

Section #9

Social identity 🤝 Status

April 7, 2023

The New York Times

Outsiders Solve Problems. Just Ask Goats.

In a study of how animals respond to the unknown, goats and camels, especially those with a lower social position, proved most capable of liberating a snack from a cup.

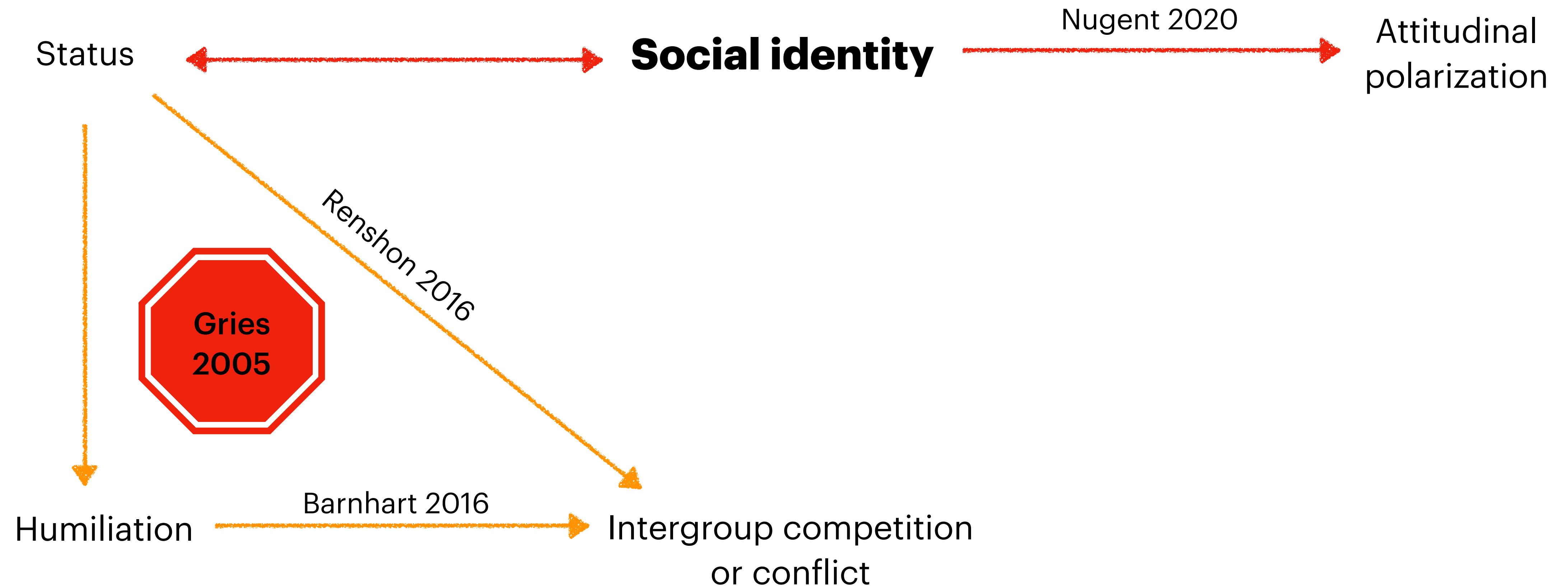
By Veronique Greenwood

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What was linked to success, as well as to willingness, was an individual animal's social position. Close observation of the animals allowed the researchers to construct hierarchies of their social groups. They found that animals that were outcasts or low in the pecking order had less fear of new objects, more willingness to explore them and a greater chance of getting the prize.



The readings



The Cases of Tunisia & Egypt

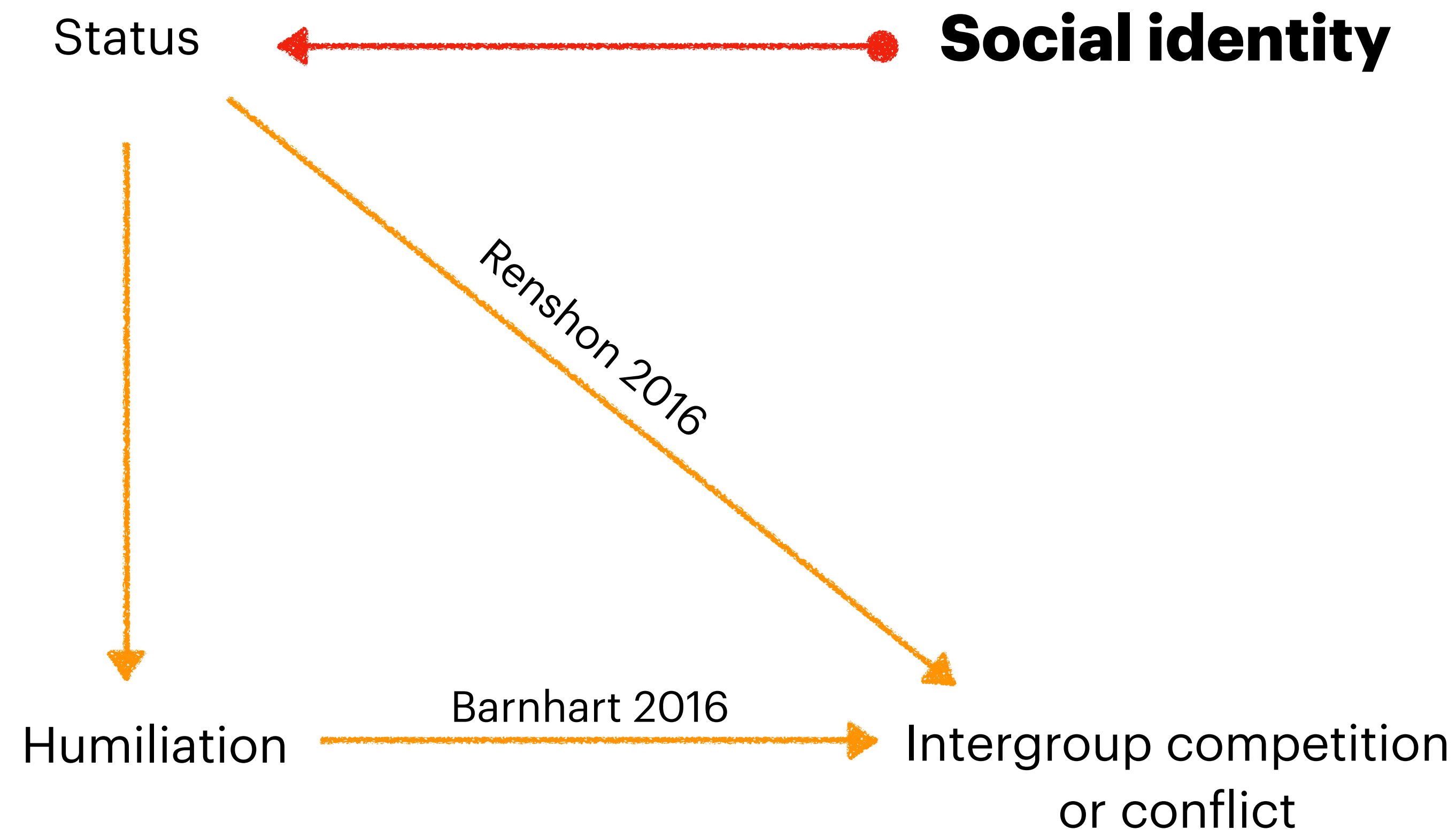
Repression & Polarization (Nugent 2020)

- Context: Arab Spring (2010-12)
 - Early uprisings in Tunisia & Egypt
 - Tunisia & Egypt deposed their autocrats & empowered former opposition
 - Tunisia democratized, while Egypt autocratized
- Puzzle: Why did the Arab Spring result in such different outcomes for Tunisia & Egypt?



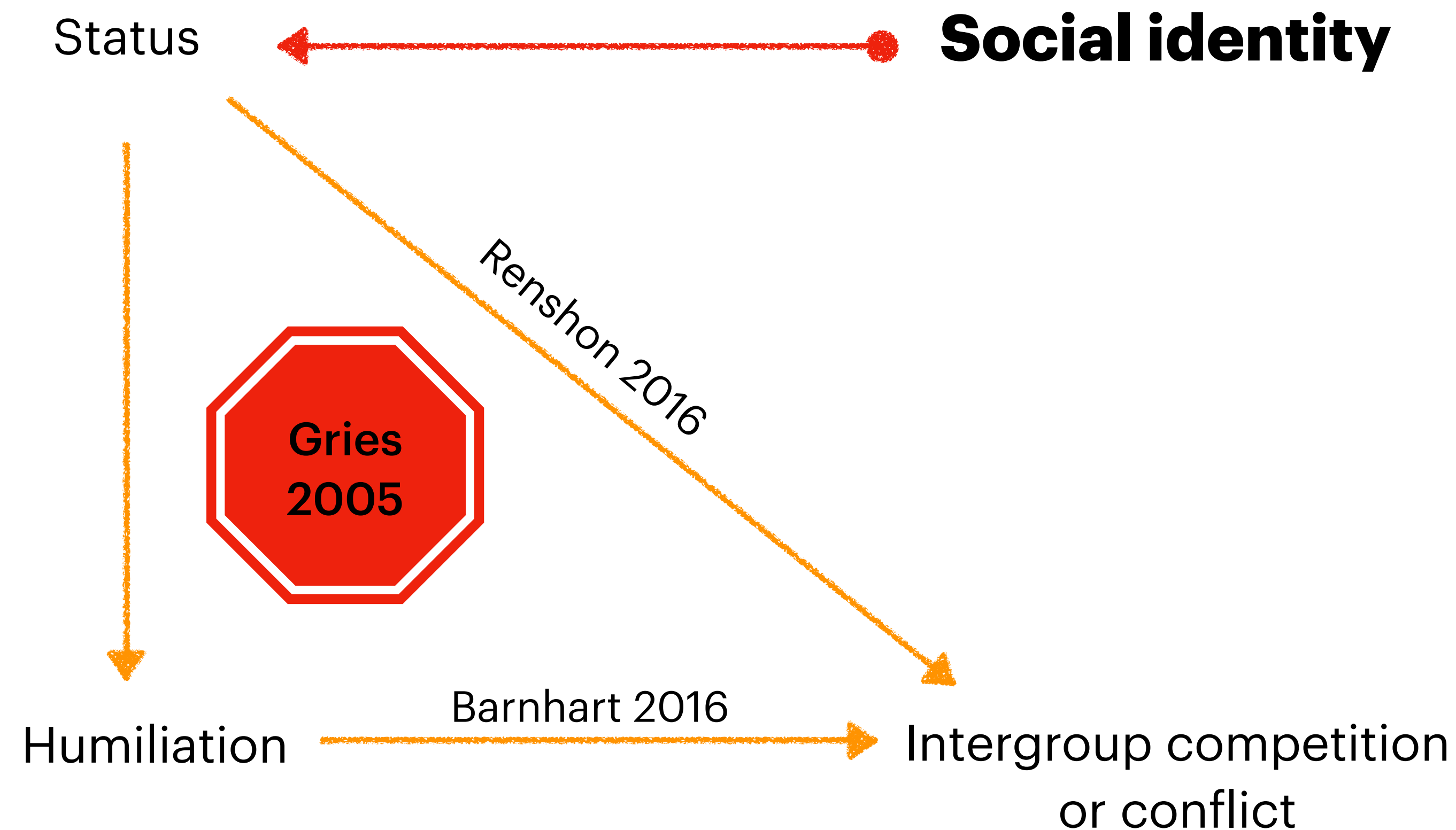
1. Why & how are identities important in this case?
2. What role does repression play?
3. Do you need the corresponding experiment to be persuaded by the argument?

The readings



1. Why do states want status?
2. What triggers status dissatisfaction?
3. How do states seek status?

The readings



Ways out of competition-inducing comparisons:

- Exit from social identity
- Changing dimension of comparison
- Changing meaning of the value being compared
- Changing the target of comparison
- Self-deception