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United States Assistance Policy in Africa

Exceptional Power

Shai A. Divon and Bill Derman



In this important contribution to development and foreign policy literature, the authors use Africa as a lens to illuminate the ways in which development assistance has served as an instrument of American power, promoting U.S. geopolitical and economic interests from the Cold War to the war on terror.

Elizabeth Schmidt, *Loyola University Maryland, USA*

A thought-provoking excavation of the official discourse of international development. By regarding aid as a tool of power, Divon and Derman construct a critical narrative that contrasts the needs of ordinary Africans with interests embedded in US foreign policy over the years. Worth reading.

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This book studies American policies towards Africa from WWII to the present day. It does so by employing an understanding of power transcending a simplistic interpretation. As policies empowered some groups and changed local dynamics, aid was an extremely important tool in wielding influence. A great book.

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This book is an always readable and provocative deconstruction of American foreign aid, and the interests and ideologies that have long supported it.

Nicolas van de Walle, *Maxwell M. Upson Professor of Government, Cornell University, USA*

Analyzing the exercise of American power in Africa through U.S. development co-operation, this book illuminates the interests and ideologies behind it. Showing how U.S. administrations (1946-2016) have viewed as well as framed the African issues that confronted them, this book is recommended to all those studying great power politics and development theory.

Morten Bøås, *Research Professor, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) Oslo, Norway*



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United States Assistance Policy in Africa

From the end of WWII to the end of the Obama administration, development assistance in Africa has been viewed as an essential instrument of US foreign policy. Although many would characterise it as a form of aid aimed at enhancing the lives of those in the developing world, it can also be viewed as a tool for advancing US national security objectives.

Using a theoretical framework based on 'power', *United States Assistance Policy in Africa* examines the American assistance discourse, its formation and justification in relation to historical contexts, and its operation on the African continent. Beginning with a problematisation of development as a concept that structures hierarchies between groups of people, the book highlights how cultural, political and economic conceptions influence the American assistance discourse. The book further highlights the relationship between American national security and its assistance policy in Africa during the Cold War, the post-Cold War, and the post-9/11 contexts.

This book will be of great interest to students and scholars of Development Studies, Political Science and International Relations with particular interest in US foreign policy, USAID and/or African Studies.

Shai A. Divon is a post-doctoral fellow at the Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Faculty of Landscape and Society at the Norwegian University of the Life Sciences, Norway. He has extensive military and security experience and has worked and carried out research in Africa, Asia, the United States and the Middle East.

Bill Derman is Professor Emeritus at the Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Faculty of Landscape and Society at the Norwegian University of the Life Sciences, Norway and also at the Department of Anthropology, Michigan State University, USA.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ACOTA	African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program
ACRI	African Crisis Response Initiative
AFRICOM	African Command
AGOA	Africa Growth and Opportunity Act
AMISOM	African Union Mission to Somalia
ANC	African National Congress
AQIM	Al-Qaida in the Maghreb
ATT	Amadou Toumani Touré
BNC	Binational Commission
CAR	Central African Republic
CENTCOM	Central Command
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CJTF-HOA	Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
DFA	Director of Foreign Assistance
DoD	Department of Defense
DoS	Department of State
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EACTI	East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative
EARSI	East Africa Regional Strategic Initiative
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EUCOM	European Command
FNLA	National Liberation Front of Angola
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front
FROLINAT	Muslim National Liberation Front of Chad
FTF	Feed the Future
FY	Fiscal Year
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCCI	Global Climate Change Initiative

GHI	Global Health Initiative
GIA	Armed Islamic Group (translation)
GPOI	Global Peace Operations Initiative
GSPC	Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (translation)
GUNT	Transitional Government of National Unity
GWOT	Global War on Terror
ICG	International Crisis Group
ICU	Islamic Court Union
IDCA	International Development Coordination Administration
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INPFL	Independent National Front of Liberia
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MNLA	National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad
MPLA	People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MUJAO	Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCP	National Congress Party
NEPDG	National Energy Policy Development Group
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
NIC	National Intelligence Council
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NPFL	National Patriotic Liberation Front of Liberia
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National Security Strategy of the United States
NSSM	National Security Study Memoranda
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PACOM	Pacific Command
PDD	Presidential Policy Directives on Development
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
PSI	Pan Sahel Initiative
QDDR	Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance
RPF	Rwandan People's Front
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSTRO	Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations
SWAPO	South-West African People's Organization

TFG	Transnational Federal Government
TSCTI	Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Initiative
TSCTP	Trans-Sahara Counter Terrorism Partnership
UN	United Nations
UNAMIR	United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
UNITAF	Unified Task Force (Operation Restore Hope)
US	United States (of America)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIA	United States Information Agency
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African Peoples' Union



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1 Introduction

Power rules

Great expectations

Following the end of World War II (WWII) the United States emerged as the most powerful nation in the World. Although threatened by communism there was a sense of optimism expressed by President Truman as he promised that the US would raise the living standards of the underdeveloped nations and that '[f]or the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people' (Truman, 1949). This would be accomplished by sharing technology and by programmes 'based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing' (Truman, 1949). This was Truman's optimistic vision and it was shared by many in Europe after the war.

In general, the US presents itself as the leader of the free world. Since the end of WWII, it has championed democracy, a liberal global economy, modernisation and systems of rules and laws manifesting through institutions such as the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations. To this end, the US tried to use its power and influence in the world to create what it views as the best political, social and economic system that leads to individual freedoms and prosperity.

Development policies are often delinked or separated from more general foreign policy concerns (Easterly, 2008; Birdsall and Leo, 2015). When the focus is on foreign policy, development is usually backgrounded, a sub-plot, or ignored altogether in favour of high-politics, wars and such. Meanwhile, development theories might use individual case studies to illustrate the rights, wrongs, successes or failures, of a particular policy, but lack a longer perspective, and often leave interests in the background. Development theory aims at a timeless approach, but presents a-historical theories of what works or not, but often omits contextual historical, or even systemic factors.

In this book, we seek to reconnect them in order to explore how American 'interests' are framed. We consider how within a dynamic and changing world certain views in the US, or truths, have remained relatively

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stable. We do this by examining aid or development assistance in the context of the exercise of US power.

Aid or development assistance has been a key component of US policy since President Truman. In this book, we ask if there have been significant changes in the formulation of US aid policies? How, over the past seven decades, has development assistance been articulated within all the presidential administrations? How have these administrations answered the question: what is the purpose of development assistance? Is it to help transform under-development into developed nations? Is it to help people and states in conditions of 'under-development' to reach an end state labelled 'developed'? Is development assistance about helping those most in need to 'help themselves' or to give them the tools to be placed on a path to development? If not, what are the other embedded agendas, objectives and purposes behind the development assistance policies of powerful states?

Historically, development assistance has a particularly important place in global politics. During the colonial period, colonial administrations sought, through domination and hierarchy, to remake their colonies through processes they framed as assistance to develop. Development became a term through which colonial subjects were seen as inferior and inefficient. Following decolonisation, formal government control seems to have been replaced by informal influence explained as development assistance. This process has been uneven, sometimes peaceful, sometimes violent, but based on the idea that the world was divided into 'rich', 'civilised' and 'modern' nations (often the colonisers), and 'poor', 'barbaric' and 'traditional' nations (often the former colonised). As the colonial world came to an end the world was divided into three – the First (the West), the Second (the East) and the Third World. These terms have fallen out of fashion, and now several terms are used to distinguish powerful (developed) nations from weaker (developing or underdeveloped nations). These terms are usually based on economic criteria with the World Bank's categories based on income the most used.¹ In the remaking of the world, the US has played a particularly influential role. Because the US has seen itself as the leader of the free world and involved in development assistance in many countries,² we thought it apt to examine the sources and utilisation of power through assistance policies by the American state post-WWII. The kind of enquiry we propose could be done for any of the major nations providing development assistance. Nevertheless, the influence of the US as a global superpower is of particular interest for this purpose.

This is not intended to be a book examining foreign policy from an international relations perspective. We do not attempt, either, to examine in much detail the influence of domestic power relations in the US on the assistance policy of the US, debates around foreign assistance mechanisms, nor the mechanics of how the US delivers assistance. From an African perspective, this book is not meant to be a comprehensive historical

volume on the sub-continent post-WWII. What we do attempt to do is to enter the long-standing debates around the purposes of development assistance explaining how drawing upon various conceptions of power illuminate alternative reading of materials. We do this to help unmask the tensions between the value-based conceptions of granting assistance, and the hierarchy, interests and ideologies that guide assistance policies and practices. Through this book we narrate the position of sub-Saharan Africa in US global priorities. We provide an account of how each president has viewed Africa, the major African issues they faced, how they dealt with them and the place of development assistance in their policies. To do this we look at the hierarchies, interests and ideologies that guide assistance policies over time. We link how political, security, economic and military interests intersect with development assistance from 1945–2016. In order to do this, we explain in this chapter how we view power in the social sciences, and how development assistance can thus be usefully understood as an instrument of power.

While the US is often characterised as the most powerful nation in the world, power in the social sciences is an elusive concept. Different emphases and understandings based on various theoretical perspectives can, in turn, lead to new interpretations. To explore how we might gain new interpretations of development assistance as a tool of power, we begin this book with a discussion on the importance of power in social science thinking, and then in turn, how power can be mobilised and exercised in and among states.

The British philosopher Bertrand Russell once remarked that the most fundamental concept in social science is power (Russell, 1938: 10). Power, he asserted, is like energy: '[it] has many forms, such as wealth, armaments, civil authority, [and] influence on opinion' (Russell, 1938: 10–11). Conceptualising power as energy has important metaphorical values. We can imagine power as located in different places at the same time; we can imagine power flowing from different points of origin to other points, losing influence, gaining influence, modifying parameters or forms depending on a multitude of variables. We can visualise different types of power, resulting in and leading to different effects, in isolation or in relation to a multitude of present and past variables; we can even try to visualise the future effects of power through various forms of analysis. But as Nye remarks (2011: 3), power in the social sciences and subsequently the effects of power on social settings is unlike energy in physics and cannot be captured in a formula where measured components are placed in a relationship that produces an equally measurable result.

As discussed thoroughly by Lukes (2005: 61–62), the meaning of power in a qualitative sense is elusive. The use of the word *power* in spoken and written form leads to various conceptions of its meaning (Clegg and Haugaard, 2009). The issue becomes even more complex when attempting to translate idioms across different languages for different users depending

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on their political agenda, disciplinary background and context of use, leading to various disagreements on conceptualisations and understandings of power.

As outlined below, in this book we propose to draw on the analyses offered in different theoretical traditions to better frame and understand the ways in which national security interests and idealism interact with the development assistance discourses and policies of the US. We will emphasise but not be limited to Michel Foucault, Steven Lukes, James Scott and others to guide how and why US development assistance policy took the shape it did. We will clarify why and how US development policy was never able to escape from the particular concept of American exceptionalism and subsequently how the US views and understands its role which guides the linkage between national security, foreign policy and development assistance.

Foucault – power and modes of thinking

Of Foucault's many influential concepts, he is perhaps best known for his reflections and analyses of power. He also altered his own position during his academic career, which added more complexity and depth to his interpretations of social realities, highlighted weaknesses and shortcomings of some of his methodologies, and offered potential solutions and improvements. To understand Foucault's work, one must rely primarily on lectures and interviews conducted with him where he contemplates the meaning of his research, as well as expands and clarifies his thinking and conceptualisations. A rich and large scholarship of Foucault's work has emerged in the years following his death and has led to methods, approaches and theoretical frameworks. We, of course, are most interested in his uses and understandings of the concepts of power and governmentality. We have found his emphasis upon power, discourse and knowledge to render more legible elements of US development assistance.

During the course of two lectures held in January 1976, Foucault (Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 78–109) attempted to identify conceptual coherence in several of his works. He spoke of the 'local character of criticism' and explained that it indicates:

[A]n autonomous, non-centralised kind of theoretical production, one that is to say whose validity is not dependent on the approval of established regimes of thought.

(Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 81)

What Foucault underscores is that knowledge is often restricted by a process where 'functionalist coherence or formal systematisation' leads to the production of very specific accounts of reality that become standards of rational thought and are considered as truths (Davidson, 1986: 225).

Foucault suggests that a close critical examination of historical contents can unravel conflict and struggle subjugated by the structural standards under which knowledge was produced. The production of specific truths over prolonged periods of time leads to systematic stratification which results in an elaborate social construction. Stratification in this sense is a slow process where a multitude of individuals, collectives and the unfolding of historical events interact with pre-existing knowledge and truths to produce an accumulation of experiences that lead to societal axioms. In this sense, stratification is a social construction where key narratives are produced, reproduced and reinforced, standardising the shape and validity of knowledge and defining truth as follows:

‘Truth’ is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operations of statements.

‘Truth’ is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it. A ‘régime’ of truth.

(Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 133)

Foucault was studying the history of sciences, exploring it as a mechanism of power that shapes notions of what is defined as acceptable knowledge. Based on these premises, the discourses that appear in a society will grant precedence to certain types of knowledge which are based on, and/or incorporate, the basic truths of a society. This is a description of a circular mechanism through which knowledge is shaped by truth, which then leads to the production of knowledge that incorporates these truths, thus reinforcing them and eventually leading to their reproduction and deeper infusion in society:

[B]asically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterise and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented, without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth.

(Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 93)

In a purely theoretical sense, Foucault saw a dynamic mechanism that leads to social constructions. Imagine a mound consisting of several stratified layers where each stratum has some kind of relationship to the previous one. This stratification is generated by three elements that

enhance each other in a circular relationship: power, knowledge and discourses. Together they produce the ideological foundations of a society: the regime of truth. The longer this mechanism works uninterrupted, the more complex and elaborate the stratification it produces.

History teaches us that paradigms shift as Foucault elaborates in his lectures of 1978.³ But the main point here is that paradigms which are the ideological foundations of a society can be identified, deconstructed and studied by the analysis of discourses. From discourses we can tease out what can be considered and accepted as knowledge, and to a certain extent we can explain how or what leads to the establishment of societal paradigms or why they shift. In essence, this is the conceptual foundation for a methodological framework that enables us to understand the building blocks of social constructions through the analysis of specific discourses.

Hoy (1986: 124–128) notes that Foucault's approach to the concept of power avoids the discussion between those who assign power to agents (such as Lukes) and those who assign it to structures (such as Marx). Instead, Foucault focuses on the analytics of power by 'mapping the network of power relations that have evolved historically' (Hoy, 1986: 128) as a method of explaining society as follows:

Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation. In other words, individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application.

(Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 98)

Using these lenses, Foucault invokes the term 'subjugated knowledge', which is knowledge that has been produced within the frame that defines and legitimises basic truths of a society. Exploring historical content critically with the aim of understanding, uncovering and challenging the functionalist and systematised impositions that frame narratives, will facilitate the exposure of subjugated elements, the 'insurrection of subjugated knowledges' as Foucault terms it (Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 81). In other words, to expose these hidden elements, one must allow for the challenging of the power that dominates and subjugates rationality and truth in a society (Davidson, 1986: 225).

Foucault, as pointed out by Lemke, introduces the notion of a distinction between power and domination. Foucault wrote that people play

strategic power games – games that are about determining the conduct of others. These power games are different than states of domination. Indeed, for some, participation in power games is voluntary and associated with various forms of pleasure. Therefore, in specific social settings, subjugation to power and even domination is associated with positive outcomes.

Nichols (2010) in his survey of the influence of Foucault upon postcolonial studies noted that power reorganises peoples' identities and also can re-organise or re-configure peoples' subjectivities. Domination in this light (and which we consider below) becomes a particular type of power relationship. It is in Lemke's words 'stable and hierarchical, fixed and difficult to reverse' (Lemke, 2002: 53).

To superimpose his insights on more contextual examples, Foucault used the term *governmentality* to describe power and privileged systematic ways of thinking about roles, values, ethics, ideas and governance. He also contended that 'governmentality' was born from historical changes in the West (Foucault *et al.*, 2007: 108–110). Governmentality is, in this perspective: 'the rationalisation of governmental practice in the exercise of political sovereignty' (Foucault *et al.*, 2004: 3, quoted by Lemke, 2007: 44). Foucault tried to embed into one term the conditions in which governance of a sovereign creates the rationality that produces, justifies and enforces the discourses that legitimise the sovereign's governance. It serves to grant precedence to specific goals as well as shape subjects that subscribe to, adhere, justify and help reproduce and empower these discourses (Anders, 2005: 39–40; Dean, 2010: 24–37; Foucault *et al.*, 1991: 102–113).

Foucault employed two styles of study (which he termed archaeology and genealogy) to tease out the subjugated elements he was after. It allowed him to create narratives to uncover the relations of power appearing in discursive practices and explain their effects in societal situations (Davidson, 1986: 227). Archaeology attempts to locate historic statements conducive to the production of truth by isolating discursive practices which are:

characterized by the delimitation of a field of objects, the definition of legitimate perspective for the agent of knowledge, and the fixing of norms for the elaboration of concepts and theories. Thus, each discursive practice implies a play of prescriptions that designates its exclusions and choices.

(Foucault quoted in Davidson, 1986: 221–222)

To conduct an archaeology in this sense, one must first problematise the present to identify which threads to follow. Once these threads are identified and isolated, an excavation into historical statements can be conducted to locate where threads begin, end, or assume another form, as well as to locate how, why, by whom and for which purposes modifications occur (Davidson, 1986: 223).

The second style of study employed by Foucault is genealogy. Davidson (1986: 224) explains that the main focus of genealogy is the relationship between ‘systems of truth and the modalities of power’. Unlike archaeology which focuses on identification and isolation of discursive practices, genealogy is concerned with the power connected with these discourses (that is, the governmentality aspects of discursive practices). Genealogy aims to rediscover conflict and struggle tucked away and pushed to the fringes by canonised histories (Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 83). In other words, emancipating subjugated knowledge from the power of canonisation (Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 85).

Foucault distinguishes between archaeology and genealogy by explaining that the archaeological method leads to an analysis of discursive practices, while the genealogical method explains the ways in which discursive practices highlight certain truths and subjugate others (Foucault and Gordon, 1980: 85). Davidson (1986: 225 and 227) notes that Foucault’s archaeological and genealogical methods are in fact complementary. The first enables the discovery of discourses relevant to a problematised issue, while the second uncovers the ways in which discursive practices exercise power that lead to specific outcomes.⁴

Nancy Fraser notes that the most problematic aspect of Foucault’s work was his assumption that his standpoint was normatively neutral (Fraser, 1989: 18). Foucault believed that his research was based on stoic analyses in the sense that it did not bear on the positivity or negativity of discursive practices, but rather focused on the exposition and explanation of the modalities of power and political regimes located in them (Dean, 2010: 54). Foucault himself termed it as a refusal of ‘the “blackmail” of the enlightenment’ to be for or against it (Dean, 2010: 54; Foucault and Rabinow, 1984: 42). This position triggered the Foucault–Habermas debate and evoked one of Habermas’s central criticisms of post-modernism. Essentially, Habermas pointed out that the archaeological and genealogical methodologies employed by Foucault are in essence the ‘analysis of truth’ and ‘critique of power’ respectively. He claimed that no critique of power could be conducted without an analysis of truth, and that Foucault’s analysis of truth is not deprived of a ‘normative yardstick’, despite his claims to the opposite (Habermas, 1986: 108).

Whether it is impossible to conduct a genealogical analysis without being swayed by normativity is an ontological, and subsequently, epistemological question. The answer lies in the stated opening positions of the researcher. Habermas’s criticism of Foucault on this matter relates to Foucault’s failure to conduct a normative-free analysis, despite his claims to the contrary. Using Foucauldian perspectives (among others) in the analysis of development assistance, and more generally, if and how the US government uses it to promote its own interests, means that we have normative views. By questioning the ‘truth’ of American exceptionalism and viewing it rather as a form of power and discipline means that we regard

normative claims as important to our work. What we would claim, however, is that it is not anti-American. Moreover, we would not claim to be dispassionate. We work in a department of international environment and development studies and our sympathies lie with the world characterised as less developed, underdeveloped, or low income. In our view, the requirements, needs and claims made by peoples of Africa have greater legitimacy than often acknowledged due to their political and economic weaknesses in a capitalist world economy. The African continent has its own specific history where potentials were cut short or diverted by the slave trade, colonialism, and now climate change. Given the special historical relationship between the US and Africa produced by the slave trade (and its aftermaths), an inquiry into the use of power by the US seems highly relevant. Our analysis leads us to pessimism as to the potential for the US government to change how it frames and organises development assistance. It has become an even more fraught arena due to the rise of terrorism and the militarization of US foreign policy more generally. We take this up again in our conclusions.

Using Foucault's archaeological and genealogical methods as markers, we interpret the intentions of development policy as a complex field which is shaped by and serves as a regime of truth through which idealism and national interests are met and to varying degrees satisfied. The terms *developed* and *underdeveloped* carry specific meanings when used to describe encounters between cultures. They indicate a hierarchy rooted in a plurality of conceptions such as race, gender, culture, resources, technology and religion. The justification for investing in and conducting an intervention under the heading of 'development assistance' features the space where ideology and culture merge with the subtext meanings of developed and undeveloped. We attempt to unmask⁵ these encounters through a lens of power.

***The American regime of truth and the formulation of development policy
– thinking about Foucauldian power***

We suggest that the regime of truth is the means through which the identity of powerful Americans can be confirmed. The space where 'American' is conditioned. It is the mechanism through which individuals and groups in America make sense of a way of life, the foundations that determine how stories in the society are told and understood, the way *sense* is being made and the way behaviour is being interpreted. The regime of truth is the foundation, to be beyond question if it is to be most effective, upon which the acceptance or rejection of discourses is possible in the context of American society (Guyatt, 2016; Parkinson, 2016). It is the mechanism that grants validation to statements and determines the rejection of others. The regime of truth in a society is what makes it possible to answer the question: 'What is power for?'⁶ The regime of truth underscored in this work validates and legitimates (for Americans) the projection of American

power. It works to project its own power upon the American people; it is the power to forge 'American'. It is possible, in our view, to locate in narratives and discourses some fundamental building blocks of contemporary American ideology. These blocks are elements that are produced and reproduced by American institutions through which the basic truths of the society are formed (and are often used and presented by political elites). What we sketch here is the American ideology⁷ that emerges first in an anti-colonial form to the British colonial rulers and later as a contrast to twentieth-century fascism and communism as America consolidates its hegemonic power. Americans construct and legitimise their actions in the world in reference to the roots of the nation. We find that the regime of truth helps shape the concept of foreign assistance and legitimises its particular operationalisation over time and in different contexts. Our focus is on the conjunction between assistance and national security employed to achieve specific objectives justified by this particular ideology. The American regime of truth which supports the assistance policy is discussed further in Chapter 3. Once a foreign policy course has been established in a context, the analysis of power moves away from a Foucauldian description towards other conceptual frameworks to study the ways in which power is projected.

Lukes – power as domination

In his seminal work on power, Lukes (2005) produces a lucid conceptual map that facilitates the theoretical and empirical study of power in its application. The underlying debates that led to this publication were linked to the study of American politics. Lukes picked up on certain debates on power in American politics during the 1960s (see below), and identified a number of shortcomings in the way power was conceptualised until then. In his work, he describes the two common conceptualisations of power, and adds another which he calls 'the third dimension of power'.

The debates that triggered the formulation of Lukes' theoretical framework on power took place in the late 1950s, and revolved around questions of domination, especially of elites, in American society. The first dimension of power which Lukes refers to was formulated by Dahl (1961) who disagreed with a hypothesis forwarded by Mills (1956) asserting that American politics were dominated by a group of elites. Dahl studied decision-making in politics, focusing on the behaviour of actors when conflicting preferences were observable. From his analysis, Dahl established that power and influence are not located with one individual or a group of individuals. He demonstrated that no single individual or group could consistently exercise decision power over a plurality of independent issues (Lukes, 2005: 38). Dahl's analysis of power is dubbed by Lukes as the 'one-dimensional view' where power manifests when decisions are made, or through actions that lead to decisions (Lukes, 2005: 19).

The main shortcoming of this view, and subsequently of Dahl's methodology for measuring power, is that his observations were limited to conditions where A exercised power over issues, causing B to do or accept something which is against B's own preference. While this can indicate a great deal about the exercise of power within a system and on particular issues brought for discussion, it does not raise questions such as who decides which issues are or can be raised or omitted from an agenda, or the way in which issues are framed on the agenda. Bachrach and Baratz (1970) point out that Dahl examines power only in situations where an issue is brought up for discussion and decision-making. Dahl does not consider or examine the operation of power manifested by the exclusion of issues from decision-making processes, or by the way in which they are brought to the table. Bachrach and Baratz (1970: 6 quoted in Lukes, 2005: 22) indicate that power is also located beyond observable behaviour and should also be studied in situations where known conflicts of interests exist (as opposed to situations where conflict of interests are observable through direct behaviour). Dahl's study of power is thus confined to contextual behavioural observations and suffers from the reproduction of the biases confined to a system, ignoring power over the system (Lukes, 2005: 38).

The two-dimensional view of power is linked directly to the criticism raised against Dahl's one-dimensional approach. It locates power as being over the system and expands the scope from the exercise of open coercion (where A is observed to cause B to accept or do something B would otherwise not do), to the use of influence where A limits the range of possibilities of B (Lukes, 2005: 22). An important distinction here is that B may or may not realise that A has exercised power over him or her. This issue expands the sphere of a study of power to non-observable behaviours.

As noted by Lukes (2005: 24), conflict, whether overt or covert, is still assumed to be an underlying cause for invoking the use of power when viewed through the two-dimensional lens. While assumed to be present, conflict is not always immediately observable in a case where issues are purposefully not raised or treated as non-issues, making the empirical study of power a complicated endeavour. The three-dimensional view of power suggested by Lukes deals with a more complex exercise of power where conflict is a latent concept. It taps into power exercised to avoid the emergence of conflicts altogether (Lukes, 2005: 28). In this respect, the three-dimensional view of power is linked to a form of power discussed by Foucault where A uses social forces in addition to institutional capacities and individual decisions to shape the basic belief, preferences and perceptions of B, to the capacity that B assumes a course of action that is not in his or her best interests, sometimes without even realising it. But even though the concept connects to linked mechanisms, Foucault and Lukes highlight different components and subsequently study different elements. Lukes' initial conception of power is limited to power as domination, that

is 'power over' and to a certain extent 'power to' for the purpose of securing compliance (Lukes, 2005: 109). Foucault's views on power change over time. In an essay published after his death (Foucault, 1988; Lemke, 2007) he distinguished between power and domination while also stipulating that when he said power he really meant 'relations of power.' Foucault stated that in order to be relations of power (in contrast to domination) they could not exist unless the subjects are free.⁸ These relations of power are then changeable, reversible and unstable. We read this as indicating differing degrees of agency. It follows that in relations of power there must be the possibility of resistance. There are those relationships of power which he called 'strategic games between liberties' where some people try to determine the conduct of others. If there is no possibility of resistance then there are no relations of power. The later Foucault left more space for politics. This is in contrast to his earlier emphasis upon states of domination – economic, social institutional or sexual which are often thought of as the most important face of power. In addition, Lemke (2007) observes that Foucault identified a third type of power relation – government that refers to the 'conduct of conduct' although in general Foucault sought to expand the understanding of power relations beyond government interactions with the population.

Lukes highlights the importance of viewing power agents broadly. He contends that power does not require, when it is at work, the intentions or positive intervention of actors. Viewing power in this way lets us see and understand social arrangements that produce powerlessness or specific outcomes as unconnected to the powerful (Lukes, 2006: 171) To identify a process where power is being exercised requires the identification of the exerciser but does not require direct intentions (Lukes, 2005: 57–58). In this way Lukes does not dismiss the role of structures and their influence on agents. Given his interest in inequality he would favour identifying responsibility. Part of the differences between Lukes and Foucault rests on their disciplinary backgrounds. Foucault as philosopher and historian highlights hidden connections between power and knowledge and how power-knowledge relations change over time. Lukes on the other hand seeks to provide us with the theoretical and analytical tools as to how states regulate and control populations⁹ under their control.

In relation to this study, the theoretical framework offered by Lukes is used to inform two different forms of analysis. The first is the relationship between idealism and national interests in the operation of development politics inside the US. It comprises the power game that informs the relationship between different agencies with different areas of responsibilities. This relationship can be studied in historical and contemporary contexts (separately or as a continuum) focusing on how certain societal values¹⁰ manifest in the formulation of coherent foreign policy as viable conscious arguments to influence a course of policy or action. This exercise

highlights the inter-agency ‘power game’ and determines the ever-changing and contextual starting position of the different agents¹¹ influencing formulation of policy.

The second form of analysis is the power exercised through the operationalisation of a policy in developing countries – in this case, the American development policy in Africa. Lukes’ framework serves as a conceptual map to understand the operationalisation of policy that explains the role of development assistance in the strategic relationship between the US as a donor country and African nations as recipients. Using the theoretical framework for this purpose assumes a starting position that possibly regards this relationship as attempted domination: the US attempting to secure the compliance of Africans to achieve its own ends. This may lead to potential criticism that this work is contaminated by a normative bias that colours both the type of investigation and its outcomes. In diplomatic language, the relationship between various countries is described as one of partnership, co-operation and with shared goals rather than attempted domination (excluding cases of open conflict). Our purpose is to analyse how a powerful donor interacts with the concept of assistance to achieve other ends, and examine how this interaction bears on helping the under-developed to develop. To clarify why an analysis of US development policy in Africa using a conceptual map inspired by Lukes is not, in this case, anchored in a normative bias against the US, we would like to turn the discussion to the context of power as a tool to achieve American policy objectives.

Nye – hard, soft and smart power

In 2010 the Department of State published its first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) to answer the question: How can America do better? (QDDR, 2010: Forward by Secretary of State Hilary Clinton). The QDDR was a follow-up by Obama’s Presidential Policy Directive on Development¹² and was meant to provide a strategic framework to improve the deployment of America’s power:

Secretary Clinton began her tenure by stressing the need to elevate civilian power alongside military power as equal pillars of U.S. foreign policy. She called for an integrated ‘smart power’ approach to solving global problems – a concept that is embodied in the President’s National Security Strategy.

(QDDR, 2010: ii)

Both America’s National Security Strategy (NSS) and the QDDR form the basis for the strategic frameworks of the US Agency for International Development (USAID, 2013: 6). Both documents emphasise the concept of *smart power* as a strategy to further US foreign policy objectives.¹³

Smart power is a term arguably coined by Nye in 2003 to refer to contextual combinations of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ power to achieve preferred policy outcomes (Nye, 2004: 32). In 2006, Nye co-chaired, together with Richard Armitage, a Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) commission on smart power. The efforts of the commission culminated in a report published in 2007 (CSIS, 2007) laying out a set of recommendations to the ‘President of the United States, regardless of political party’ on how a smart power strategy can be implemented (CSIS, 2007: 1). In 2011, Nye published a book entitled the *Future of Power* (Nye, 2011) where he outlined in a more academic fashion the strategic vision of the smart power concept.

In essence, Nye (2011: 14) describes ‘three faces of relational power’, correlating his baseline with Lukes’ conceptual map for the analysis of power, and then turns the three dimensions of power into conceptual tools for policymakers. The underlying idea is to help policymakers devise informed strategies where the ranges of power options at their disposal, hard and soft, are combined intelligibly to wield influence in foreign affairs. The need to explicitly introduce the notion of smart power came after a decade where the US projection of power was understood to be overly reliant on hard power strategies, damaging the image of America and consequently significantly hampering its strategic influence over a range of foreign policy objectives. He observed that the exercise of power became more complicated due to globalisation and growing interdependency. In turn, these changes require new methods and approaches on new global issues where interests must reflect global and domestic priorities at the same time.¹⁴

Nye developed a spectrum of power behaviours to indicate the range of options available for policy (Nye, 2011: 21). The spectrum ranges from ‘command’ which is at the hard power end of the spectrum, to ‘co-opt’ at the soft power end, introducing ‘coerce’, ‘threat’, ‘pay’, ‘sanction’, ‘frame’, ‘persuade’ and ‘attract’ as possible behaviours. He defines soft power as the ‘ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes’ (Nye, 2011: 20–21).

Nye and Armitage explain that to achieve America’s interests:

The United States must become a smarter power by once again investing in the global good – providing things people and governments in all quarters of the world want but cannot attain in the absence of American leadership. By complementing U.S. military and economic might with greater investments in soft power, America can build the framework it needs to tackle tough global challenges.

(CSIS, 2007: 1)

One of the critical areas listed by Nye and Armitage where a smart power approach will be a useful strategy to achieve policy objectives is global development:

Elevating the role of development in U.S. foreign policy can help the United States align its own interests with the aspirations of people around the world.

(CSIS, 2007: 1)¹⁵

As illustrated by the QDDR, various documents issued by USAID, and the NSS during the Obama administration (NSS, 2010: 14–16),¹⁶ the concept of smart power was adopted explicitly to better achieve US foreign policy interests. Thus, there exists in the US government a conscious use of a concept of power which firmly rests on Nye's adaptation of Lukes' conceptual framework to achieve policy objectives around the world. The three pillars of American power as explained in various documents (such as USAID, 2012 and references) are defence, diplomacy and development, or 'the 3Ds' as they are often referred to in the Obama administration.

Nye devises a conception of power for the purpose of American policymakers. He adapts Lukes' analysis into a concrete range of options for policymakers so that they can better understand the range of possibilities at their disposal to project America's power and achieve objectives in a smarter way. The smarter way is to project power while reducing the unintended consequences associated with over-reliance and uninformed use of specific power tools. Smart power as a policy tool is also an artefact of the regime of truth, and as such constitutes an object for Foucauldian analysis.

We return now to the question of whether using a conceptual map that studies conscious attempts to exercise power to influence, control, and dominate as a tool for the analysis of development policies, can be considered a bias-free exercise. The formal foreign policy strategy of the US in recent years has been structured around the explicit projection of smart power, which in itself, is a conceptual tool based on the three 'faces of power' described by Nye as the different aspects of relational power. Since the faces of power are based on Lukes' description of the three dimensions of power, the role of this strategy is to plan intelligent ways to exercise 'power over', and to a certain extent 'power to'. This means locating intelligible ways to modify B's behaviour to be consistent with the preferences of A as a form of influence, control, or domination. The word 'domination' often resonates negatively and is associated with open, often violent or coercive imposition. Nevertheless, domination encompasses subtle behaviours which are sometimes not even noticeable. When A devises a set of preferences and then commits to achieve them, it can be argued that A will be engaged in various forms of domination if he or she attempts to induce or modify the behaviours of B. Does this necessarily mean that it is not in the (best) interests of B to engage in that behaviour? If it is in the interests of B to engage in a behaviour suggested by A, does this mean that A's actions with regard to B cannot be called domination? Is the use of the word 'domination' only appropriate when A induces, influences, affects or modifies the behaviour of B when it is not in the

interests of B to engage in that behaviour? Lukes (2005: 86) defines 'power as domination' as A's exercise of power over B in order to further (or at least not harm) A's own preferences, when this exertion of power has a negative bearing on B, whether B realises this or not. While this definition of power as domination is useful, it assumes that one can identify whether the exertion of power by A is in fact bearing negatively on the interests of B. That is not always the case; the question is who is to determine that A's power is bearing negatively on B? Is it A? Is it B? Should it be an objective observer? What if B believes that it is in his or her best interests to accept A's exertion of power? Can it be argued that in fact B does not know or understand what is in his or her own best interests? Can it be argued that B is 'primitive' (to utilise the word used by colonial powers and Americans on some occasions when referring to Africans)?

We prefer a more generalised designation of domination, limiting the variables to the actual action and purposes of the entity exercising power. This designation is the following: *power as domination is when A exercises power over B to achieve A's own set of objectives*. Such a definition incorporates all the uses of hard and soft power by A, and underlines that by the exercise of power, A's intentions are first and foremost to achieve A's own set of objectives tied to A's own interests and preferences as A defines them or understands them. This means a conscious attempt by A to project power to achieve first and foremost his or her own objectives (interests and/or ideological-based objectives), whether these have a negative bearing on B or not (see below for a further discussion). But, as argued above, choosing to conduct an analysis based on a framework that studies power as a conscious attempt to modify or induce behaviours (domination), does not necessarily lead to a normative bias against, in this case, the US. It is using the building blocks upon which US foreign policy strategies are built in order to dissect and analyse its effects, consequences and the meanings for development assistance.

There is another type of power that surfaces on the 'dominated' side of the equation which significantly affects the intended outcomes of the 'powerful's' policy and practices. This type of power must also be factored into the analysis.

Scott – weapons of the weak

To explain the third level of analysis, we will begin with an old Ethiopian proverb quoted in Scott (1990: opening quote): 'When the great lord passes, the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts'. Albeit colourful, the proverb captures an element of power neglected by Lukes. Though the actions of the peasant in this case have no practical effects on the power of the lord, it indicates that sometimes the relatively powerless can grant the powerful the impression that s/he is more successful than s/he really is. As Scott (1985) demonstrates, subdued people can employ a

number of different strategies through which power exercised over them is undermined or nullified, and in many cases, without the knowledge of the dominator.

Using Lukes' own style of formulation to explain the point above: assuming that A is the powerful individual or entity who consciously exercises power over B to achieve A's own ends, often (and especially in development assistance contexts as contended here) B finds ways to use the exercise of power by A: to undermine A; to give A the impression that s/he is more powerful than s/he really is; to allow A to exercise parts of his or her power and to concede other parts; or to gain power, to ends that serve B's purposes and/or interests (sometimes against A's own interests and intentions). This can be achieved: with knowledge of A, without knowledge of A, or with partial knowledge of A. In a reconsideration of resistance in Foucault's work, Flohr argues convincingly that resistance is 'presupposed in the exercise of power' (Flohr, 2016: 48). By this he means that resistance can be an adaptive response or an unpredictable outcome of the exercise of power. In turn, the exercise of power must adapt and respond to the resistance that is produced. In the end, the outcomes of resistance are not known and can end in the reshaping of the original power relations (Flohr, 2016).

This is not really a fourth dimension of power, but rather a parallel dimension of it; it is the locus where an exercise of power over someone enables that person to tap into a source of power he or she did not have before. It is where the application of any of the three faces of power to achieve specific objectives creates opportunities that allow the dominated to employ various sets of strategies to gain more power, which in turn, is exercised in ways that may undermine the objectives of the dominator. It is not necessarily the same as open or latent resistance, which is an aspect of reactionary responses to the use of power, but rather an adaptation to the application of any kind of power, be it hard or soft.

Scott (1985: 315) begins his analysis by questioning Gramsci's concept of hegemony¹⁷ which emerges from an assertion made by Marx and Engels. In *The German Ideology* (1846), Marx and Engels explain that elites who control the modes of material production also control the means of mental production. Gramsci views hegemony as the exercise of ideological domination over culture, religion, education and media (Scott, 1985: 315). Broken down into its elements, the Gramscian notion of hegemony is an application of domination through the third dimension of power as discussed by Lukes. Scott (1985) focused his investigation on everyday peasant resistance to class domination in the context of the Green Revolution. He demonstrated that despite attempts by the ruling class and agricultural experts to exercise ideological domination, peasants continue to resist hegemony. He questioned whether the ideologies of the powerful only *seem* to penetrate the dominated, while in reality, there is a gap between manifested public behaviours and the private ideological beliefs

they continue to hold (Scott, 1985: 321–322). In many cases, the subdued hold firmly to their earlier dominant ideologies, do not lose their own sense of justice, and question and demystify the narratives of the powerful (Scott, 1985: 317). Put more simply, the weak may find ways to counter and undermine the power of the strong.

In his critique of development projects in Lesotho, Ferguson (1994) demonstrates a common feature of many development interventions whereby there is an effort to hide or mask the power dimensions required to act. In the case examined by Ferguson he describes how the development objectives of a donor are converted into a project by a recipient state. The recipient state transforms development objectives into ‘technical problems’ on a project level, which leads to situations where resources provided by a donor (say, to address poverty) end up serving the expansion of state powers over its own population (Ferguson, 1994: 256). Ferguson emphasises that this is not necessarily a result of a conspiracy, but ‘just happen[s] to be the way things work out’ (Ferguson, 1994: 256). Seen through the lens provided by Scott, we can assign the role of the powerful to the donor and the role of the weak to the recipient state.

Two major issues manifest through Ferguson’s example which are relevant for the chapters that follow. The first is that, in this case (and many others), the domination of the powerful are not necessarily a conscious attempt to exercise domination over the recipient to transform his or her behaviour to fulfil the interests of the donor. Ideological biases are socially constructed, and are embedded in identities. As such, a donor may express his or her own ideological biases in discourses without realising that they are that. A donor as such may not be aware of the power (in a Foucauldian sense) that construct in him/her a regime of truth, and unaware of the power s/he exercises as a donor to re-create this truth with recipients. A donor who controls the resources and decides how to allocate them will invest in sets of objectives consistent with their view of how development challenges should be tackled. This view might not necessarily reflect the needs or preferences of the recipient, but the recipient might claim that they want to tap into the resources offered by the donor. The recipient might agree with the premise that the donor knows better. It is possible that the intentions of the donor are to accord with the recipient and pays little or no attention to how the recipient has altered their views or actions. In the book, we demonstrate how the US as a donor seeks to alter or support other countries’ policies and actions to align with US government broader national security objectives. However, as we also demonstrate, this exercise of power does not necessarily produce the intended outcomes.

The second issue that manifests in Ferguson’s example is the introduction of a ‘chain’ of power relations that can result in significant modifications of initial objectives and intentions of a donor. In this case we have a donor country, a recipient state, and a group of people within the recipient state where the development project or programme is applied. We can

formulate it as A, B and B₁, where A exercises latent or conscious power over B, and B subsequently exercises power over B₁ which may be consistent or inconsistent with the intentions of A. This becomes more complicated when we consider that B might intentionally or unintentionally modify or completely change the intention of A by exercising power over B₁. The power that B is able to exercise over B₁ is in this case only possible because A initiates and supports the process.

Interests, power and development assistance – a conceptual map

This work tries to locate and explain development assistance policy both as a result of power in social constructions (the regime of truth) and as a tool of power (through the operationalisation of policy). But the question remains how to incorporate the different types of power and its effects in terms of reactions to it in an analysis that accounts for context, complexity and nuances. In order to justify the type of data gathered and included in this research as well as to clarify the ways in which we interact with the data we sketch a conceptual map anchored in various conceptualisation of power.

Domination is the main category under which we locate power in development assistance; development assistance or aid is based on hierarchy between the givers and receivers of aid. This is discussed in Chapter 2. If we use Lukes' definition of domination, then Nye's concept of power includes elements that are difficult to accept as domination. An example of that is the use of co-operation as an expression of soft power. In a case when B agrees to co-operate because he or she believes it is in his or her best interests to do so, would not be domination as defined by Lukes. But if B's decision to co-operate is related to a current, past or continuous effort by A¹⁸ to (re-)structure B's basic beliefs, we are in fact witnessing domination. If B believes that co-operating with A is in his or her own best interests but has been influenced over decades and does not know better, or B has no access to knowledge and information other than that given to him by A,¹⁹ or B is a victim of global Western cultural imperialism, A is in fact dominating B. But asserting that B does not know better, or is a victim of imposed structures, is a qualitative statement closely linked to normative positions. Therefore, domination cannot be linked to how the exertion of power bears on B since the experience of B can be contested ad infinitum. Domination should be defined based on the intentions of A, and not only when A is engaged in a conscious attempt to exercise domination, but rather based on A's fundamental intention to induce or modify a behaviour of B for the objective of achieving A's own preferences. In this case, we can include Nye's range of tools, from hard to soft power, as forms of domination. Domination in this case can be visible, hidden or invisible, but can also range from conscious to unconscious domination. In other words, the dominator does not realise s/he is dominating.

If one chooses a dictionary definition for *domination* which focuses on supremacy, pre-eminence and mastery, then the term raises controversy as it is saturated with negativity. But domination also involves control and influence, which disarms the negativity described above. As mentioned, domination can be subtle, almost unnoticed. And if we turn back to Foucault, submission to domination can even be voluntary with full understanding of the roles of master and servant. In addition, a dominator might not be conscious of the exertion of domination, acting based on his or her own understanding of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ in a fashion that serves the interests of the subject. When a missionary builds a school in Africa, the missionary is not only bringing education to Africans, but is also bringing Christianity and salvation (in his/her mind) to them, as well as his or her own personal redemption.

If we open up a conceptual space where power operates as domination, then which concepts can we use in order to make sense of the range of actions and reactions? First, we consider the operation of power in a simple manner, locating an A which exercises power over a B. Considering the complexity of power that is exercised to achieve objectives, as well as the parallel dimension of power (the power gained by B through the exertion of power by A), we can devise a simplified non-exhaustive framework that allows us to understand some of the complexity to address the content of this book. Table 1.1 examines the operation of power in a space where it is exercised as domination between A, the dominator, and B, the dominated, with feedback of B to the exertion of power by A.

In a chosen context, we can ask ourselves the following questions about A’s exertion of power: What type of power is A exercising? What is the level of awareness of A regarding the dominating effect of this power? In which sphere does A’s power operate? In Figure 1.1, Divon (2015) uses three indicators on a scale for convenience to describe the form of power in each attribute. In addressing specific cases, the scale would need to be adjusted to taken into specific complexities. Once we define the forms of power exerted by the dominator, we can examine the reaction of the dominated. Consider the example when A is consciously using development assistance (soft power) in country X to invisibly repel Soviet attempts to

Table 1.1 Conceptual framework for a general analysis of the operation of power as domination

<i>Attributes</i>	<i>Context</i>	
	<i>Forms of power</i>	<i>Dominator (action) Dominated (reaction)</i>
Type	Hard-combined-soft	
Awareness	Conscious-latent-unconscious	
Sphere	Visible-hidden-invisible	

Source: author