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DOES POWER CORRUPT
OR DOES IT FACILITATE GOAL ATTAINMENT?
DOMINANCE AND FUNCTIONALIST PERSPECTIVES
IN PSYCHOLOGICAL MODELS OF POWER

This article describes how psychological models of power adopt the dominance and functionalist perspective in examining the influence of power on power holders. According to the dominance perspective, power leads to a desire to increase dominance over others and has a negative and corruptive influence on the person holding it, whereas the functionalist perspective puts emphasis on how power aids the attainment of the power holder's and the group's goals and should therefore trigger processes helpful in goal attainment. The main object of analysis is the assumptions about how power influences social perception.

Keywords: power; psychological models of power; social perception.

Introduction

In recent decades, a huge number of studies devoted to power and its effects on the functioning of power holders have been published. Among other issues, these studies concern power holders' social perception and cognitive processes (e.g., Guinote, 2007; Smith & Trope, 2006; Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee, & Galinsky, 2008; Smith, Jostmann, Galinsky, & van Dijk, 2008; Cisiak, 2013; Waytz, Chou, Magee, & Galinsky, 2015), emotional processes (e.g., Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Sassenberg, Jonas, Shah, & Brazy, 2007), and behavior (e.g., Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003; Galinsky, Magee, Gruenfeld, Whitson, & Liljen-

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quist, 2008; Guinote, 2008; DeWall, Baumeister, Mead, & Vohs, 2011). Power is indispensable for the functioning of groups, organizations, and societies. At the same time, its perception in psychology often involves an emphasis on the negative influence that power has on the power holder (e.g., Kipnis, 1972; Fiske, 1993; Maner & Mead, 2010). Power is a concept so broad that the way it is defined, the way its effects are perceived, as well as the way hypotheses are formulated and tested largely stem from scholars' conscious or unconscious assumptions concerning human nature.

Jennifer Overbeck (2010) points out that, in studies on power, authors often adopt one of two general perspectives. The first one is the dominance perspective, in which power is perceived negatively as that which corrupts and leads to a desire for dominance over others becoming the highest value for the power holder. The second one is the functionalist perspective, addressing the ways in which power influences individuals' and groups' possibilities of attaining goals. The aim of this article is to show how these perspectives are present in the main psychological approaches constituting coherent theoretical models describing the influence of power on its holders. These models were selected by the author based on the extent to which they constitute coherent proposals describing the effect of power on a person and based on how important they were as an inspiration for further research on power. The significance of these models has been pointed out by other scholars, too (e.g., Guinote & Vescio, 2010; Magee & Smith, 2013). Therefore, the present article is not meant to be a review of studies describing diverse mental processes related to holding power; nor is it meant to be an attempt at presenting the main issues addressed in research on power. These can be found in other publications. The main themes in power research are presented, for instance, by Guinote and Vescio (2010) in the introduction to the book they have edited. These authors point to three main thematic areas addressed in power research: the relationship between power and corruption, stereotypical perception of others, and goal-oriented activity. However, they neither refer to the issue of differences in the perception of power between the main theories nor assess these theories through the lens of the dominance perspective and the functionalist perspective, which the author of the present paper does. A detailed review of the results of research on the consequences of holding power can be found in Wojciszke (2011). Due to the broad scope of effects included in models of power, I will place emphasis mainly on how these models present power holders' perception of other people. This kind of comparison illustrates how the models differ in the way of looking at what purposes the mental processes associated with power primarily serve.

**Different views of power:
The functionalist perspective and the dominance perspective**

There is an important ambivalence in the perception of power. On the one hand, power is an intrinsic element of the functioning of all complex societies and organizations – power structures come into being because power is indispensable for goal attainment. Because of its great importance, people immediately create hierarchy in groups. For example, in the study conducted by Fiske and Ofshe (1970), in half of the groups of three participants in the experiment, status differentiation appeared during the first minute after the beginning of interaction between previously unacquainted people. Moreover, it is hierarchy-related information that people process particularly quickly and remember particularly well (Cummins, 1996). In a review article describing the results of their search for leader traits, Judge, Piccolo, and Kosalka (2009) write: “[I]t is fair to surmise that whenever there is social activity, a social structure develops, and one (perhaps the) defining characteristic of that structure is the emergence of a leader or leaders” (p. 855). Power thus appears to be an indispensable element of the functioning of a complex social structure. Yet, its perception is fairly often negative. Power is frequently seen as a phenomenon that inevitably results in people taking advantage of others.

Addressing the above problem, Overbeck (2010) distinguished two different perspectives on power – the functionalist perspective and the dominance perspective. The intuitive way of looking at power tends to conform to the latter, which research results confirm. For instance, Ng (1980, as cited in Overbeck, 2010) found that people described as “power seekers” were more negatively evaluated by others than individuals described as “cold.” It is worth citing the results obtained in one of the classic psychological studies devoted to formulating social evaluations – namely, the study by Salomon Asch (1946). In an experiment regarded as one of those that had the strongest impact on the face of psychology (Hock, 2003), Asch demonstrated that describing a person as “warm” or “cold” significantly influenced how positively or how negatively that person was evaluated, even if the remaining traits in his or her description were the same and predominantly positive (in Asch’s study, these were: intelligent, skillful, industrious, determined, practical, and cautious). The finding that power seekers are evaluated worse than those described as “cold” is telling.

Likewise, Depret and Fiske (1993) referred to power as a word culturally regarded as “indecent.” Also the book that was published in Poland as *Władza. Pokusy i zagrożenia* (literally: Power: Temptations and Threats; Lee-Chai & Bargh, 2009), whose cover depicts a wolf among a flock of sheep, has an original

English title that more accurately reflects the view on power presented therein, namely: *The Use and Abuse of Power. Multiple Perspectives on the Causes of Corruption* (Lee-Chai & Bargh, 2001).

The two perspectives mentioned above are also present in psychological theories describing the way in which power affects the individual's cognitive and emotional processes. Social sciences (and perhaps also other sciences) are never free from the influence of a particular way of perceiving phenomena, which is frequently also associated with their evaluation as positive or negative. A scholar who wishes to create a model describing the influence of a phenomenon so complex and manifesting itself in so many situations and contexts as power has to focus on a certain way of perceiving it. The aim of this paper is to present how the dominance perspective and the functionalist perspective on power manifest themselves in the main psychological models of power. These include the metamorphic model of power by Kipnis (1972), the model of power as control by Fiske (1993), the approach/inhibition model by Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson (2003), the situated focus theory by Ana Guinote (2010), and the social distance theory of power by Magee and Smith (2013). In further sections of the article, each of these models will be analyzed in terms of main assumptions, particularly in terms of how it addresses the consequences of power to the perception of other people. This will make it possible to show how the advantage of either the dominance perspective or the functionalist perspective can be observed in each of the theoretical models described. A brief summary of the key characteristics of the models of power described in this paper is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Characteristics of Different Theories of Power

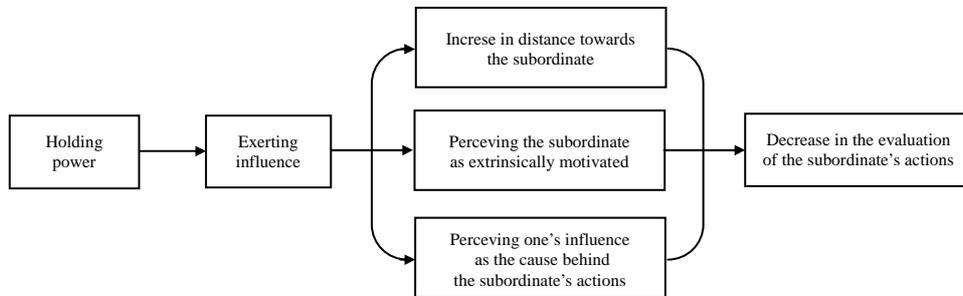
Psychological theory of power (year of emergence)	Authors	Main mechanism determining the effect of power on the power holder	Authors' perspective on power holders
Metamorphic model of power (1970s)	David Kipnis	Changes in the perception of oneself and others connected with exerting influence on one's subordinates	A dominance perspective
Theory of power as control (1993)	Susan Fiske	Not focusing on the individual traits of one's subordinates and perceiving them in accordance with stereotypes	A dominance perspective
Approach/inhibition theory of power (2003)	Dacher Keltner, Deborah Gruenfeld, Cameron Anderson	The activation of the behavioral approach system in power holders and the activation of the behavioral inhibition system in subordinates	A dominance perspective and a functionalist perspective
Situated focus theory of power (2010)	Ana Guinote	Power holders selectively focusing on the most important elements of the situation/context	A functionalist perspective
Social distance theory of power (2013)	Joe Magee, Pamela Smith	Power holders experiencing greater social distance from others and using a higher construal level	A dominance perspective and a functionalist perspective

The metamorphic model of power by Kipnis

David Kipnis's model is the first systematic attempt in psychology to answer the question of what effect power has on the individual holding it. And although the model was developed based on correlational research (Kipnis, Castell, Gergen, & Mauch, 1976), its significance is clearly visible in the work of the authors of more recent psychological approaches to power, who often refer to Kipnis and his views.

In his approach to the effect of power, David Kipnis opts for views characteristic of the dominance perspective. In his opinion, power has a negative and corrupting effect on the individual, which results from mechanisms that determine the power holder's way of perceiving himself/herself and others. According to Kipnis (Kipnis, 1972; Kipnis et al., 1976), the effect of deprecating other people and overestimating oneself stems from the fact that the power holder encounters the submissiveness of people dependent on him or her, who put his or her ideas into practice. This results in the power holder regarding his or her own ideas and views as better and more valuable. Kipnis believed that the power holder's perception of other people involved belittling them. Additionally, since psychological distance increases the possibilities of controlling individuals, the power holder may be motivated to think about them in a way that increases this distance and thereby to decrease the subordinates' perceived worth. This in turn helps to give them instructions without scruple – including instructions that may concern actions that are negatively perceived or go against the norms.

Kipnis believed that all the above mechanisms stemmed from the fact that power holders more frequently exert influence, as a result of which they perceive themselves as the cause of their subordinates' behavior. This view is illustrated by the words found in one of his articles: "It is a mistake to believe that one can begin with control as a means of helping others and yet end with personal autonomy for each individual" (Kipnis, 1987, p. 35). The model proposed by Kipnis, illustrating the effect of power on the perception of others, is presented in Figure 1.



Source: Author's compilation based on Kipnis (1972)

Figure 1. Metamorphic effect of power according to Kipnis.

In his studies, Kipnis tested the above views concerning the effect of power on the perception of others. As mentioned above, most of them were correlational, not experimental, which means it is difficult to make unambiguous statements about the causal relationships in the obtained results. Kipnis and colleagues (Kipnis et al., 1976) responded to these charges by stating that the relationship between power and the perception of oneself and others should be seen as dynamic. Holding power leads to a specific perception of other people's role as well as one's own. It causes behavioral changes in interactions, which in turn may contribute to the emergence of further inequalities between the parties involved. Thus, for Kipnis, power is corruptive, in accordance with the dominance perspective. In this model, the mechanisms involved in holding power are not seen as something that may help a group or organization attain a goal (a view characteristic of the functionalist perspective), but rather serve to increase the power holder's perceived advantage over subordinates.

Susan Fiske's model: Power as control

The second theoretical model describing the effect of power is the theory of power as control, proposed by Susan Fiske (1993). The author postulates the existence of a strong relationship between holding power and the use of stereotypes in perceiving others. This relationship functions as mutual feedback. On the one hand, power is a factor increasing the likelihood of using stereotypes; on the other hand, the use of stereotypes strengthens the individual's power in the eyes of the subordinates. In Fiske's model, power holders have a stronger tendency to see others stereotypically; this stems from three reasons:

(1) Power holders do not have to put effort into seeking information about individuals, since the very nature of the power relationship implies their lower dependence on the subordinates.

(2) Power holders may not have a possibility to judge others nonstereotypically because they are often information-overloaded and, consequently, “take shortcuts” in their thinking (Moskowitz, 2009).

(3) Power holders may choose to use stereotypes if they have a high need to dominate.

What inspired the development of Fiske’s (1993) model was cases of women discriminated against in the workplace. On their basis, the author described the conditions that promote power holders’ stereotypical judgments with regard to subordinates in organizations. The factors she described operate both on the level of the individual and on the level of interactions with others. Of the above three reasons for which power holders may exhibit a stronger tendency to stereotype, the first two are located on the level of interactions with other people. A power holder controls resources valuable to individuals dependent on him or her, which makes the power holder independent of them to a great extent. According to Fiske, this situation is a factor increasing the likelihood of stereotyping the subordinates. It can be said that, simply, a power holder can more frequently afford to cognitively function in an automatic mode. The second factor operating on the level of interactions with others is information overload connected with responsibility for numerous tasks. This factor causes the exhaustion of cognitive resources and more automatic processing of information related to subordinates. On the individual level, Fiske refers to the metaphor of “rotten apples,” meaning people who have a stronger need to dominate over others and, consequently, exhibit a stronger tendency to stereotype those they want to control.

Fiske sees power as inextricably connected with stereotypes. She draws attention to the significance of two functions of stereotypes: descriptive and prescriptive. The descriptive function of stereotypes is responsible for the fact that people have a system of beliefs concerning actions and behaviors characteristic of particular social groups. The prescriptive function, by contrast, actually imposes the way a person belonging to a given social category should behave. Both functions are linked with power and control, since stereotypes enhance the power of an individual or group over other individuals or groups in the sense that they limit the range of possible behaviors to a narrow category consistent with stereotypes. Consequently, holding power is associated with more stereotypical perception, stemming from the already mentioned three causes (information overload, no necessity of putting effort into individual judgment, and a tendency to domi-

nate). They may function separately or jointly. When it comes to individuals who are objects of stereotyping, they have a considerably limited possibility of action choice. What they are left with is the options consistent with stereotypes, which strengthens the power others have over them.

Thus, the model of power as control shows a strong relationship between power and stereotypes and postulates the mediating role of attention, which is nearly always directed more intensely upwards than in the opposite direction in social power relations. In this model, the point of view is characteristic of the dominance perspective: power results in power holders perceiving their subordinates in a way that increases distance and strengthens power. While in the previously described model, proposed by Kipnis, this results from the perception of subordinates as less autonomous, in Fiske's model the cause is stereotypical perception. It can therefore be said that these authors, regarded as forerunners of psychological research on power issues (Guinote, 2010), postulate its negative impact on power holders. In the case of the model of power as control, this way of thinking is made particularly prominent by the assumption that power can be related to stereotypes not only through automatic actions and unintentional stereotyping but also as a result of deliberate stereotyping and active seeking of confirmation for the content of the stereotype. This, again, is a theory that does not identify mechanisms of functional significance – helpful in the achievement of goals other than the maintenance or enhancement of dominance – in the way power holders perceive others.

The approach/inhibition theory of power by Keltner, Gruenfeld, and Anderson

The approach/inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al., 2003) seems to be the broadest theoretical model of power as regards the predictions made. The main pillar of this theory is the assumption concerning the different way of functioning of power holders compared to subordinates. Holding power activates the behavioral approach system, and being a subordinate results in the activation of the behavioral inhibition system. This proposal is based on two earlier lines of research.

The first of these is Gray's theory concerning the neural substrates of approach and inhibition as well as their relations to behavior and emotions – and also to disorders. Gray is the author of the biopsychological theory of personality (1970), in which he introduced the idea of two distinct systems of behavioral control: the approach system and the inhibition system. The former is activated

in a situation when information about the available rewards appears in the individual's environment, and the latter is activated when the individual encounters negative events, punishments, and boredom. People differ in terms of the sensitivity of both systems. This is an individual difference that determines how easily the approach or inhibition system is activated in a particular person. This means a person may be guided in his or her behavior to a greater degree by seeking rewards or by avoiding punishments. Gray's theory found extensive empirical support in the context of various domains of human functioning (e.g., Carver & White, 1994; Gable, Reis, & Elliot, 2000).

The second line of research that the theory proposed by Keltner and colleagues draws on is Higgins's (1989, 1997) regulatory focus theory. Like Gray, Higgins postulates the existence of two distinct motivational mechanisms regulating behavior: promotion and prevention. Higgins (1997) also assumes that there are individual differences in the prevalence of one of the mechanisms – in other words, that people are characterized by chronic regulatory orientation. When pursuing a goal, individuals guided by the promotion mechanism follow their aspirations – namely, what they can achieve or gain. By contrast, individuals guided by the prevention mechanism focus on avoiding the unpleasant consequences of not achieving the goal and are concentrated on thinking about their obligations. Thus, the two theoretical proposals that served as the basis for reflection to Keltner and colleagues show that behavior can be motivated by approach or inhibition. According to the proposal in question, power holders function in an environment in which there are many rewards and easily available positive states, while subordinates are often in a situation in which it is important to avoid punishments and negative states.

The authors of the approach/inhibition theory of formulated twelve suggestions concerning the consequences of power, relating to four areas of functioning. These suggestions are specified in the form of 24 hypotheses concerning the relations described. Their detailed description goes beyond the scope of the present article, but it is worth citing two of them as examples to support the thesis that the approach/inhibition theory combines elements of the dominance perspective and the functionalist perspective on power.

Hypothesis 10. Power holders see others through the lens of how useful they are for the achievement of goals.

Hypothesis 16. Analyzing the causes of outcomes achieved together with others, power holders perform attributions, seeing themselves as the main authors of the achieved outcomes, whereas subordinates point to others as the main authors.

This way of understanding how power holders perceive others makes the approach/inhibition theory a theoretical model combining elements of both the dominance perspective and the functionalist perspective. On the one hand, power holders perceive others in a way that is less valid, in a manner that is guided by automatic processes, using stereotypes and heuristics, and egocentrically see themselves as the main agents behind the outcomes achieved together with others. These activities can be interpreted as aimed at gaining dominance – increasing the perceived and/or actual advantage over others. On the other hand, in the approach/inhibition theory there is a hypothesis that relates to perceiving others through the lens of how useful they can be in the achievement of the power holder's goal. This element may be interpreted as combining the dominance perspective and the functionalist perspective. On the one hand, the behavioral approach system, which is considered to be activated to a greater extent in power holders, is responsible for seeking rewards and pleasures, which can be seen as associated with the dominance perspective. Taking advantage of other people to gain pleasure for oneself is an abuse of power. On the other hand, the behavioral approach system is responsible for the achievement of goals and plans (DePue, 1995). The fact that a high-power individual pays attention to his or her subordinates' characteristics relevant to the achievement of goals can be seen as consistent with the functionalist perspective. This may determine the choice of appropriate people with a view to achieving the desired result by the power holder's group.

At this point, it is worth citing the results of the research conducted by Cisiak (2013), which the author interpreted as consistent with the hypotheses presented in the approach/inhibition theory. In her research devoted to the relationship between power and the perception of others, the author tested how holding power affected the tendency to use one of the two basic dimensions in terms of which people judge other actors functioning in the social world: community and agency (Cisiak & Wojciszke, 2008). Cisiak (2013) found that power holders had a higher tendency to perceive others in terms of agency. Individuals in whom a sense of power had been induced paid attention to agency-related characteristics in their subordinates when they were given the role of a manager waiting for a new member of the team they were in charge of. They attached greater value to characteristics attesting to agency. Power also determined the interpretation of the behavior of strangers – their behavior was judged to a greater extent in terms of agency. Perceiving others in terms of the extent to which they can contribute to the achievement of goals, power holders pay the largest amount of attention to agency-related information, since it is agency that has the greatest impact on

a particular person's ability to accomplish the tasks he or she is entrusted with (Wojciszke & Abele, 2008).

Admittedly, it is possible to imagine a situation in which the power holder's only goal is to maintain or increase his or her dominance over others. In that case, perceiving other people through the lens of their usefulness for the accomplishment of this goal could be seen as confirming the validity of the dominance perspective on power. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the approach/inhibition model contains an element of the functionalist perspective, which is present neither in the metamorphic model nor in the model of power as control.

The situated focus theory of power by Ana Guinote

Chronologically the fourth theory is the situated focus theory of power, proposed by Ana Guinote (2007, 2010), which, to the greatest extent, takes the functionalist perspective on power. The essence and the basic assumption of this model is the idea of power as an element that makes it possible for the individual to achieve goals. This possibility is associated with selective focus of attention. Guinote's (2010) original idea was that power holders tend to focus on the main aspects of a situation and on the possibilities it offers while ignoring less important aspects. Consequently, power holders' behavior is more diverse and more changeable across situational contexts: high-power individuals use a broad repertoire of behaviors. For instance, cognitive processes may be automatic as well as controlled. This depends on the context: the objects that become the focus of attention are those that are more important from the point of view of goal achievement possibilities.

The main aspects of the situation that power holders will focus on and according to which they will regulate their cognition and behavior can either stem from the situation itself and its aspects (bottom-up processes) or be caused by top-down processes – i.e., dependent on the individual's intentional activities. Therefore, Guinote uses the term “context” to refer both to external aspects and to those produced by the individual. These aspects will be the objects of power holders' attention and will become the figure for them. Guinote mentions the following (2010, pp. 149–150):

- stimuli, situation-related signals – for instance, possibilities, distinctive characteristics, effects of priming;
- expectations, such as stereotypes, which lead to specific ways of processing information;

- information connected with the states experienced, such as metacognitive sense of familiarity, ease of processing, or the physiological reactions that accompany information processing;
- frequently or recently activated cognitive schemas, which are therefore highly accessible;
- individual's goals, resulting in a higher tendency to discern and respond to goal-relevant stimuli;
- chronically accessible cognitive schemas.

At a given moment, the individual's cognition may involve one or more of the above factors. Cognition may take the automatic or controlled path, depending on which one is more appropriate in a particular context. The diversity and changeability of cognitive processes across contexts will occur according to the current circumstances only in power holders, who can afford to focus on the most important factors and ignore the remaining, insignificant stimuli. Subordinates, by contrast, will exhibit lower diversity and usually process information in a more controlled way.

This theory therefore puts emphasis on the functional significance of power-related mechanisms. They are perceived not in terms of the dominance perspective but through the lens of individual's goal achievement. Again, it should be noted that the goal may be, to the greatest extent, to gain and maintain power; nevertheless, Guinote's theory shows how having the possibilities of exerting influence leads to greater effectiveness – that is, in what way it can be functional. According to Guinote (2010), it is also of functional significance what mechanisms power activates in the process of perceiving others. For instance, she proposes a view of the factors that may facilitate and limit the phenomenon of stereotyping that is different from Fiske's view. In her opinion, the use of stereotypes will be determined by the degree to which the situation itself activates stereotypes or by the degree to which they correspond to its interpretation. This perspective makes it possible to explain the result obtained by Overbeck and Park (2001), indicating that power holders can also look for and find information about other people's individual characteristics to a greater extent than subordinates if this is important from the point of view of the goals pursued. According to Guinote, the relationship between power and stereotyping will be moderated by the degree to which looking for information consistent with stereotypes is appropriate in the context of a given situation and/or significant to the achievement of the activated goals.

Thus, just like in the effects of power postulated by Keltner and colleagues (2003), according to Guinote's approach power holders perceive others through

the lens of what is important for goal achievement. According to Guinote, this effect is associated with information processing in the context of its significance for the plans being implemented. Unlike the authors of the approach/inhibition theory, she does not consider this kind of behavior of power holders as rooted in perceiving the surrounding social reality as free from threats and full of rewards and opportunities, but adopts the functionalist perspective to a greater degree. In this perspective, the power holder is not someone who uses his or her privileged position to take advantage of others but someone who pursues goals. The power holder's way of thinking is not simply more heuristic because he or she can afford it due to the lack of actual or discernible threats, but it is more appropriate for the situation. In the context of this theory, situational appropriateness determines the possibility of achieving the goal. For example, in accordance with this kind of thinking, power holders put goal achievement above their preferences regarding others and, as Wojciszke (2011) observes, are ready to form a coalition with people whose worldview strongly diverges from their own if this enables goal achievement.

The situated focus theory is a model postulating assumptions consistent with the functionalist perspective. Power-related mechanisms are helpful in goal pursuit. They do not always make an individual more effective, but they are always associated with activity aimed at the accomplishment of specific plans. For example, the series of studies conducted by Weick and Guinote (2010), devoted to the relationship between power and the planning fallacy (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979) revealed that power holders made more optimistic plans than their subordinates. This means that the plans made by them are less feasible, since the time necessary to implement them is not properly estimated. This mechanism should not be regarded as one that makes an individual more effective. What it stems from is power holders' strong focus on goals. Focus on plans leads to ignoring minor and secondary activities and the obstacles that may extend the process of their implementation. Thus, once again, power seen in this way has functional significance, even if the mechanism described is not helpful in achieving the goal on time.

The social distance theory of power by Magee and Smith

The last of the main models of power is the social distance theory of power, described in the 2013 article by Joe Magee and Pamela Smith. In this model, power and the results of holding power for the individual are linked with asym-

metrical social distance and with the higher-level construal that stems from it (Smith & Trope, 2006; Trope & Liberman, 2010). According to this model, the results of power for the individual can be considered both from the dominance perspective and from the functionalist perspective. What is more, according to its authors, the mechanisms that lead to the corruption of the power holder and those that allow the power holder to effectively achieve his or her goals have the same source: the high distance towards the subordinates that they perceive.

Magee and Smith argue that asymmetry in these relations, which is present in a situation when one individual has greater power than another, leads to the emergence of social distance. The authors refer to studies devoted to close relationships and use their results to describe the mechanisms occurring in power relations. In their opinion, the fact that the power holder is less dependent than the subordinate results in the former feeling no need to affiliate with the latter. Subordinates, by contrast, are more strongly motivated to affiliate with the person they are subordinate to; they are also more aware of their different perspective. This results in distance, perceived by both sides, which is asymmetrical in the sense that it is perceived as greater by power holders.

Magee and Smith link the consequences of power partly with the feeling of greater social distance and partly with the fact that distance is associated with the use of higher-level construal. It should be noted that the direct effects of power holders feeling more socially distanced, pointed out in the social distance theory of power, can be interpreted in accordance with the dominance perspective, while those that stem from the use of higher-level construal seem to be largely functional. Table 2 presents the effects of power proposed by Magee and Smith.

According to Magee and Smith, high-power individuals do not show interest in the views, attitudes, and states of their subordinates. It is in the light of this thesis that the authors interpret the results obtained by Galinsky and colleagues (2006), who found that high-power individuals had a low tendency to adopt other people's perspective. In the social distance theory of power, lack of interest in other people's views is not a functional mechanism, which means it does not serve to protect the goal in a situation when the analysis of other people's points of view could result in the abandonment of goal pursuit or decrease confidence about the goal being right. The authors see it as an unmotivated effect connected with the low tendency to worry about individuals who one feels socially distanced from. It is worth noting that placing emphasis on how distance from other people affects power holders can be interpreted as a return to the ideas proposed by Kipnis (1972) and Fiske (1993). The author of the metamorphic model of

power and the author of the model of power as control also assume that distancing oneself from one's subordinates is one of the main negative effects of power.

Table 2
Effects of Power According to the Social Distance Theory of Power

Effects of power stemming from greater perceived social distance	Effects of power stemming from the use of higher-level construal
Higher tendency to use contrast in social comparisons	Better identification and selection of goals
Lower susceptibility to social influence	Stronger focus on what is to be achieved and weaker focus on method
Lower interest in other people's mental states	Higher subjective confidence regarding activities
Lower sensitivity to other people's needs	Higher consistency of actions with declared values
Lower accuracy in interpreting other people's mental states	Stronger focus on the goal
Lower tendency to use projection	Better self-regulation
Higher tendency to experience emotions connected with distance towards others, combined with lower tendency to experience emotions involved in affiliating	Higher tendency to rely on stereotypes if they are mentally available and relevant to a given situation, or higher tendency to infer individuals' traits if stereotypes are unavailable or irrelevant
	Higher tendency to judge others instrumentally in terms of their usefulness for the goal one is pursuing

Source: Author's compilation based on Magee and Smith (2013, p. 161).

When discussing the consequences of distance, the authors of the social distance theory of power also draw on the construal level theory, proposed by Nira Liberman and Yaacov Trope (2010). According to this theory, information processing may take place on various construal levels. Higher levels are associated with a focus on the most important, central characteristics of an object, action, or situation, while lower levels are associated with a focus on secondary characteristics and with a lower level of abstraction. Various kinds of distance (e.g., temporal, physical, or social) are associated in a similar way with the use of high-level construal. Consequently, social distance – being an effect of the asymmetrical power relation – results in power holders using higher-level construals. It seems that, to a great extent, the mental processes stemming from this fact can be interpreted in accordance with the functionalist perspective. This is because they are largely connected with goal-oriented activities and task performance.

Magee and Smith believe, for instance, that greater ease in the identification and choice of goals appropriate in a given situation, already found by Guinote (2008), stems from the fact that goal is a more central, primary characteristic of the situation. In their opinion, high-power individuals exhibit greater flexibility in the choice of means for the achievement of goals, as well as higher self-regulatory ability, focusing on what they want to achieve rather than on the manner in which to do it. All these mechanisms can be linked with the functionalist perspective on power. Judgment regarding other people is also subordinated to the goal. In the light of the model in question, high-power individuals have a tendency to judge others through the lens of their usefulness for its achievement. This mechanism has already been described in the sections of the present article devoted to the approach/inhibition theory of power and Ana Guinote's situated focus theory. It is certainly worth stressing that, according to Magee and Smith, this mechanism is motivated by the desire to achieve the goal and is helpful in this activity. The goal itself may be good or evil from the ethical point of view, but the perception of others through the lens of how they can contribute to the achievement of the goal should be seen as a functional action.

The authors of the social distance theory of power also address an issue that, since the emergence of the model of power as control (Fiske, 1993), has been inextricably linked with power research – namely, the use of stereotypes. The authors believe that a high tendency to use them will appear when they are mentally accessible and when they are of significance to the goals that the individual wants to attain in a particular situation. If, by contrast, individual traits are more relevant in a given situation, it is in their terms that other people will be perceived and judged by power holders. At the same time, these traits will also be construed at a high level of generality. This proposal is consistent with Ana Guinote's (2010) ideas. Thus, in this theory, using stereotypes also tends to be interpreted in terms of their functional significance. Magee and Smith admit that the strong tendency to produce a negative picture of others may occur in high-power individuals when their goal is to strengthen power or when they have a strong need to dominate. The latter need was also mentioned by Fiske (1993) as one of the factors behind the fact that power holders may be motivated to perceive their subordinates negatively. In Fiske's theory, stereotypical perception of others is seen as a necessary and nearly always corrupting effect of holding power, while in the social distance theory of power it appears when stereotypes are relevant to the judgment of others in a particular situation. This means it is not without exceptions and performs a function linked with goal achievement.

To sum up the theory proposed by Magee and Smith, it is worth stressing, again, that it combines the dominance perspective with the functionalist perspective on power. An interesting aspect of this theoretical proposal is the perception of the mechanisms present in both perspectives as stemming from a common source: social distance, asymmetrically perceived by power holders and their subordinates. As a result, the corrupting effects of power and those that are functional seem to be inseparable from each other.

Conclusion

Scholars' views of human nature expressed in the proposed and developed theories describing the mechanisms governing mental processes and behavior are of enormous importance for the development of psychology. At the most general level, they function as psychological theories of the human being – as sets of ideas and hypotheses concerning what humans are like and what basic mechanisms there are in their behavior (Koziellecki, 1998). The assumptions of these theories are an attempt to answer all the questions of psychology (Łukaszewski, 2003). Attempts to formulate a consistent theoretical model describing the influence of a particular social phenomenon on people's functioning also involve formulating hypotheses explicitly or implicitly making certain assumptions concerning human nature. The aim of the present article was to show how these assumptions can be discerned in psychological models describing the influence of power on power holders, with special emphasis on the mechanisms involved in their perception of other people. The metamorphic model of power and the model of power as control place emphasis on the perception of power from a dominance perspective, focusing on mechanisms associated with the need to dominate, the need to hold power for its own sake, and negative judgment of others, leading to the corruption of the power holder. Later theories, by contrast, tend to adopt a functionalist perspective, looking also for mechanisms facilitating goal achievement in power holders. Two of them (the approach/inhibition model and the social distance model of power) link power with the dominance perspective, and one (the situated focus theory) focuses to a considerable degree on the functional mechanisms involved in holding power.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that scientific theories and hypotheses are expressions of their authors' way of thinking, which depends, among other things, on the social reality. What we are witnessing nowadays is, on the one hand, growing inequalities in the level of income and wealth among society members (Piketty, 2015), and on the other – a growing egalitarianism in the pos-

sibilities of expressing opinions as well as exerting influence by means of modern media. The dynamically changing reality will certainly have an impact on the shape of further models developed in an attempt to consistently describe the multifaceted and fascinating influence of power on human mental processes and behavior.

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