of violence. This research illustrates the potential value of Internet-based research for reaching populations rare among traditional college participant pools and studying more consequential outcomes.

Nevertheless, much of the current research on intragroup dynamics and, particularly, intergroup relations continues to focus on traditional forms of social exchange, leaving socially - mediated exchanges outside of the mainstream of work on these topics. The study of intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics in electronic media and their effect on authenticity of online behavior and interactions still has substantial unrealized potential. The combination of increasing practical relevance and the opportunity to discover the generalizability or boundaries of existing theory to electronically mediated social relationships makes this an exceptionally promising new research direction. It also permits the study of longitudinal processes with the kinds of populations (such as blatant racists) that have been traditionally limited in typical social psychological research samples consisting of college introductory psychology students. Thus, the seeming challenges to conventional paradigms and resources of studying the ways intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics relate over time can help accelerate the adoption new paradigms and the development of more comprehensive frameworks that address the current (and future) realities of authentic vs. inauthentic psychosocial life of people.

In conclusion, despite their shared focus on groups, research bridging intragroup dynamics and intergroup relations as factors of psychosocial functioning of individuals is surprising rare. The goal of this article was to highlight the value of research integrating these areas, particularly for understanding and improving intergroup and intragroup human relations which create climates of authenticity and space for self-reflection on related topics like self-alienating, false group, organizational and social identities of people in modern society. Moreover, the academic partitioning of these subdisciplines in research practice obscures the fact that intragroup dynamics commonly inherently involve intergroup dynamics.

Groups, organizations and societies are hierarchically organized and differentiated, with different subgroups occupying different statuses and roles. Also, identity representations (authentic vs. inauthentic) play a critical role

in both intragroup dynamics and intergroup relations and thus offer an integrative perspective, conceptually, and new insights into improving both intragroup processes and intergroup relations, practically. Marrying research on intergroup relations and intragroup dynamics as factors for authentic vs. inauthentic (self-alienated) psychosocial functioning of people in groups, organizations and society can therefore stimulate the development of more comprehensive theories, facilitate the adoption of new paradigms, and expand the scope of research to encompass rapid and unprecedented changes in the human relations.

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## About the Authors

**Nadya Lyubomirova Mateeva**, PhD is a Senior Research Assistant at Section of Social, Work and Organizational Psychology at Department of Psychology, Institute of Population and Human Studies - Bulgarian Academy of Science. Her scientific interests are related to the study of interpersonal, intergroup and intercultural relationships, symbols and authenticity in human communication. She is a psychodrama director, a trainer in group-dynamics.

**Plamen Loukov Dimitrov**, PhD has been the President of the Bulgarian Psychological Society since 2001. He graduated from "Medical Psychology" at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 1984. He defended his PhD thesis on Developmental Psychology at Institute of Psychology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in 1989. He is an international consultant in organizational development. Postal address: Bulgarian Psychological Society, Ap. 2, 52, Cherkovna Street, 1505 Sofia, Bulgaria.