25th International Lab Meeting – 20th Summer School 2014
13th – 19th July 2014, Rome (Italy)

Participants Presentation

Genesis, development and actuality of the Social Representation theory in more than fifty years (1961-2011 and beyond): the main paradigms and the "modelling approach"

SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

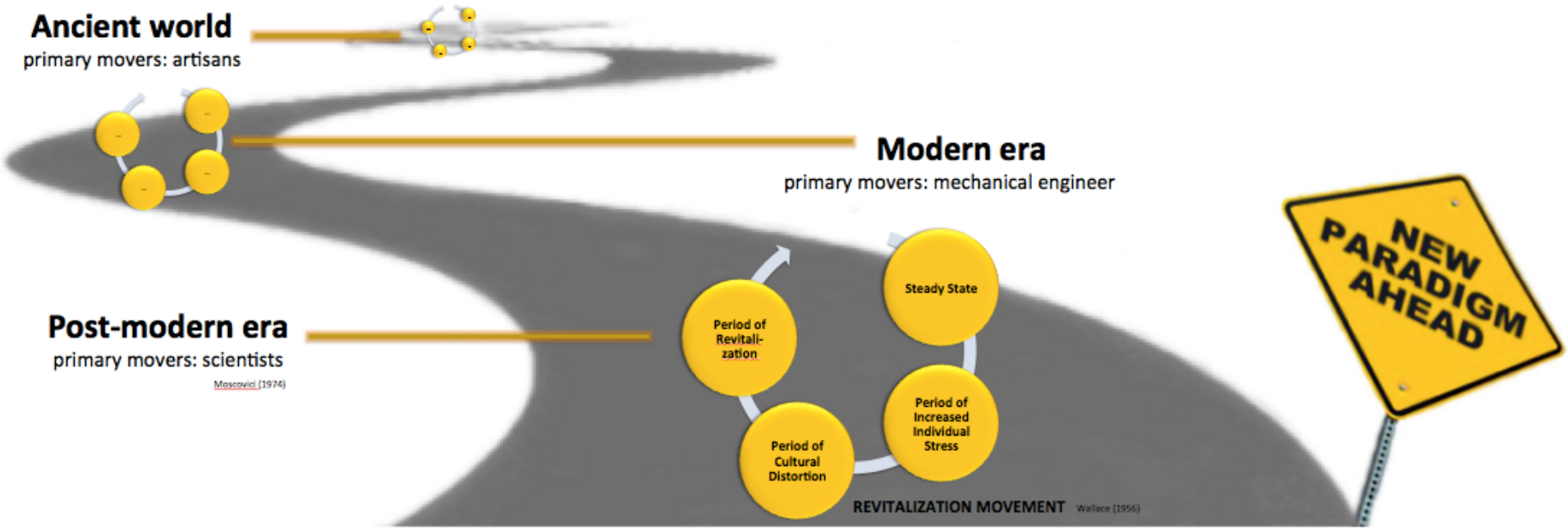
European/International Joint Ph.D.
in Social Representations and Communication

20th International Summer School
on
Social representations and
Communication

Eco-village:
A source of social change?

Petra Čarman
Mauro Sarrica

The world in crisis



What could our relationship with nature look like in the future?

Environmentalism

Spirituality

… propensity to take **actions with pro-environmental intent**

Stern (2000)

… for example, in the areas of:

- Food
- Housing
- Energy
- Transportation
- Education
- Health
- Political activism

… one's striving for and experience of **connection with the essence of life**.

Connectedness with the transcendent

Connectedness with oneself

Connectedness with others and nature

de Jager Meezenbroek et al. (2012)

Who could be the **movers**?

What is an eco-village?

An eco-village is an intentional or traditional community using **local participatory processes** to **holistically integrate** ecological, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of sustainability in order to **regenerate social and natural environments**.

Global Eco-village Network (GEN)

Even though they come in all shapes and sizes, eco-villages have

MULTIPLE COMMON ELEMENTS:

- vision
- recognition of community
- understanding of nature
- application of technology to minimise adverse environmental impact
- use of passive solar design in housing
- some food or other production
- internal decision making system
- internal disputes resolution system

Dawson (2010)

Moscovici (1969)

2 lines of research

1. **Could eco-villages present one of the movers in our changing relationship with nature?**

- How are **eco-villagers communicating** with each other and with the outside world?
- What is the **general idea about eco-villages** in the society?

1. **If so, what does that mean? How are social representations of environment(al behavior) and spirituality linked?**

- What is the general **eco-village ideology**? How is it being negotiated?
- What are the **representations of environment and spirituality** shared within eco-villages and what is their relationship?
- What are some of the **conflicts eco-villages are experiencing** and how are they going about solving them?
- What is the **discourse on environmentalism** in eco-villages? What type of **environmental knowledge** is used?

Methodology

OUTSIDE

- Media analysis
- Internet search trends
- Questionnaire*
- (Webcrawler)

INSIDE

- Participant observation
- Interviews
- Questionnaire*

*
Environmental Identity: EID (Clayton, 2003),
Connectedness with nature: INS (Schultz, 2001), LCN (Perkins, 2010),
Spirituality: SAIL (de Jager Meezenbroek et al., 2012),
Environmental behavior: PEB (Whitmarsh & O'Neil, 2010)

2 eco-villages …

- **Braziers Park**
  - United Kingdom
  - Secular community
  - Around 16 inhabitants
  - "A continuous experiment"

- **Federation of Damanhur**
  - Italy
  - Spiritual community
  - 600 inhabitants … 25 communities of 10-30 people
  - "Laboratory for the future"

Braziers Park

Damanhur

PROPRIETÀ
- TEMPORALE
- PIANIFICATO
- INFORMAZIONI ORGANIZZATE
- VA SOSTENUTA
- OTTIMIZZAZIONE (COMPLESSITÀ)
- MASSIMA RECAZIONE

Some preliminary results …

(from participant observation & interviews)

- Organization
- Social structure
- People
- Past-Present-Future
- Environmental behavior
- Spirituality
- Relationship with the outside

Braziers Park
(UK)

VS.

Federation of Damanhur
(Italy)

Can we talk about a common eco-village ideology?

Dimensions that help the community interpret the world:

- Environmental Behaviour
- Spirituality

… and their discussion:

- Monological vs. dialogical
- Coherent vs. divergent
- Encouraged vs. ignored