



14th International Lab Meeting
15th Edition of the International Summer School

European Ph.D. on
Social Representations and Communication
At the Multimedia LAB & Research Center, Rome-Italy

Social Representations in Action and Construction
in Media and Society



"Cultural and cross-cultural
approaches to social representations:
The implications of the globalised/localised cultural scenario"

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Key Lectures

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15th Edition of the European Ph.D. on Social Representations and Communication International Summer School

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Culture is not an hamburger: cultural, cross-cultural psychology and social representations

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Outline



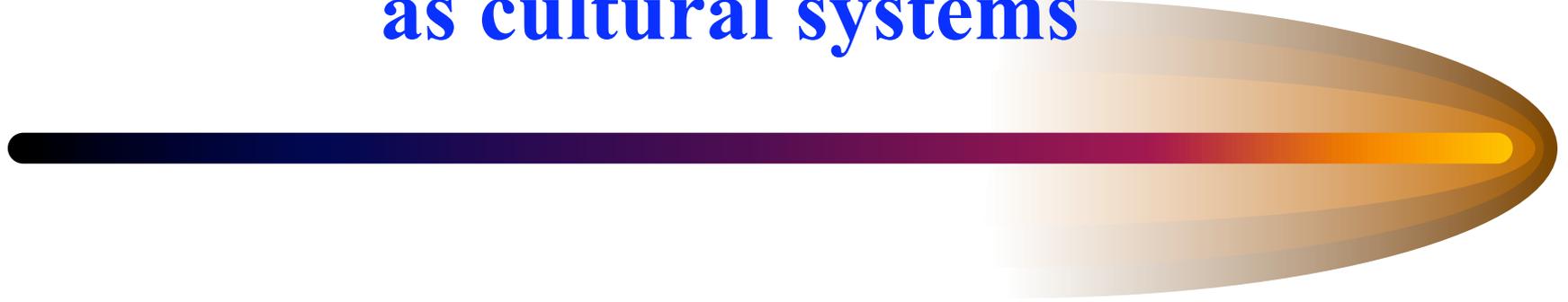
- Key words
 - in my own lecture's title
 - in the 15th International Summer School Scientific Program's title
- Culture as content, Culture as context, Culture as process
- Culture in a color, Color is culture
- Culture, Representations and Communication
- An exemplary case study to look at the relation between Social Representations and Communication

Outline



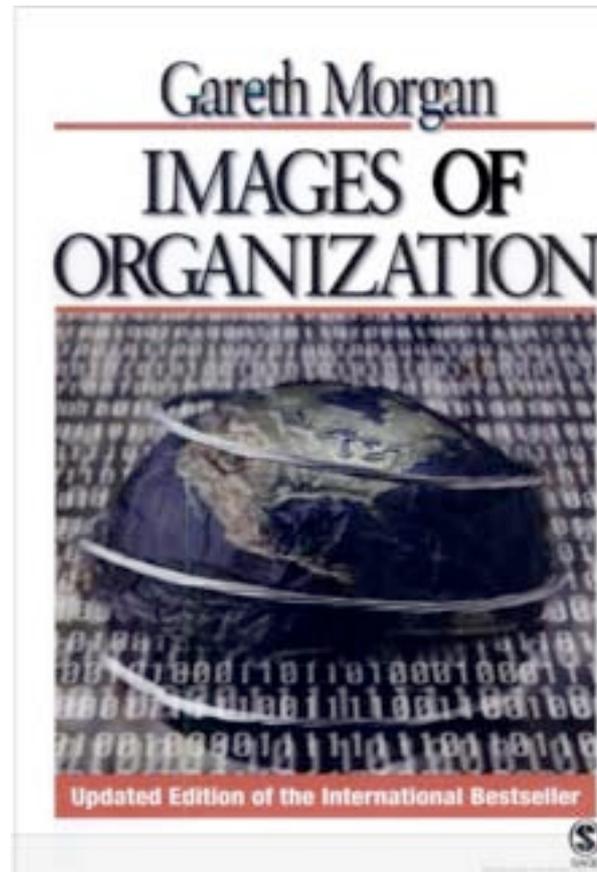
- Key words in my own lecture's title:
 - **Culture is not an hamburger**
 - **Cross-cultural psychology**
 - **Cultural psychology**
 - **Social Representations**
- Key words in the 15th International Summer School's Scientific Program :
 - **Cross-cultural approach**
 - **Cultural approach**
 - **Social Representations**
 - **Globalised/Localized cultural scenarios**

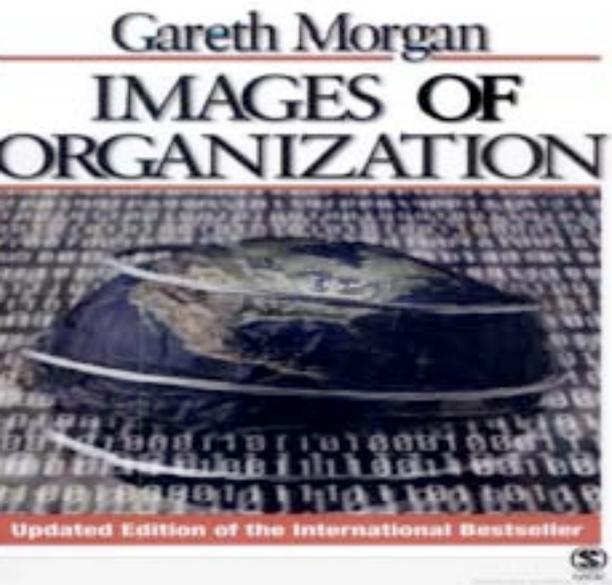
Organisations as cultural systems



- as cultural phenomenon (local/global/
glocal)
- as cultural contextes (organisational
cultures and sub-cultures)

- **Culture is not an hamburger!**





Metaphors, as implicit images of Organisations

Since its first publication over twenty years ago, **Images of Organization** has become a **classic in the canon of management literature**.

The book is based on a very simple premise:
All theories of organization and management are based on **implicit images or metaphors** that stretch our imagination in a way that can create powerful insights, but at the risk of distortion.

Metaphors can be very interesting **tools for investigating Social Representations**.

However here the point is to understand **WHY CULTURE IS NOT AN HAMBURGER, although hamburger is part of a culture**.



Metaphors, as implicit images of Organisations

- *Machines*
- *Living organism*
- *Brain*
- *Plato's cave*
- *Elephant*
- *Political System*
-

are all examples of *metaphors of organisations*, as **tools both to analyse them and to guide action plans**

Gareth Morgan

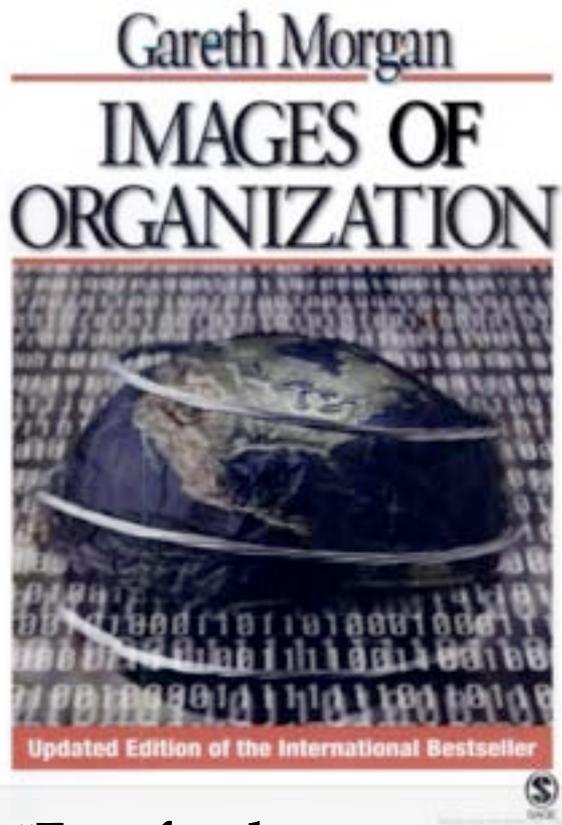
IMAGES OF ORGANIZATION



Organisations as “machine”

“Anyone who has observed work in the *mass-production factory* or in any of the large “**office factories**” processing paper forms such as insurance claims, tax returns, or bank checks will have noticed the machine like way in which such organizations operate. They are designed like **machines**, and their employees are in essence expected to behave as if they were parts of machines.”

Morgan, G. (2007) p. 12

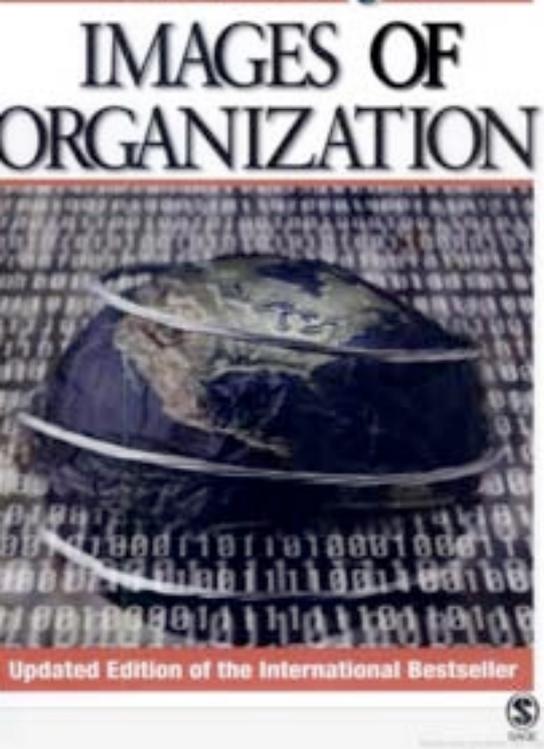


Organisations as “machine”

“Fast-food restaurants and service organizations of many kinds operate in accordance with similar principles, with every action preplanned in a minute way, even in areas where personal interactions with others are concerned.

Employees are frequently trained to interact with customers according to a detailed code of instructions and are monitored in their performance. Even the most casual smile, greeting, comment, or suggestion by a sales assistant is often programmed by company policy and rehearsed to produce authentic results.”

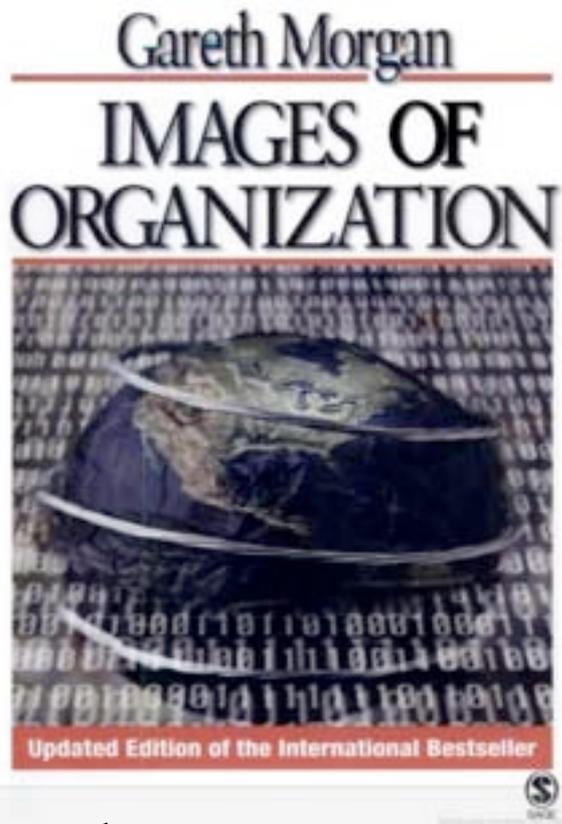
Morgan, G. (2007) p, 13



Organisations as “machine”



**MacDonald: the prototypical organisation
as a “*machine*” for producing hamburgers**



Organisations as “machine”

Morgan, G. (2007)

“The management observation checklist used by a famous fast-food restaurant to monitor employee performance (Exhibit 2.1) indicates the degree to which a simple task like serving a customer can be mechanized, observed, and evaluated in a mechanical way.”

Morgan, G. (2007) p, 13

Gareth Morgan

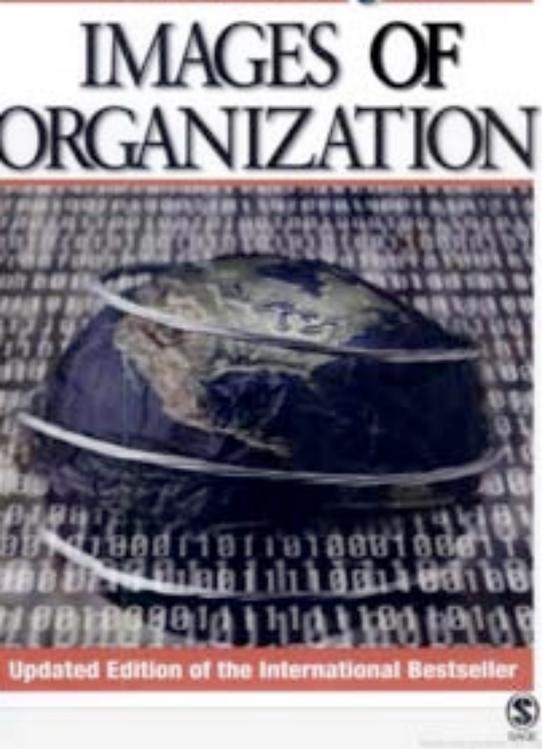
IMAGES OF ORGANIZATION



Organisations as “machine”

Morgan, G. (2007) p, 14

Greeting the customer	Yes	No
1. There is a smile.		
2. It is a sincere greeting.		
3. There is eye contact.		
Other:		
Taking the order	Yes	No
1. The counter person is thoroughly familiar with the menu ticket. (No hunting for items)		
2. The customer has to give the order only once.		
3. Small orders (four items or less) are memorized rather than written down.		
4. There is suggestive selling.		
Other:		
Assembling the order	Yes	No
1. The order is assembled in the proper sequence.		
2. Grill slips are handed in first.		
3. Drinks are poured in the proper sequence.		
4. Proper amount of ice.		
5. Cups slanted and finger used to activate.		
6. Drinks are filled to the proper level.		
7. Drinks are capped.		
8. Clean cups.		
9. Holding times are observed on coffee.		
10. Cups are filled to the proper level on coffee.		
Other:		
Presenting the order	Yes	No
1. It is properly packaged.		
2. The bag is double folded.		
3. Plastic trays are used if eating inside.		
4. A tray liner is used.		



The consequence for a metaphor of organisations as “machine”

“We talk about organizations as if they were machines, and as a consequence we tend to expect them to operate as machines: in a routinized, efficient, reliable, and predictable way.”

The consequence for a metaphor of culture as “machine”



If we assume a metaphor of a “culture” as “machine”, as a consequence we tend to expect it to operate as machine: in a routinized, efficient, reliable, and predictable way.

Cross-cultural psychology



**and the methodological consequence
of implicitly adopting the metaphor
of
culture as “machine”:
a review as case study**

Cross-cultural psychology



The main assumption:

- If *culture* is just a *country label*, or *ethnic label*, the **traditional cross-cultural** psychology is mostly a “*cross-countries*” psychology or “*cross-labels*” psychology

and its methodological implication:

- Traditional “*cross cultural approach*” applies scales of attitudes developed in western cultural society for example to an Asian country, without even questioning the meaning associated to the words and checking stability/instability of factorial structure.
- It is grounded in the *methodological individualism* of American social psychology mainstream: survey methods to analyse cultural communalities/differences between nationalities through concept like values, norms, self-identity, emotional expressions...

A case study on the way in which most of the cross-cultural psychology operates

A review on a **replication** study on CAS: **Celebrity worship: Selection of favourite celebrities and an examination of the factor structure of the Celebrity Attitude Scale in XXXXcountry/populations with ethnic differences.**

- A-critical conception of “culture” as just different nation or different ethnic group.
- As regards the “ethnic” variable, the authors assume it as simply a distinction between the two groups, XXX vs. XXX university students at two national universities in XXX, departing from previous studies that show differences between participants in mainland XXX, who tended to idolise celebrities perceived as realistic, practical, successful and socially altruistic, in agreement with a political-ideological and morally-desirable model promoted by the government and participants in XXX, who were more likely to idolise the hedonistic, extraordinary, romantic and commercial aspects of a celebrity.
- The variable “culture” in a rather simplistic way. For example, the authors provide no information about the “acculturation” of XXX students in XXX. We do not know if they have been there 1 year, since their childhood or if their parents immigrated and they were born there. In providing a cultural account of these two ethnic groups the authors completely disregarded relevant information, for example, the big difference in the two groups concerning religion.
- The lack of differences in the two ethnic groups regarding celebrity worship is attributed to the westernisation of XXX a multi-ethnic nation in Southeast Asia that recently has moved towards economic neo-liberalism and deregulation of the mass media.

A case study on the way in which most of the cross-cultural psychology operates

- The modelling role of the **UNIVERSITY STUDENTS of PSYCHOLOGY** as “**THE SUBJECTS**” of the **Culture**
- Also in the case study here presented, despite its size, the sample, only included poorly described **university students**. It does not satisfy the use of “culture” as the main variable of the study.
- In most “cross-national” studies, we find more differences within the same country between different groups chosen with a well-focussed distinctive **social positioning**, rather than between similar groups in different countries.
- The **time for cross-cultural psychology** studies built on university students (usually psychology students) and applying scales of attitudes developed in Western contexts to non-Western countries **is over**.

From “cross-cultural” psychology to “socio-cultural” psychology



- The variable “**culture**” needs to be dealt with in a more complex way.
- A crucial problem is the *level of analysis*:
 - **culture assumed as a whole** (es. individualism-collectivism)
 - **individuals as unit of analysis** (es. ideocentrism-allocentrism)
 - **no intermediation between culture and individuals**
- The conception of “culture” has been fertilised by paradigms (such as Socio-Cultural Psychology and Social Representations) that question the traditional way of conducting “cross-cultural” studies.

For a compendium about **socio-cultural psychology** see:

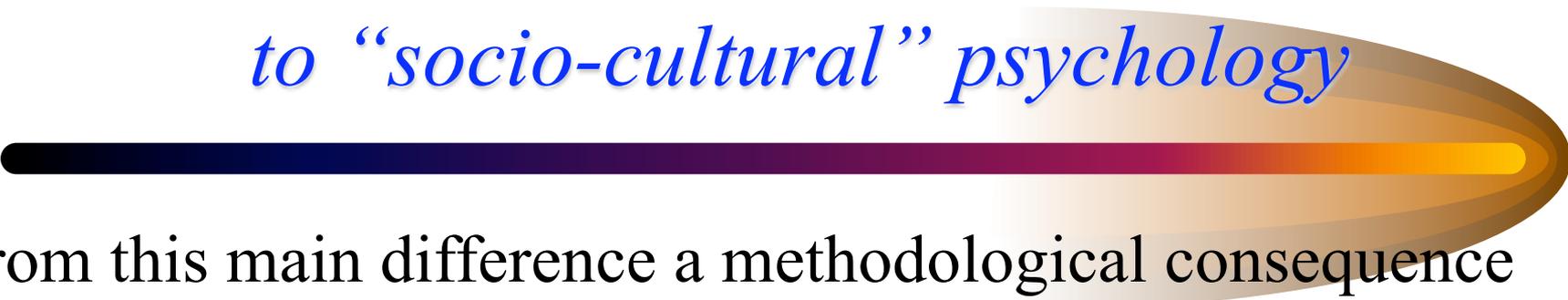
- Valsiner, J. & Rosa, A. Eds. (2007) *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociocultural Psychology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

From “cross-cultural” psychology to “socio-cultural” psychology



- The main difference can be summarised (Mazzara, 2007):
- for **cross-cultural psychology** (also declined as inter-cultural or trans-cultural psychology) *culture and psychological processes are distinct entities* (the universality of psychological processes starts when culture stops: es. looking for universal values, self-structure, etc.);
 - for **cultural psychology**, culture and psychological processes are deeply interconnected and mutually constitutive (looking for particular configurations, historically and contextualised determined, mediated by experience and artefacts, mind and culture in contexts)

From “cross-cultural” psychology to “socio-cultural” psychology



From this main difference a methodological consequence derives:

- for **cross-cultural psychology** ---- **empiricist-positivist approach** (based on experiments and survey) looking for invariant validity of results (the same hamburger in all cultures and contexts!)
- for **cultural psychology**----phenomenological, hermeneutical and constructivist approaches (based on linguistic, conversational or semiotic analyses) looking for meaningful narratives

The conceptual map of “socio-cultural” psychology



An heterogeneous family of interdisciplinary perspectives unified by a dialogues within and between psychology, sociology and anthropology, sharing with social representation paradigms:

- emphasis on the “*social*” in contrast with the “non-social”(individual-specific)
- focus on *language* (which unites persons into language communities)
- co-construction of knowledge and *meaning-making process*, based on interpretation of experience
- against *methodlatry* based on deterministic and causalistic level of explanation of psychological phenomena as in the physical world

The conceptual map of “socio-cultural” psychology

MAIN APPROACHES:

- the **activity-theoretic perspective** focussed on the direct mutuality of the persons and their socially organised settings (Boesch, 1993, 1997, 2005; Cole and Engestrom, 2007). Activity theory explains psychology as grounded in practical cultural activities.
- the **semeiotic mediational symbolic approach**, focussed on the construction and use of meaning as a bridge between the macro-social discursive foci and the interpersonal and group levels. The symbolic approach explains psychology as formed by collective symbols and concepts. It is close to the dialogical perspective on the self. Prominent figures who take the symbolic approach to cultural psychology are Geertz, Shweder, Lutz, Wierzbicka, M. Rosaldo, and Super & Harkness .
- the **discursive/conversational approaches**, ranging from macro-social to micro-social level of analysis: from the conception of people who use language to the the conception of language which use people;
- the **individualistic approach** emphasizes individual construction of psychological functions from collective symbols and artifacts. The individualistic approach to cultural psychology also finds expression in the work of Jaan Valsiner. Valsiner seeks to combine the symbolic and individualistic approaches.

Strengths And Weaknesses of Three Approaches to Cultural Psychology



- **Carl Ratner,**

Director of Institute for
Cultural Research and Education
Trinidad, CA, USA

Three Approaches to Cultural Psychology: a critique

<http://www.humboldt1.com>

Approach	Strengths	Weaknesses
Symbolic	Emphasizes cognitive basis of psychological processes	Overlooks practical activities, artifacts, and conditions
	Elaborates social content of psychological processes	Symbols appear arbitrary
	Recognizes social construction and sharing of concepts	Minimizes individual differences in concepts and processes
Personal	Emphasizes individual agency in constructing psychological phenomena from social influences	Indefinite process of social construction
	Emphasizes individual differences in psychological phenomena	Overlooks practical activities, artifacts, and conditions which affect psychology
	Emphasizes organized social action necessary to alter cultural and psychological phenomena	Overlooks organized social action necessary to alter cultural and psychological phenomena
Activity	Emphasizes action rather than pure cognition	Activity and tools are conceived as devoid of social content
	Emphasizes tools	Unclear about how activity organizes psychological processes
	Emphasizes social agency	Minimizes individual agency
	Recognizes heterogeneity of psychological processes	

Toward an Integral Framework for Cultural Psychology anchored in Durkheim epistemology

A viable approach to cultural psychology should synthesize the strengths and avoid the weaknesses of the foregoing three theories.

(Carl Ratner, *Three Approaches to Cultural Psychology: a critique*)

1) **Psychological phenomena are cultural in their essence.** This tenet is drawn from the symbolic and activity approaches to cultural psychology. It means that psychological phenomena are formed as people participate in social life, they embody characteristics of a particular social life, and they generate behavior that perpetuates particular social relationships. To say that psychological phenomena are cultural means that they are social facts, **formed and shared through social processes that transcend individual processes.** Even emotions, which appear to be deeply personal, are cultural phenomena.

2) The cultural essence of psychological phenomena consists in practical **social activities.** Activities are socially organized behaviors which people devise to meet their practical needs. Activities include working, educating, playing, governing, treating disease, adjudicating disputes, arranging family life. Activities are conducted according to particular behavioral norms; rewarded with different levels of prestige, wealth, privileges, rights, and opportunities; allotted to certain members (groups) of the population; controlled by certain members (groups) of the population; and structured with other activities in a division of labor. This social organization is built into activity and constitutes its concrete character. Activities are the ways human life is organized. **As such, activities define the kinds of things that people think about, perceive, imagine, remember, speak, and feel; activities also structure how we think, perceive, imagine, speak, feel, and remember.**

Toward an Integral Framework for Cultural Psychology anchored in Durkheim epistemology

A viable approach to cultural psychology should synthesize the strengths and avoid the weaknesses of the foregoing three theories.

(Carl Ratner, Three Approaches to Cultural Psychology: a critique)

3) Psychological phenomena are organized by social concepts as symbolic cultural psychologists, and certain activity theorists such as Vygotsky, emphasize. However, contrary to the **symbolic approach**, people do not collectively form symbolic concepts on a purely mental level. People's conceptions about things, people, and events depend upon the activities which they devise for dealing with them. (**Concepts also depend upon experience with the natural environment.**)

4) Social activities, concepts, and psychological phenomena are devised by humans, as individualistic cultural psychologists insist. However, contrary to their view, **agency is not an individual attribute which spontaneously and unpredictably spins out idiosyncratic meanings**. Nor is it formed on a purely interpersonal level through face-to-face co-regulations. **Agency develops through participating in broad, collective social activities.**

Grounding psychological phenomena in cultural activities, institutions, and conditions does not reify them as individualistic cultural psychologists imagine. **Durkheim** explained this point when he said that "sociology in no way imposes upon man a passively conservative attitude." On the contrary, "sociology which by discovering the laws of social reality will permit us to direct historical evolution with greater reflection than in the past" (Durkheim, 1909/1978, p. 75).

From “cultural psychology” to “Social Representations”

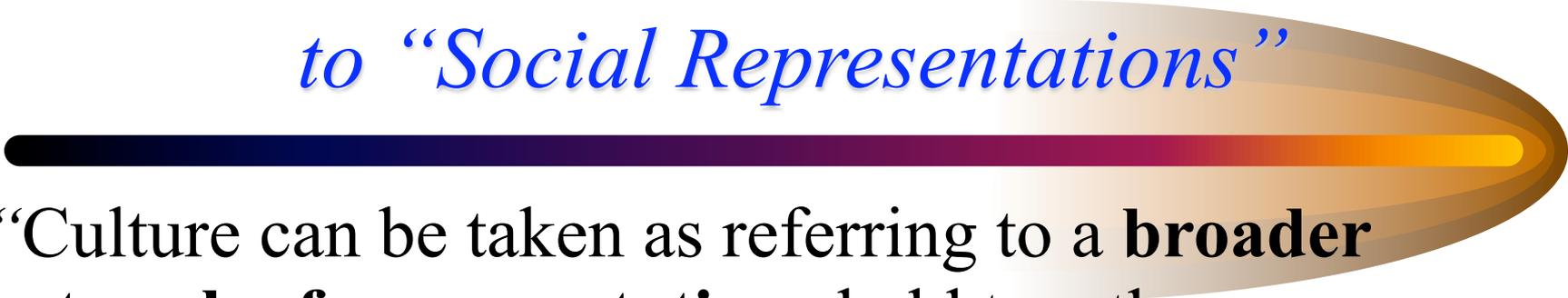
- Assumption of the **variable “culture”** as being a more complex, multi-level and interrelated dimension in the construction of the hypotheses, research design, methodological choices and interpretation of the results.
- At the crossroad between social psychology and sociology, Social Representation theory has represented an **alternative to both the individuo-centric theorizing of social cognition and the socio-centric notion of collective representation in Durkheim.**
- Social Representations **are not simply objects of investigation of cultural psychology**, or a domain of study. Social Representation is primarily A THEORY , the UNIFYING THEORY in SOCIAL SCIENCE, a sort of of META-THEORY.

From “cultural psychology” to “Social Representations”



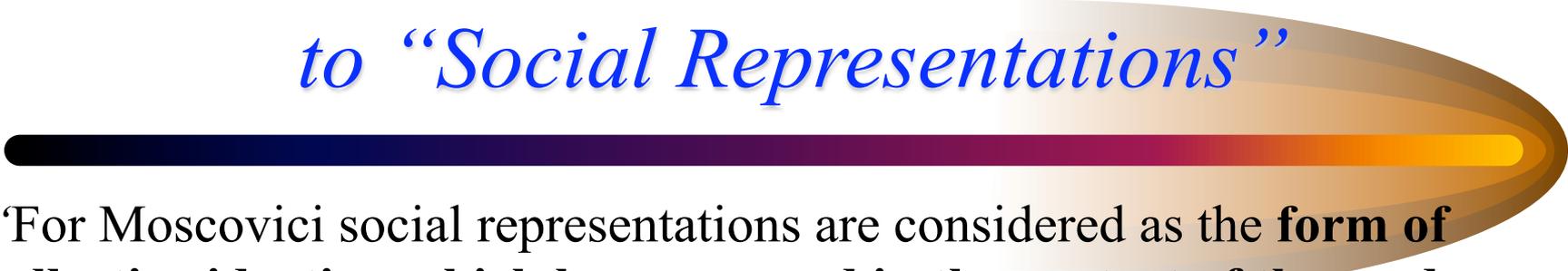
- “If these emerging common points of interest and concern hold the promise of a **productive engagement between cultural psychology and the theory of social representations**, we should also note that while the term “**culture**” and “**social representations**” appear to refer to different level of analysis, nevertheless whatever it is that we take to be connoted by the term culture only becomes accessible through the observation and analysis of specific representations” (Duveen, G. , 2007, p. 544)
- see also: Jodelet, D., Guerrero, A. (Eds). (2000). *Develando La Cultura*. Mexico,

From “cultural psychology” to “Social Representations”



- “Culture can be taken as referring to a **broader network of representations** held together as an organised whole by a community.
- Social representations can be seen as **particular cultural forms**, and the analysis of social representations will always refer **back in some way to the cultural context in which they take shape**”
 - (Duveen, G. , 2007, p. 544)

From “cultural psychology” to “Social Representations”



- “For Moscovici social representations are considered as the **form of collective ideation which has appeared in the context of the modern world.**
- Whereas **pre-modern civilization** are generally characterised by unitary structure of power, authority and legitimation, the **modern world** is rather characterised by a diversity of forms of belief, understanding and practice in which different social groups construct their own understanding of social processes and social life, in short, their own **representations**, which may not only **distinguish one group from another**, but can also be the **source of conflicts among them.** (...)
- Representations are **the products of patterns of communication within social groups and across society as whole**, and thus, importantly, are also susceptible to change and transformation.”

By definition Social Representations are :

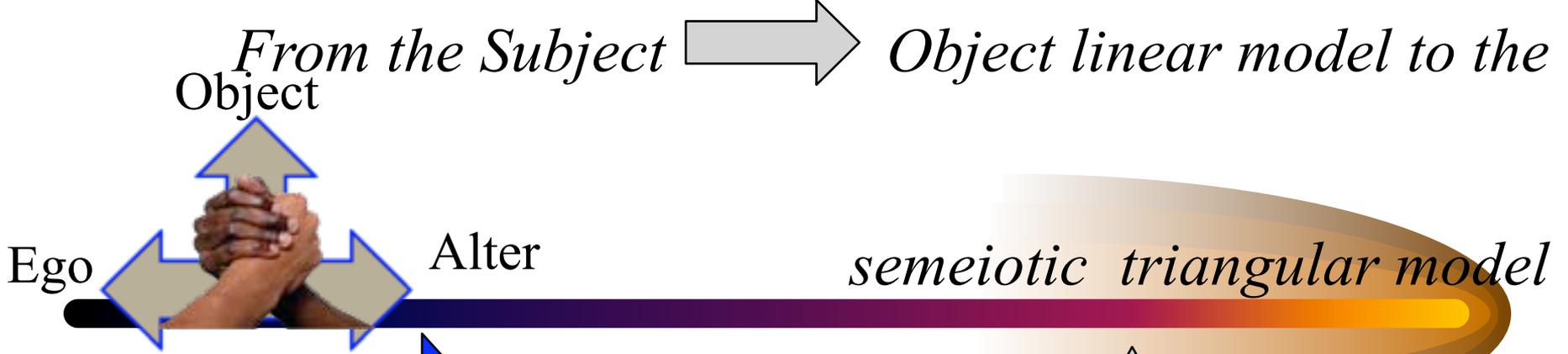
...forms of social thinking used to **communicate (AIM)**, understand and master the social, material, and intellectual environment.

As such, they are analyzed as products and processes of mental activity that are socially marked. This social marking refers to conditions and contexts where representations emerge, to **communication** by which they circulate, and to the functions they serve. **(TRANSMISSION)**

This form of knowledge is constructed in the course of social interaction and **communication. (GENESIS) (...)**

Thus it orientes and organizes our behaviour and **communication (FUNCTION)”**

(Jodelet, 1993: 184)



From a linear perceptual individualistic model, where “**Social**” is the **object of the Cognition**

TO

a
co-constructed
socially generated
representational system,
where “**Social**” is
at the same time essential to
the *genesis, production,
functions, transmission and
transformation* of Social Reps

*Just a note on a Key details:
what's **Social** in **SOCIAL COGNITION** and
SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS THEORIES?*



“When I say I was looking for an idea or concept , I do not mean a notion which could be used just by sticking the *label* “**social**” to it, as when one says *social cognition, social attitude, social construction* in opposition to *individual cognition, individual attitude or individual construction*.

I mean an idea or concept which has a theoretical meaning based on a demonstration that **knowledge or thinking is necessarily social**, just as in physics you demonstrate that matter has to be necessarily atomic”

(Moscovici, 2000)

HOW Social Representation Theory can contribute to the understanding of SOCIETAL ISSUES?



- ONE THEORY
- different APPROACHES
- different anchoring and development of the S.R. THEORY into different cultural CONTEXTS

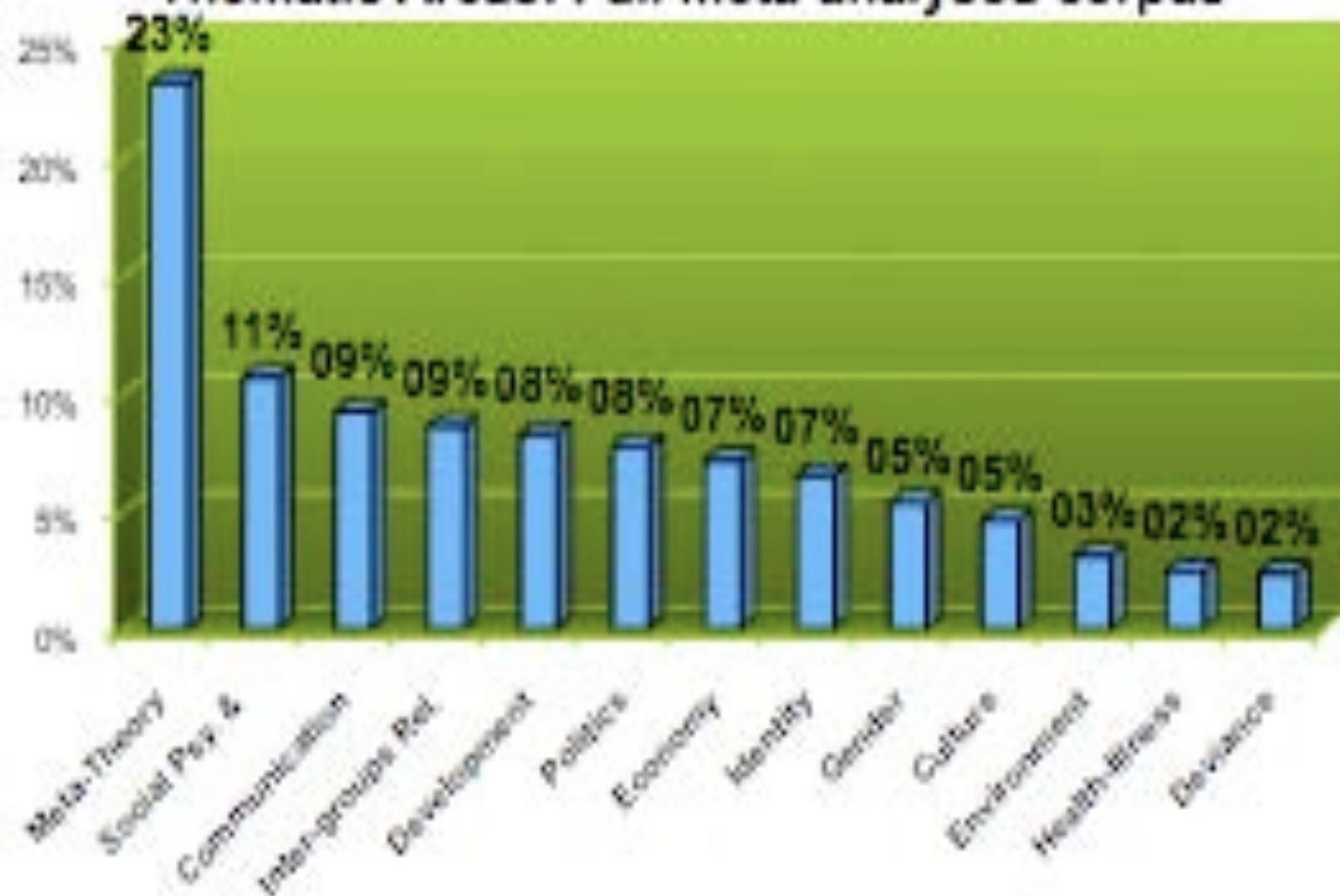


From Ravello (1992) to Bali (2008): the growth in participation to the 9 International Conferences on S.R

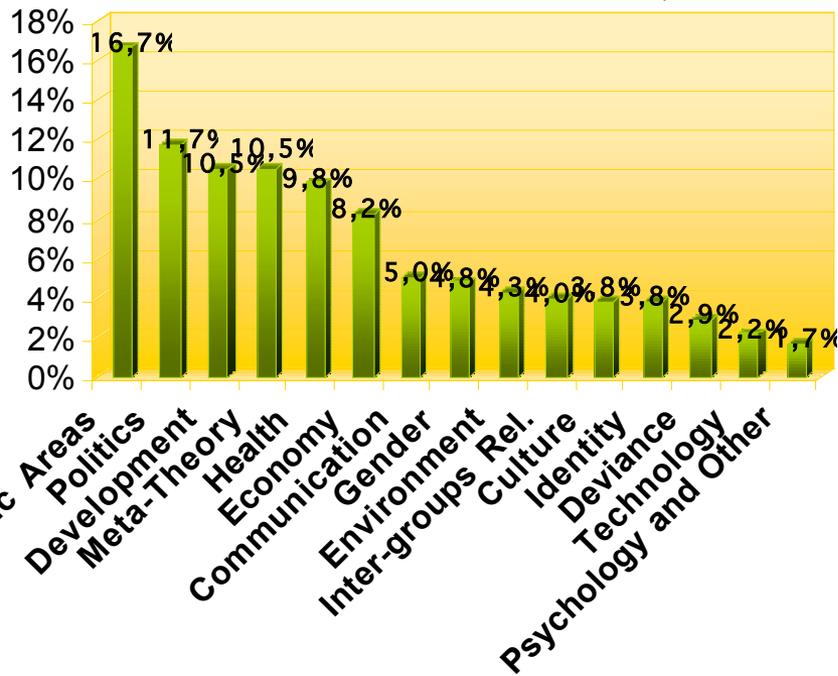


- During the time span from the Ravello Conference in 1992 to the latest International Conference held in Bali in 2008, one notes, in fact, a **growth in participation** in numerical terms that we do not hesitate to define **exponential**, including **diversification not only** in the range of geographic/cultural origins of the participants, but also in **the content** and in the theoretical interests as well as in the methodological approaches: **the expanded interest for “Culture” in the first Asiatic Conference on S.R.**

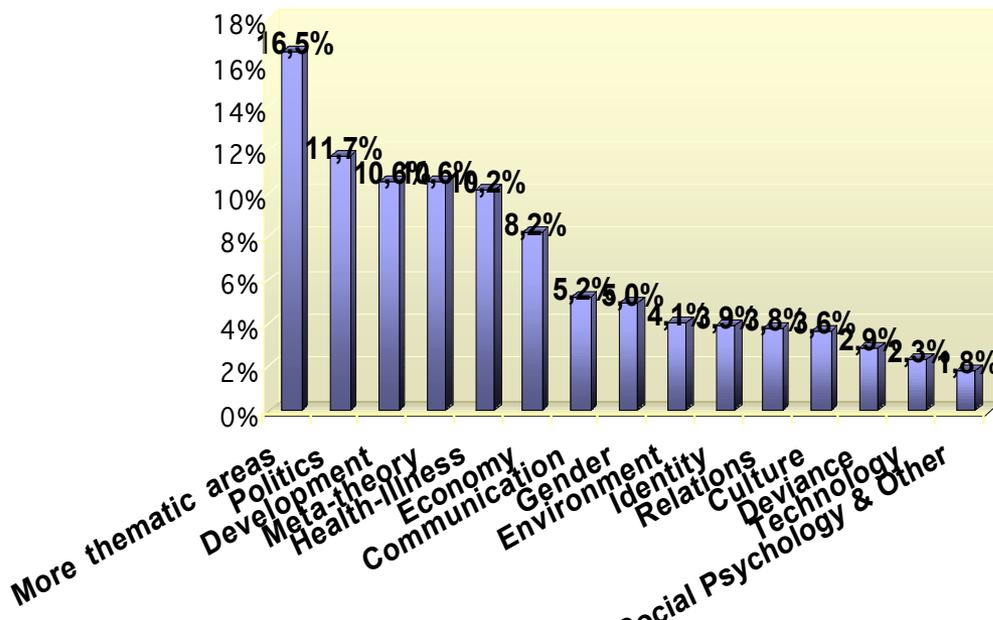
Thematic Areas: Full meta-analysed corpus



Bali, 2008



Rome, 2006

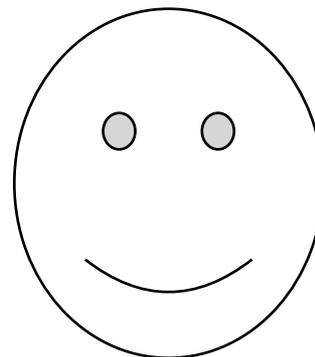
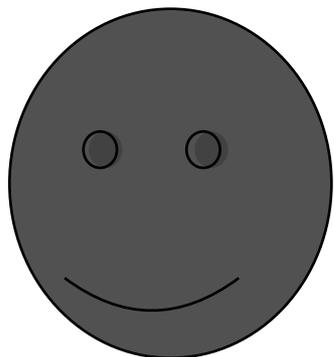


THEMATIC AREAS

Given the significance of the number of abstracts dealing with several thematic areas (16,7%), two large relatively homogenous results **categories** emerge:

- The first group, with higher frequencies, contains: *Politics and ideology* (11.7%), *Development and education* (10.5%), *SRT, meta-theory and methodological issues* (10.5%), *Health/illness* (9.8%), *Economics-labour-organization* (8.2%).
- The second group, with lower frequencies, consists of: *Communication and multimedia* (5%), *Gender* (4.8%), *Environment* (4.3%), *Interpersonal and inter-group relationship* (4%), *Culture* (3.8%), *Identity* (3.8%), *Deviance* (2.9%), *Technology* (2.2%), *Social psychology and other* (1.7%). This thematic profile is very similar to the one of the 8 ICSRs presented in Rome with the only peculiarity of the increasing of the thematic areas *Interpersonal and inter-group relationship* and *Culture*.

Is Culture in a Colour?



*Why to study Social Representations
is so interesting
in the contemporary knowledge society?*

- Just an example:

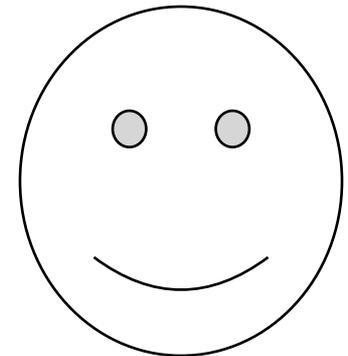
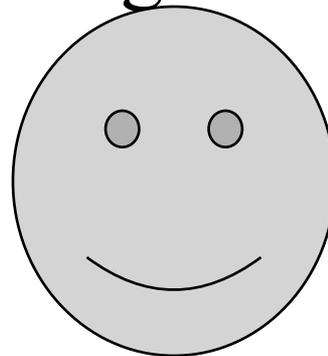
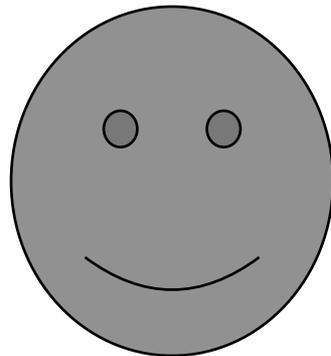
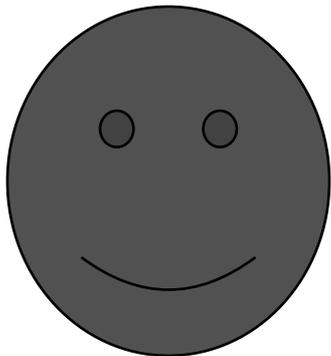
Is Mr.Barack Ohama

BLACK

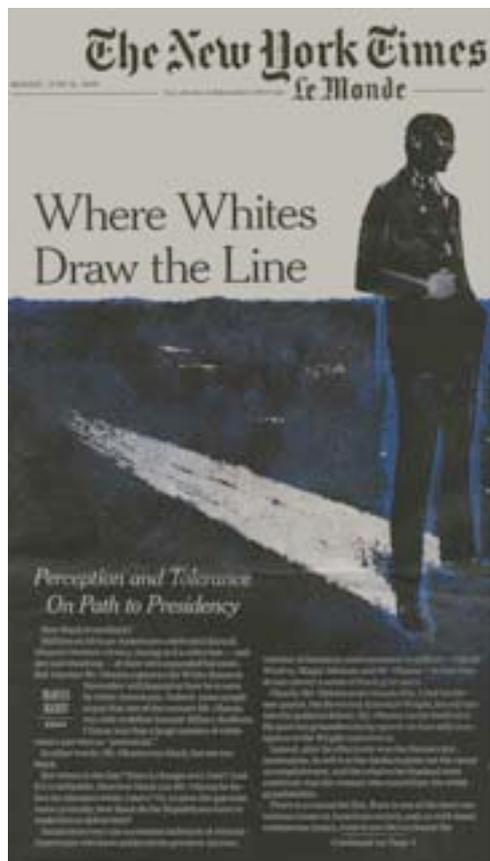
or

WHITE

enough?



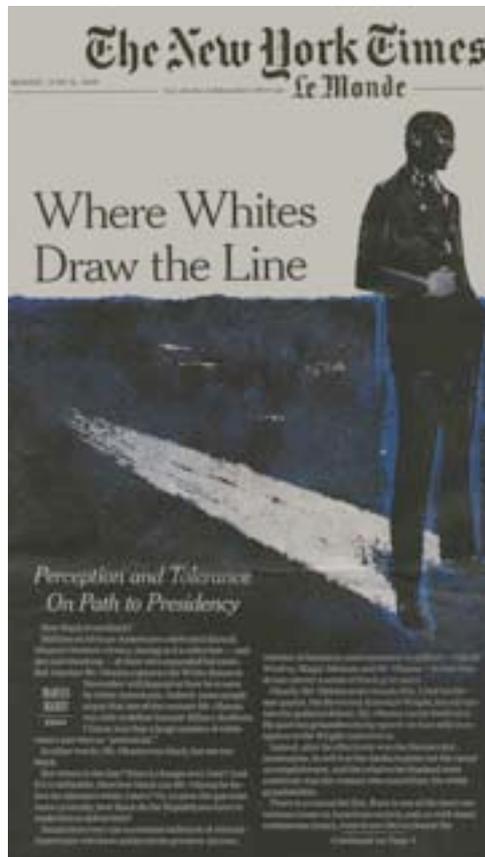
Just an example:



This picture and text published on the New York Times Le Monde edition on Sunday, June 15- Monday, June 16, 2008, gave me the idea to present the case of Barack Obama in my Bali speech as a very concrete example to illustrate how social representations operate in society and media, defining social positioning of individuals and groups, and in which respect empirical studies inspired by social representations theory might be interesting compared to other approaches in contemporary social psychology.

Just an example:

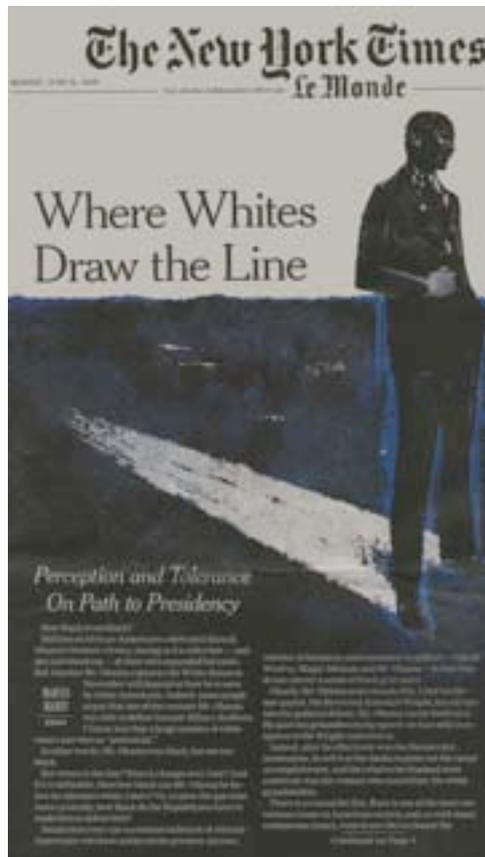
How black is too black?



“Millions of African-Americans celebrated Barack Obama’s historic victory, seeing in it a reflection – sudden and shocking – of their own expanded horizons. But *whether Mr. Obama captures the White House in November will depend on how he is seen by white Americans.* Indeed, some people argue that one of the reasons Mr. Obama was able to defeat Senator Hillary Clinton was that a large number of white voters saw him as

“POST-RACIAL”.

Just an example:



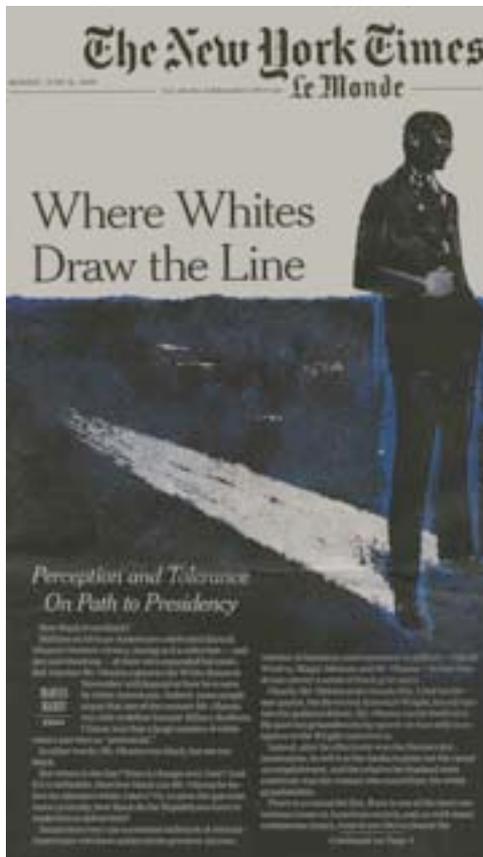
What does it mean

“POST-RACIAL”?

- The **question** is a **typical hot issue** of **“SOCIAL”** **relevance** which can be highly interesting for a Social Representation investigation.
- The **answer** has been already partially addressed in some exemplary studies, which I am going to quote just to refer to our scientific field moving from a very concrete contemporary hot issue.

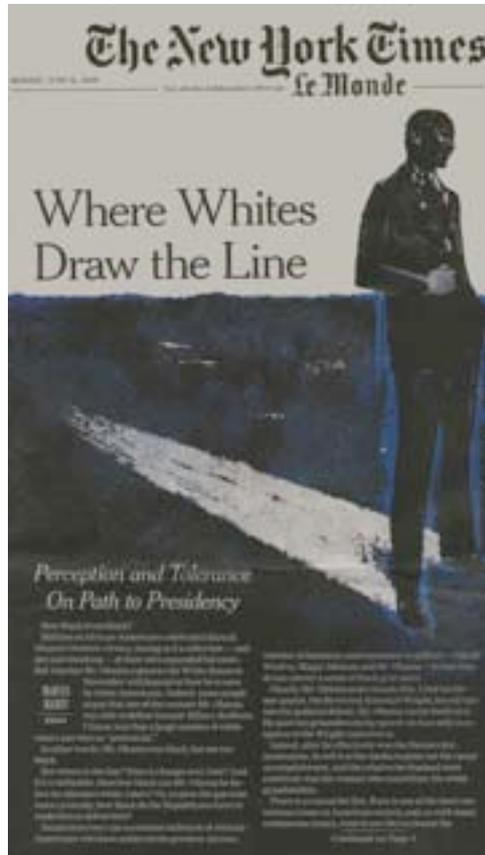
Just an example:

**A crucial point of the campaign:
Mr. Obama was
BLACK, BUT NOT TOO BLACK!**



- **But where is the line?**
- **Does it change over time?**
- **And if it is definable, than how black can Mr. Obama be before he alienates white voters?**
- **Or , to pose the question more cynically, *how black do the Republicans have to make him to defeat him?***

Just an example:



“Mr. Obama rarely dwelt on it.

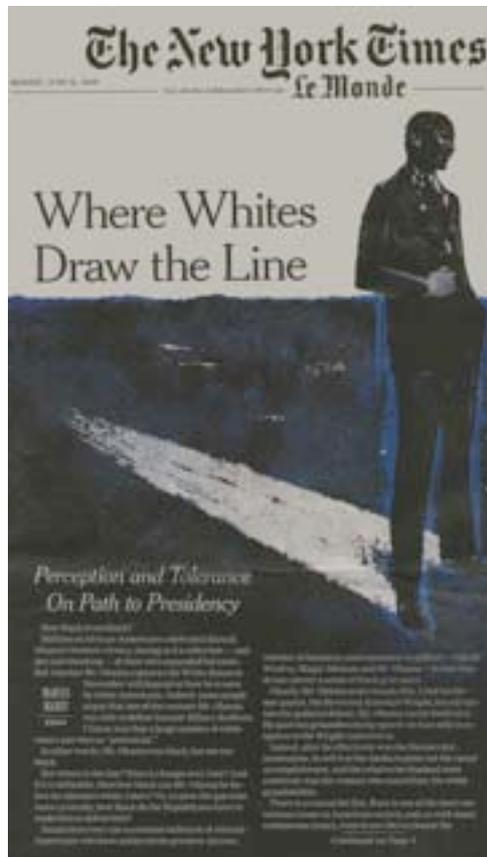
Indeed, after he effectively won the Democratic nomination, HE LEFT THE RACIAL ISSUE TO THE MEDIA to point out the racial accomplishment.

There is a reason for this. RACE IS ONE OF THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES IN AMERICAN SOCIETY, and, as with many contentious issues, Americans like to choose the middle path between extremes.

Alan Wolfe, a political science professor at Boston College, said:

“In many ways, Obama is an *ideal middle way person*: he is just as white as he is black” .

Just an example:



Indeed Obama's father was a **black Kenyan** and his mother a **white American**. His *mixed race heritage* is less discomfiting to whites, than the more common source of black American's mixed-race blood: the miscegenation of slavery.

Mr. Obama is of a different place and time than the generation of black leaders forged in the civil rights struggles.

.

Just an example:

Another Obama.....

**Anchoring social representation to
“Asiatic- American community”**

From the official Obama web-site:

*“We are seeking your support of **our big brother, Barack Obama, for President.**”*



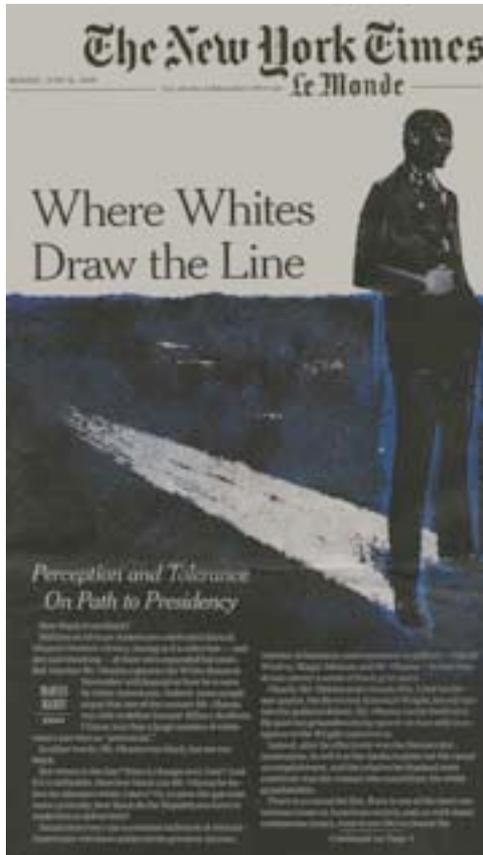
The New York Times
Le Monde

Where Whites
Draw the Line



We are so excited by Barack's candidacy and truly believe that his presidency will make this country and world a better place. We also believe that Barack is the first and only presidential candidate who has a personal understanding of the issues and experiences that demarcate our community. Barack spent his early years immersed in the complex combination of Malay, Chinese, and Indian cultural influences. Barack was born in Hawai'i and spent his adolescence in a state known for its dynamic, pluralistic climate in which Asians, Pacific Islanders, Native Hawaiians, Euro-Americans and others engaged in often subtle and constant negotiation. Barack is now based in Illinois, where he has a deep-rooted friendship with the state's vibrant Asian American community and he returns to Hawai'i every year to visit us and for rejuvenation. We strongly believe that Barack's connection to the Asian American and Pacific Islander community is reflected in his politics – he believes in values such as hard work, family, spirituality, education and security.

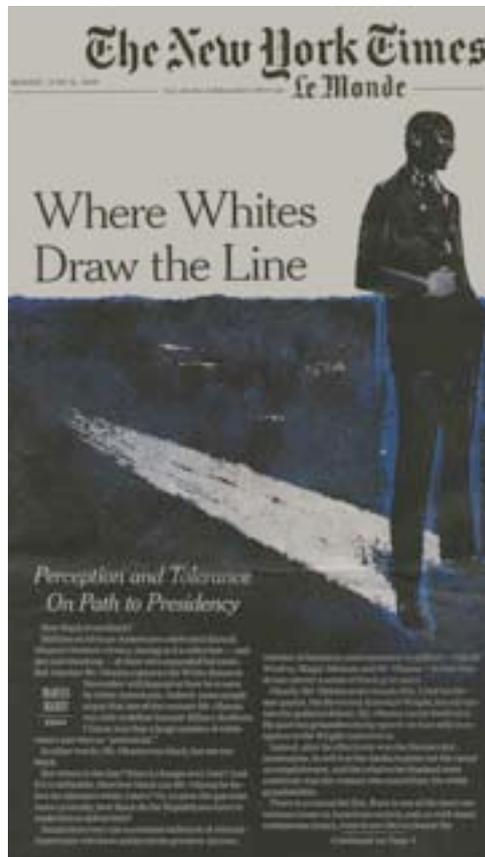
Just an example:



“Mr. Obama’s generation of black political leaders have benefited from the gains of the civil rights movement, and are now attempting to broaden them.

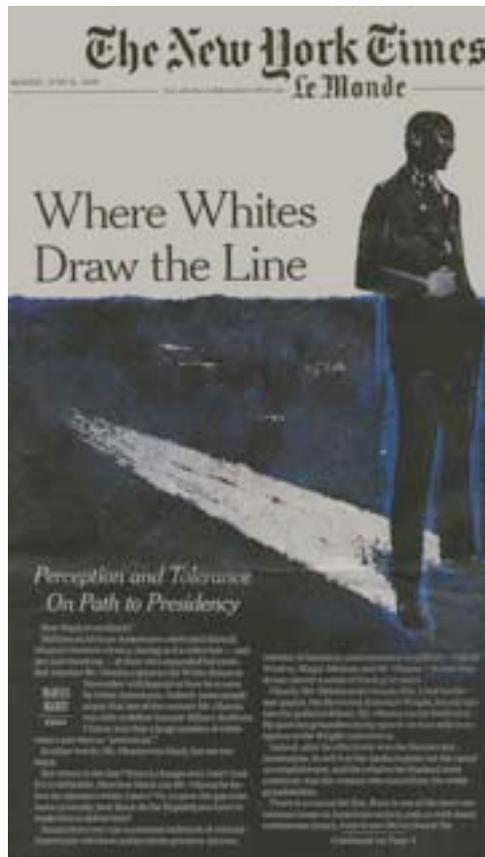
Mr. Obama so **de-emphasized race** that for most of the 17^{months} contest some of the news media became obsessed with the question of whether he was “**black enough**” to win black votes.”

Just an example:



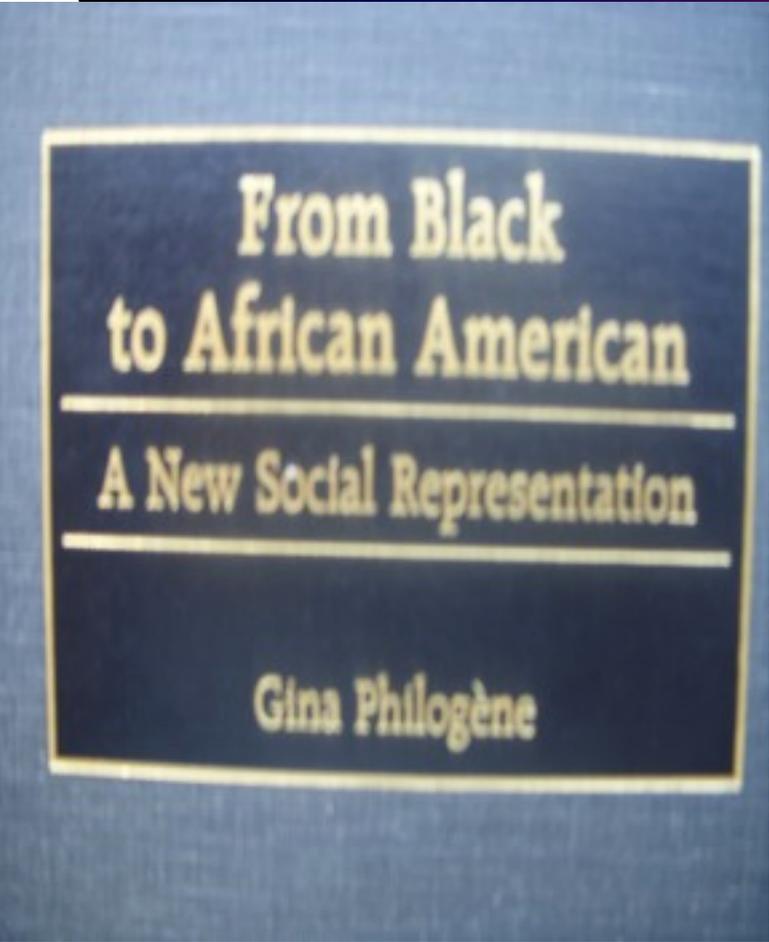
“...I was NOT BLACK ENOUGH,
now I am TOO BLACK....”

Just an example:



By reading the Marcus Mabry's article, I immediately went back to two studies which can illustrate why the interest of investigating social phenomenon from the social representations perspective, rather than from other approaches of contemporary social psychology, like, for example, the widely diffused approach of social cognition in the US mainstream tradition.

Just an example:

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is dark blue with a lighter blue rectangular area in the center containing the title and author's name in yellow text. The title is 'From Black to African American' and the subtitle is 'A New Social Representation'. The author's name is 'Gina Philogène'.

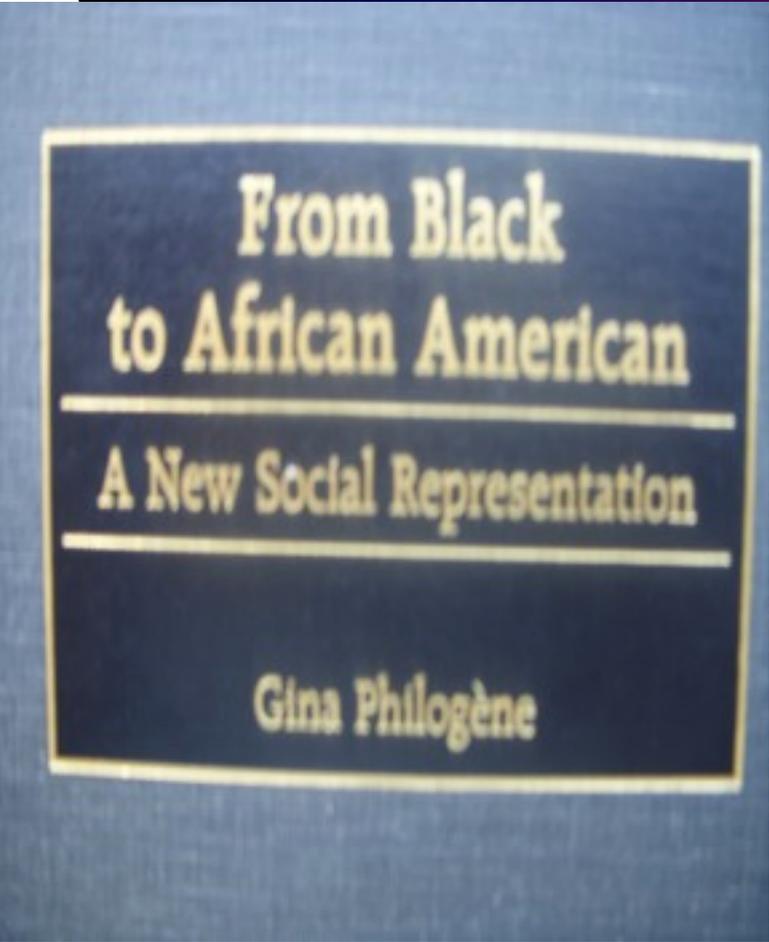
From Black
to African American

A New Social Representation

Gina Philogène

The first study, published by Gina Philogene in 1999, provides an empirical confirmation of at what extent the theory of social representations offers a heuristic tool to investigate dynamic phenomena in *statu nascenti* (rather than reified and crystallized cognition), “as **beliefs in motion within a society, rather than beliefs that remain static and are internalized by the individuals** making up that society” (Moscovici, foreword)

Just an example:

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is a dark blue color with a lighter blue rectangular area in the center. Inside this area, the title 'From Black to African American' is written in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. Below the title, there are two horizontal yellow lines. Between these lines, the subtitle 'A New Social Representation' is written in the same yellow font. At the bottom of the central area, the author's name 'Gina Philogène' is written in the same yellow font. The book is slightly angled, and there is a soft shadow to its right.

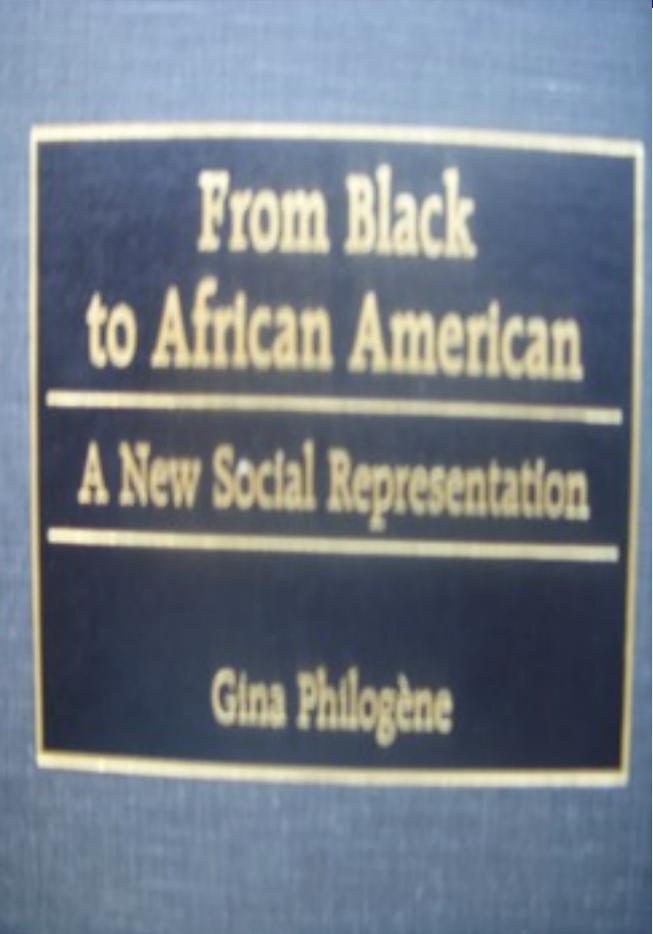
From Black
to African American

A New Social Representation

Gina Philogène

The “*anticipatory*” representation identified by Gina Philogène in the emergence of the term “African American” - replacing the BLACK - shows the extent to which the switch to a new denomination rapidly became common practice in social interaction, in everyday conversation, mediatic communication and elaboration of a new social reality, **redirecting attention away from race** and stressing the common destiny of all Americans.

Just an example:



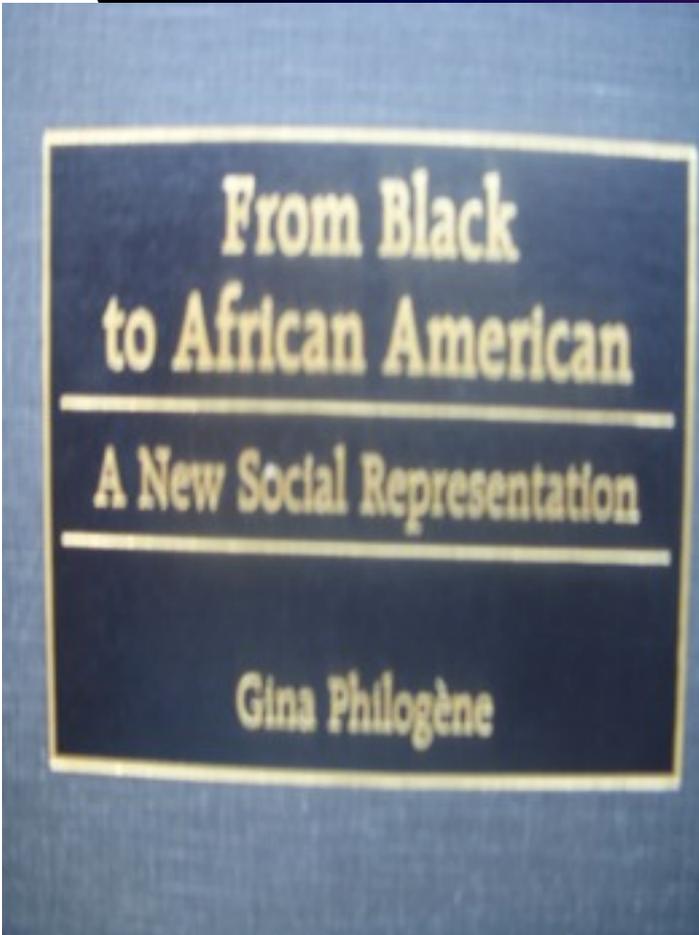
From Black
to African American

A New Social Representation

Gina Philogène

The new emerging representation has been studied by Gina Philogène as a new symbolic expression of the duality between “**differentiation from**” and “**uniformity with**” the American culture, showing an attempt to modify cognitions and attitudes concerning black Americans in the direction of inclusion and equality, as she summarised in the following schema:

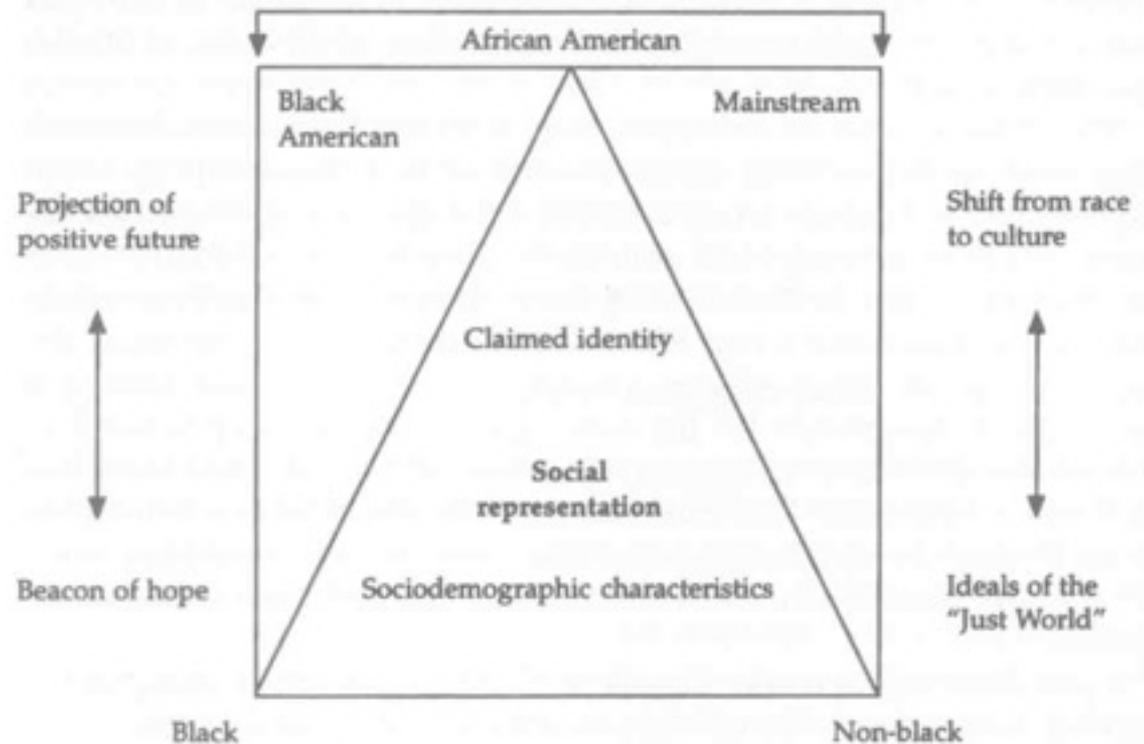
Just an example:

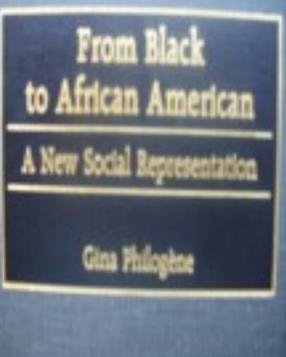


182

From Black to African American

Figure 9.1
The Triangular Model of a Social Representation





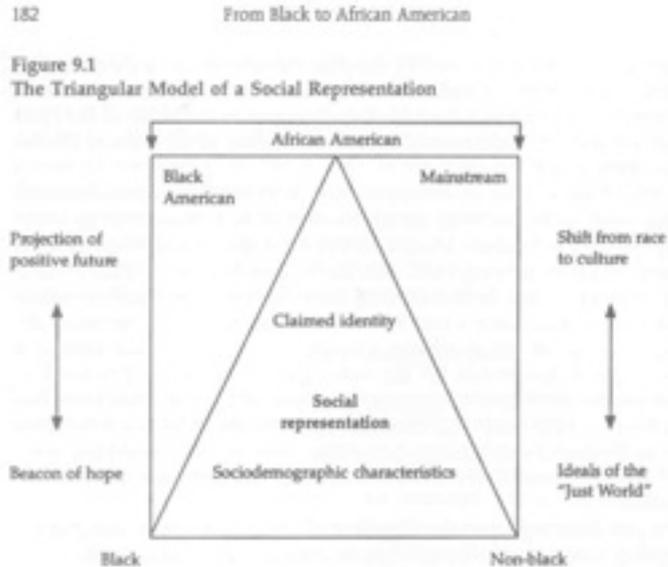
Just an example:

The figure illustrated the interconnections between the three components (Black-NonBlack-African-American) of the *triangular model* that define the social representation of African American.

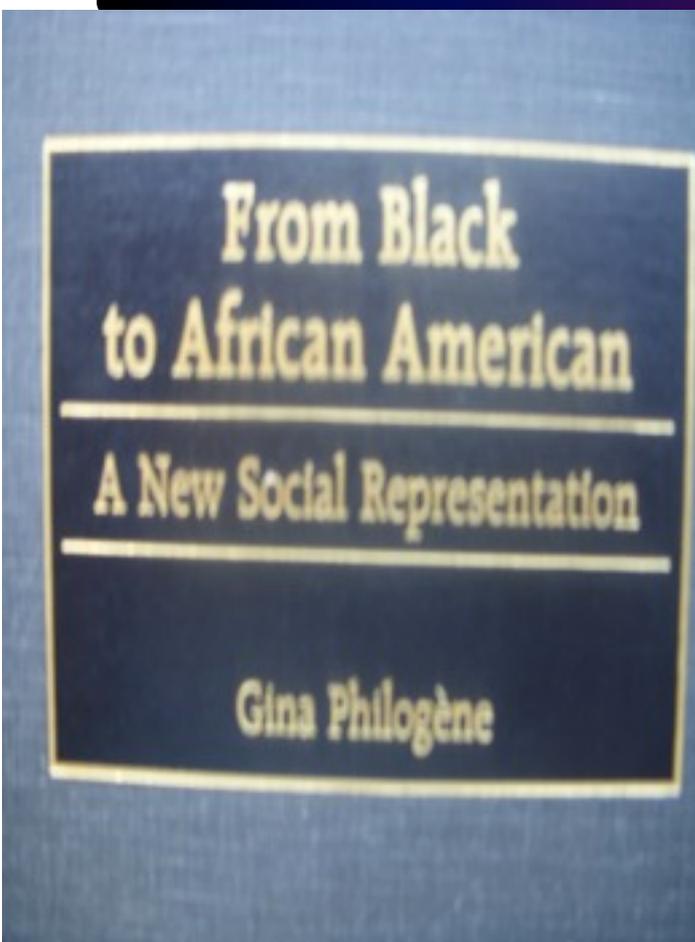
The **new object** combines the reality of **Black American** with that of the **mainstream**.

- **For Black** the new representation is associated with **projections of a positive future**.

- **For Non Black** this representation symbolizes a **shift from race to culture**, supporting the ideals of a **“Just World”**.



Just an example:

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is dark blue with a gold-colored border. The title 'From Black to African American' is written in a large, bold, gold-colored serif font. Below the title, there is a horizontal gold line, followed by the subtitle 'A New Social Representation' in a smaller, gold-colored serif font. Another horizontal gold line is below the subtitle. At the bottom of the cover, the author's name 'Gina Philogène' is written in a gold-colored serif font.

From Black
to African American

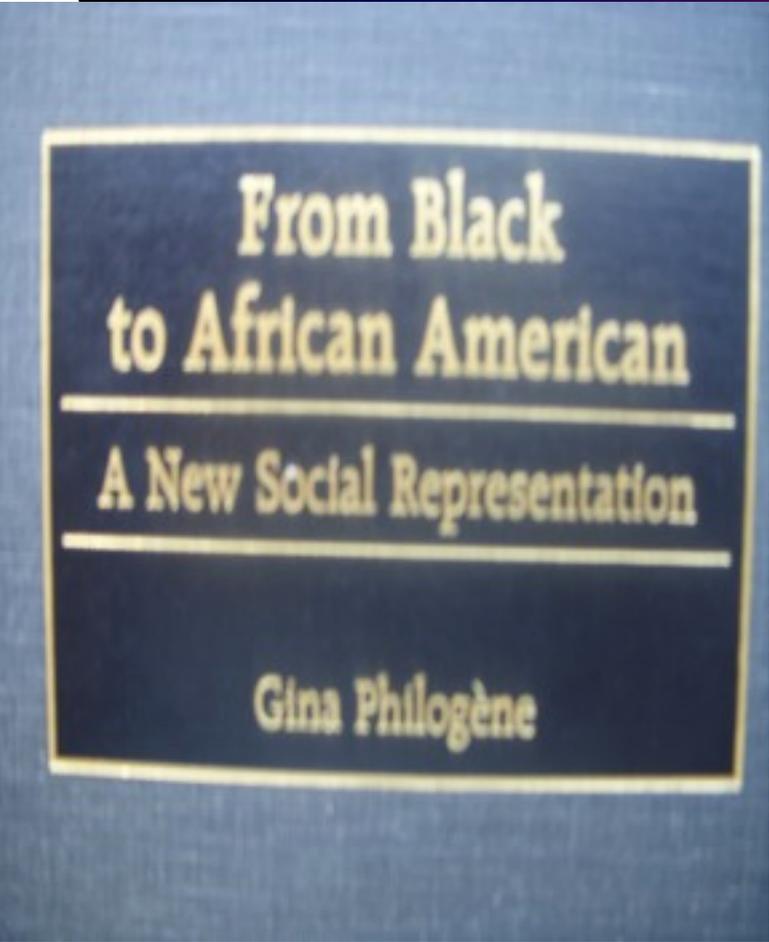
A New Social Representation

Gina Philogène

“African American, representing the first **post-segregation generation of black** Americans, symbolizes the possibility of full integration, the possibility that the **dream of a color-blind society** may one day be realized.

The term African American is therefore of direct relevance here as **group designation** which in its structure, equals those used for other groups in this multi-ethnic society” (Philogene, 1999)

Just an example:

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is a dark blue color with a lighter blue rectangular area in the center. Inside this area, the title 'From Black to African American' is written in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. Below the title, there is a horizontal line, followed by the subtitle 'A New Social Representation' in a smaller, yellow, sans-serif font. Another horizontal line is below the subtitle, and at the bottom of the central area, the author's name 'Gina Philogène' is written in the same yellow, sans-serif font. The book is shown at a slight angle, and the background behind it is a gradient of colors from purple to yellow.

A New Social Representation

Gina Philogène

The possible **objectification** - ten year later - of the anticipatory new social representation detected by Gina Philogène provides an explanation of the rhetorical device used by Obama media campaign. In fact it **shifts attention from race** (which was at the core of the “Black Power” Civil Right movement in the 1960s) **to a *color-blind* society**, guided by Affirmative Action depending on a degree of cooperation and interaction among the groups rather than a radical exclusive opposition.

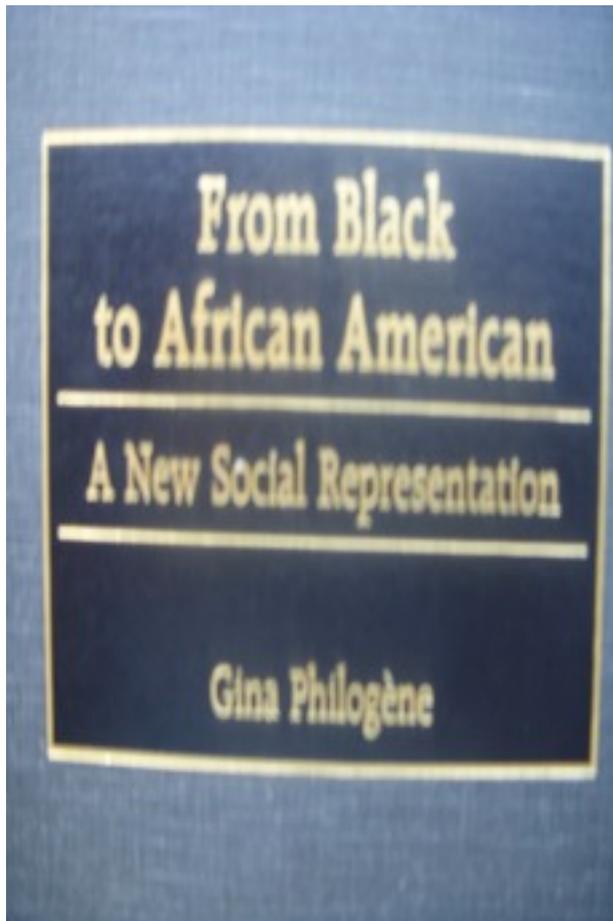
Just an example:



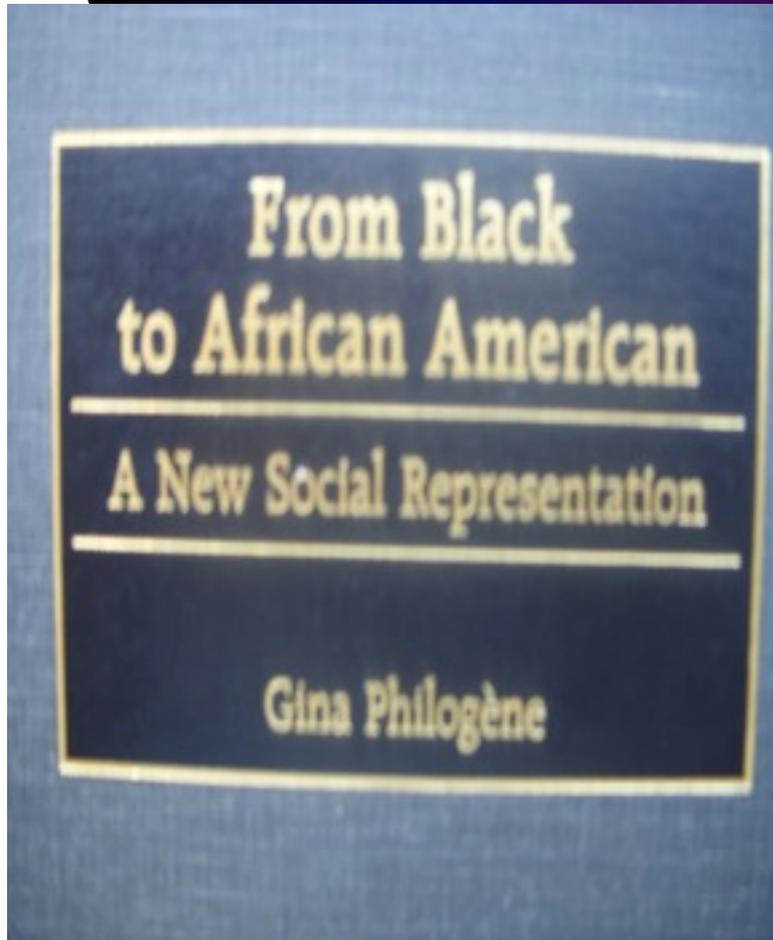
“Yes we can!”

is a new 2008 chapter of the 1963 *future visioning and shaping* Martin Luther King’s discourse **“I have a dream!** positioning symbolically in the people’ representation systems:

- the **future** into the **present**,
- the **dreams** into **reality**,
- the **divisions** into **union**.



Just an example:

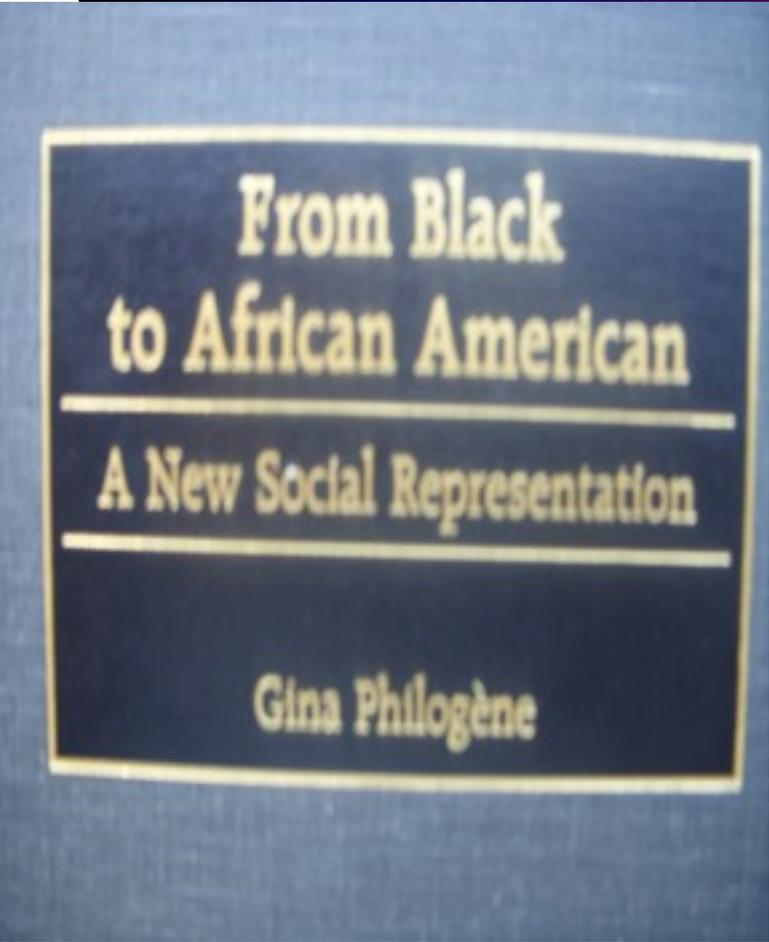


What is important here is not how much the Gina Philogène study provided in 1999 an exact prediction about the time needed for the dream to be transformed into reality and for the prejudices to disappear, not only on surface.

This will happen only **when** and **if** – in addition to the *re-labelling process* – will also occur a transformation in the in-depth collective subtle imaginary, where:

- **Black** has been always associated with *bad-impure-dirty-Devil* and
- **White** with *good-pure-clean-Angel*.

Just an example:



From Black
to African American

A New Social Representation

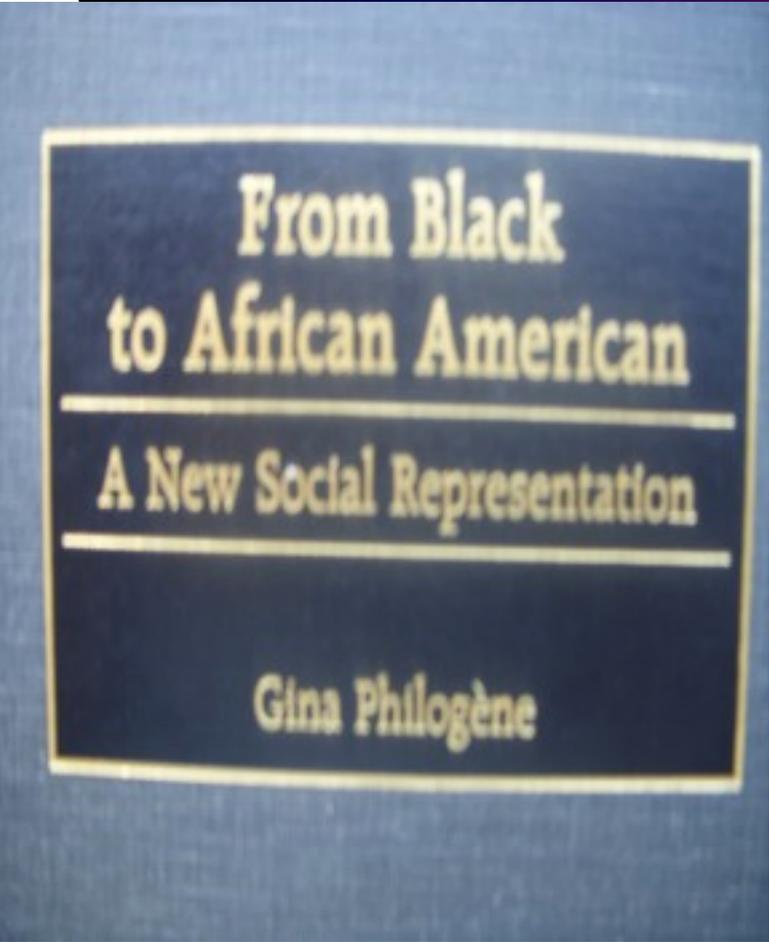
Gina Philogène

In Bali last year I said: “The question here is not whether Obama will become or not the next US President of all Americans in 2008;

but how investigating the social representations - *mediated by* and *mediating the* poliphonic communication systems, *guided by* and *guiding the* social interactive processes, practices and actions – can help us in better understanding some phenomena of the complexity of our social contemporary reality in its fast *glocal* making and transformation, for example understanding:

why and *how* a too **Black** a not enough **Black**, an **African American**, an **Asiatic-American**, an **American**, or finally a *human being*....would have any success in becoming one of the most influential leader in the world, also depending on race-nationhood representations

Just an example:

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is a dark blue color with a lighter blue rectangular area in the center. Inside this area, the title 'From Black to African American' is written in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. Below the title, there is a horizontal line, followed by the subtitle 'A New Social Representation' in the same font. Another horizontal line is below the subtitle, and at the bottom of the central area, the author's name 'Gina Philogène' is written in the same font. The book is slightly angled, and there is a dark purple and blue shadow behind it.

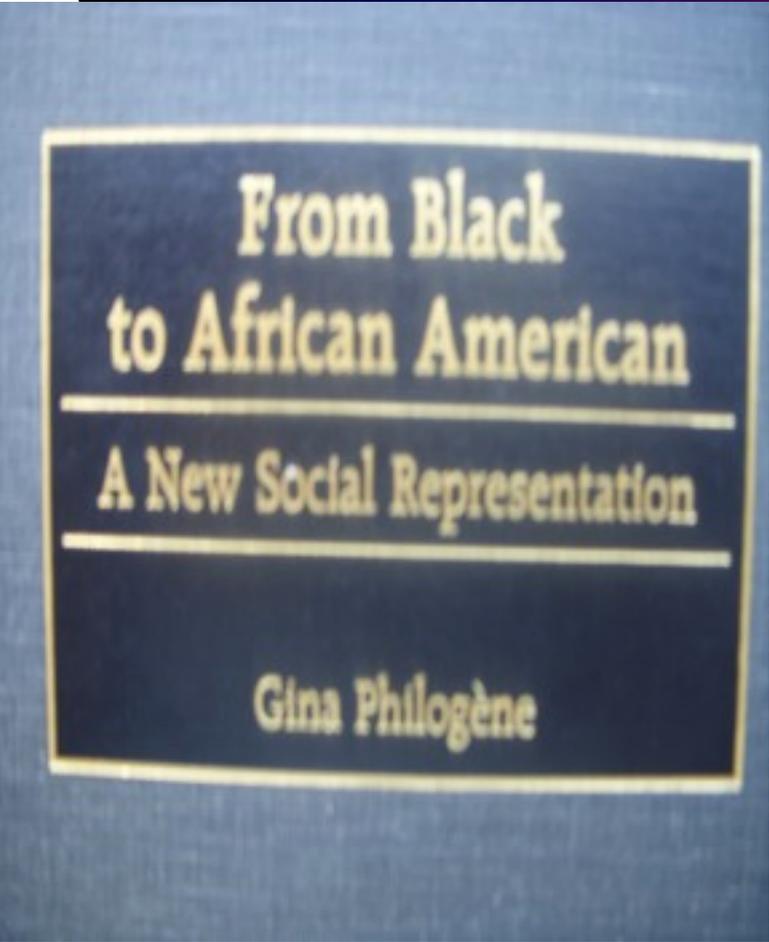
From Black
to African American

A New Social Representation

Gina Philogène

Finally - after one year - with Mr. Obama President of the USA and thousands of books written on the successful story of his campaign and on his life (including his own autobiography), we are more comfortable to assert that the phenomenon we have illustrated in Bali conference last year is now a piece of history (and no more a magician's prediction).

Just an example:

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is dark blue with a gold-colored border. The title 'From Black to African American' is written in a large, bold, gold-colored serif font. Below the title, there is a horizontal gold line, followed by the subtitle 'A New Social Representation' in a smaller, gold-colored serif font. Another horizontal gold line is below the subtitle, and at the bottom of the cover, the author's name 'Gina Philogène' is written in a gold-colored serif font.

From Black
to African American

A New Social Representation

Gina Philogène

“Obama offered a different choice: Vote for him and seize the opportunity for blacks and whites to join together in solving the country’s problems, from health care to failing schools to interminable wars.

He transformed the Wright issue from a divider to a uniter.

He used it as occasion for bringing racism out of the campaign closet and calling upon Americans as one people of many colors to strive for “a more perfect union”.

Libert, B. Faulk, R. (2009) *Barack, INC. Winning business lessons of the Obama campaign* , New Jersey, FT Press, pp.110-111.

Is it possible and even desirable a color-blind society?

I am less optimistic than Gina Philogene about the power of *re-labelling* the Blacks African Americans to build a *color-blind society*, replacing *race* with *culture*.

Denise Jodelet (1989) and my own research programs (de Rosa, 1987) clearly demonstrate the persisting archaic representations of madness and the related discriminatory practices, although in our western contemporary *ultra-scientific, over-medicalised and psychologised society* new labels, like *mentally-ill, neurotic, psychotic* and...currently simply “*users*” have *masked* the older “*crazy*” or “*mad*” etiquette. Abric and his research team have too discovered the Masked-Mute zone.

The results of the follow-up of the wide research program I have carried out in Italy in metropolitan and rural areas, impressively show how the resisting poliphasia in the social representations of madness - 30 years after the deinstitutionalisation of the asylums – still let coexist imaginary representations of mad person as “*devil*”, as “*mythological figure* (monster, teriomorphic figure, androgynous...)” as “*criminal*” and “*deviant*” to those as “*victim of society*”, “*isolated*” or “*depressed*” more anchored in the sociological or psychological explanatory theories.

Is it possible and even desirable a colour-blind society?



If Black disappear, a new colour will take his place in the hierarchy of valued-devalued social objects in the representational system, which serve our need to categorise the world into easy boxes and to position ourselves and others in the symbolic territories of asymmetric human relations.

A taxi driver in Paris explained me – better than an urban sociologist – how the different populations of immigrants have replaced over the time the marginalised urban territories of the previous incoming groups, according to their order of entry into the metropolitan space to be conquered.

Is it possible and even desirable a color-blind society?



If colours would disappear, other criteria (shapes, classes, religions, languages, beauty) would certainly continue to fragment into pieces our categorised vision of society.

Even in the global information era organised by network society rather than states and nations, *the power of the flows in the networks and the priority in the information access has become more relevant than the flow of the power*, and even determines it by re-establishing new hierarchies (Castells, 2001).

Is it possible and even desirable a color-blind society?

“Prejudices are unforgiving reminders of who one is and wishes not to be. By the same token, they project a similarity between devalored individuals or subgroups within one’s own group and external groups – for example, by associating the peasant with the savage, women with primitives, and so on. The power of prejudices derives, perhaps, from this contrast, this mixture of similarity and differences projected onto the other but also felt within oneself. This is why it would be useful to understand better what people believe they may have in common with the group from which they try to differentiate themselves, against which they discriminate, and on whom they impose stereotypes – as two aspects of the same prejudices.

Moscovici, 1999

Is it possible and even desirable a color-blind society?



Therefore to the question if **Is it possible and even desirable a color-blind society?** I believe that a realistic reply would be:

a color-blind, a shape-blind, a class-blind, a religion-blind, a value-blind, a language-blind....society will never exist and, at my opinion, it would not be even desirable.

The point is not how to delete the colors from the world, but how to harmonise them, or how to move from a “black” or “white” world to a poli-chromatic universe, according to the Denise wishes for an “and-and” social cohesion paradigm instead of “or”-”or” social exclusion societal model.

Where Whites
Draw the Line



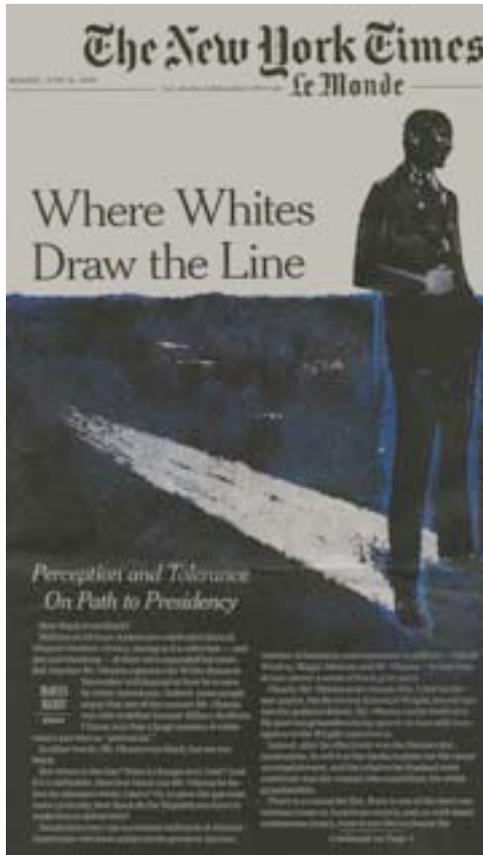
Perception and Tolerance
On Path to Presidency

By Mark Crutland
A black and white photograph of a man standing on a dirt path, looking towards the camera. The path is marked with a white line that recedes into the distance. The man is wearing a dark shirt and pants. The background is a dark, open field.

Just an example:

From the second study (de Rosa, 2001) – which flashed in my mind reading the New York Time article on too black - not enough Black Obama – I have simply extracted an example of the rhetorical device based on contrast and divided symbols for activating a commercial strategy to be United in the name of Benetton.

Just an example:



Here the contrasting black and white images have been exploiting used in a specific phase of the Benetton campaign, showing the interest of looking at the controversial social representations with regards the role of media and communication systems, not from a linear, but from a circular perspective:

how the controversial discourse “about” hot societal issues (like race, AIDS, death penalty, etc.) has activated polemical discourse “by” and “about “ Benetton to improve company’s brand and global market.

Communication and Representation

Models of Influence

 C \Rightarrow S.R.

 C \Leftarrow S.R.

 C = S.R.

 C \Leftrightarrow S.R.

} linear-reflecting
model

tautological model

circular-dialogic
model

Communication, Representation and Media

- What is the relation between **communication, social representations** and the **media**?
- How are communication, social representations and the media articulated, in relation for example to a paradigm that claims that “THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE”?
- Are media per se simply neutral cultural or technological artefacts? Or do they imply specific systems for shaping the communication-representations binomial depending on their features (degree of interactive nature, degree of virtuality, global-local cultural scenario, etc.)?

➤ NO REPRESENTATIONS
without
COMMUNICATION

➤ NO COMMUNICATION
without
REPRESENTATIONS

By definition Social Representations are :

“...forms of social thinking used to **communicate (AIM)**, understand and master the social, material, and intellectual environment.

As such, they are analyzed as products and processes of mental activity that are socially marked. This social marking refers to conditions and contexts where representations emerge, to **communication** by which they circulate, and to the functions they serve. **(TRANSMISSION)**

This form of knowledge is constructed in the course of social interaction and **communication. (GENESIS) (...)**

Thus it orientes and organizes our behaviour and **communication (FUNCTION)”**

(Jodelet, 1993: 184)

SOURCES FOR THE SOCIAL DISCOURSE “OF” BENETTON

TOOLS

- 🍏 Advertising
- 🍏 “Colors”
- 🍏 Internet web site
- 🍏 SOCIAL PRACTICES
- 🍏 Marketing

CHANNELS

- ↔ IMAGES
- ↔ IMAGES + TEXTS
- ↔ IMAGES + TEXTS
- ↔ ACTION
- ↔ Sponsorship

From family business to industrial organisation to "cultural phenomenon": Communicationg by "Internet web site"



UNITED COLORS OF BENETTON. WOMAN MAN CHILD UNDERCOLORS LIFESTYLE STORE LOCATOR

New
Fall/Winter 2006-07
Collection

BENETTON'S MAGIC FORMULA
A book about the
Group's **F1** adventure
of almost twenty years.
[read more ...](#)

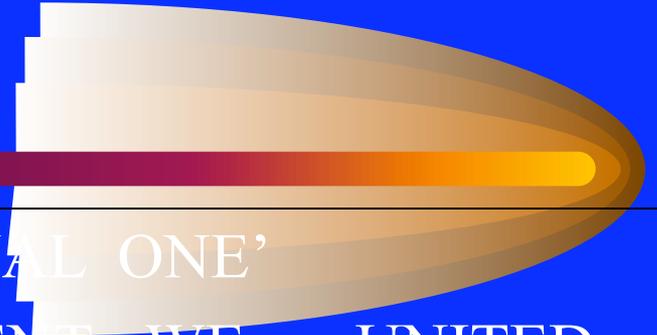
BENETTON
PLAY
www.benettonplay.com

BENETTON
TALK
www.benettontalk.com

BENETTON GROUP | PRESS AREA | INVESTOR RELATIONS | SITEMAP | ITALIANO

SEARCH

A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.



- ❖ I STAGE (1966-1983) The ‘TRADITIONAL ONE’
- ❖ II STAGE (1984-1989) WE are DIFFERENT - WE are UNITED
 - a rainbow of multi- coloured differences as metaphor of the universal harmony
- ❖ III STAGE (1989-1992) A TRANSITORY phase
‘TOWARDS THE SHOCK CAMPAIGNS BY MEANS OF CONTRAST’
- ❖ IV STAGE (1992 up to 2000) THE 'WORLD'S WOES:
ADVERTING IS MORE SHOCKING THAN REALITY.
INDICTMENT OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS

A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.

- ❖ 1993 : A NEW STAGE or AN INTERLUDE? TIME FOR COUNTER-ARGUMENT: from the message-accusation towards the action-oriented-message and social intervention.
- ❖ THE LAST SHOCK : the Spring-Summer 2000 advertising campaign entitled 'Looking at death in the face'
- ❖ 2004) A NEW FORMULA IS NEEDED after the divorce between Toscani and Benetton



HOME

TEXT SIZE A A A

Last Campaign – James and Other Apes

A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.

❖ I STAGE (1966-1983) The 'TRADITIONAL ONE'

Messages Themes	Stylistic elements	Example	Communicative Strategies
<p>Traditional message: product linked with image and the brand name of the Family's Group Business "Maglierie Benetton" (Benetton pullovers)</p>	<p>word + image</p> <p><i>Photographic style</i></p>		<p>Association of product with positive social values (Barthes' principle of 'connotative transfer')</p>



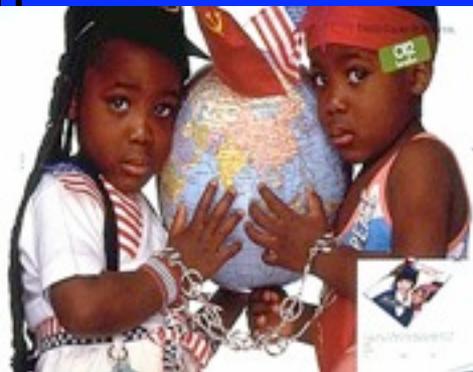
A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.



II STAGE (1984-1989) WE are DIFFERENT - WE are UNITED

Messages
Themes

Universal
harmony: positive
social
connotations;
multi-racial
themes “We are



Stylistic
elements

- no text
- multi-coloured
- Products
- graphic style (studio photos, collective subjects)

Examples



Communicative
Strategies

- ❑ Use of multicoloured differences as metaphor of universal harmony and of Company
- ❑ Change of the Logo: “United Color of Benetton”

A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.



III STAGE (1989-1992) A TRANSITORY phase



Messages Themes	Stylistic elements	Examples	Communicative Strategies
<p>TOWARDS THE SHOCK CAMPAIGNS BY CONTRAST'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ no more products ➤ Foreunner of the shock-photo series ➤ Presence of dyad, pair of opposite and contrasting elements 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Rhetorical use of visual-perceptual, chromatic and metaphorical contrast □ Introduction of social issues in advertising □ Deviant symbols

UNITED COLORS DIVIDED SYMBOLS

RETHORICAL DEVICES
by using CONTRAST:

chromatic

(black-white)

visuo-perceptual

(detail - whole)

metaphorical

race)

(colour-

(race-illness)

thematic

(toilet-p

symbolic

(devil-angel)

(wolf-lamb)





UNITED CO DIVIDED SYM



RETHORICAL DEVICES

- aimed at
provoking semantic
short-circuit and effect
of destructuring
familiarity -

by using

SEMANTIC DISSOCIATION

and MIXING of
ELEMENTS belonging
to different categories
perceived as opposites



some examples:

- ⇒ Yellow Chinese POPE
- ⇒ Black Queen Elisabeth
- ⇒ Black Cannibal with
western machine gun

prototypical elements
belonging to separate ethnic
groups (the color of skin,
shape of eye, cultural tools...)
are separated from their
natural 'possessors' to be
united in a single personage
capable of synthesising the
Benetton Group's philosophy
of "harmonising opposites"
and "acceptation of plurality"
"

A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.

IV STAGE (1992-1993) INDICTMENT OF SOCIAL PROBLEM

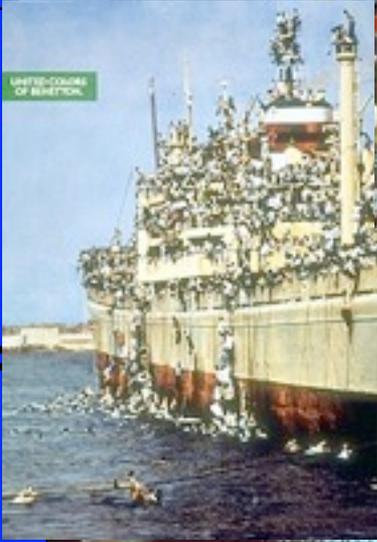


Messages Themes

- ✓ under-development
- ✓ race
- ✓ ecology
- ✓ death-penalty
- ✓ violence-
- ✓ criminality

Stylistic elements

- Real life photos
- Photo-journalism
- Anti-journalism: advertising is more shocking than reality

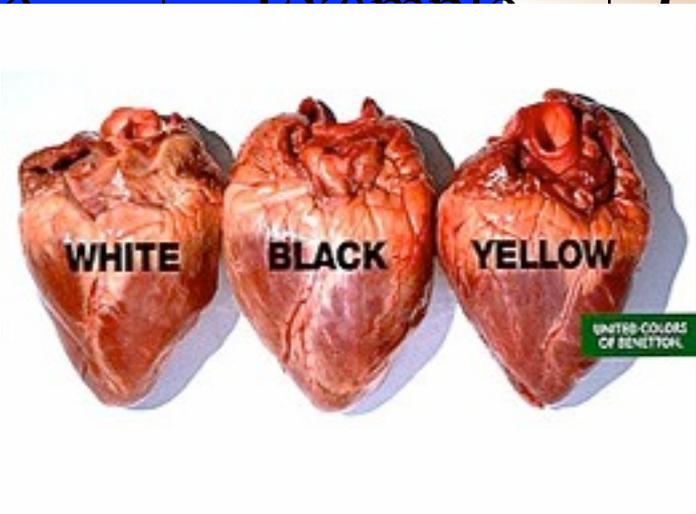


Communicative strategies

- activation of polarised discussion through shock effect:
- de-familiarisation
- decontextualisation
- debate about advertising methods

A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.

1996 : Against Racism: White, Black, Yellow

Messages Themes	Stylistic elements	Examples	Communicative Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ White, Black, Yellow hearths - races ➤ White and Black Horses ➤ Nature-culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Image of body part - words ➤ Chromatic contrast as methaphor 	 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Topic and strategies already used in previous campaigns

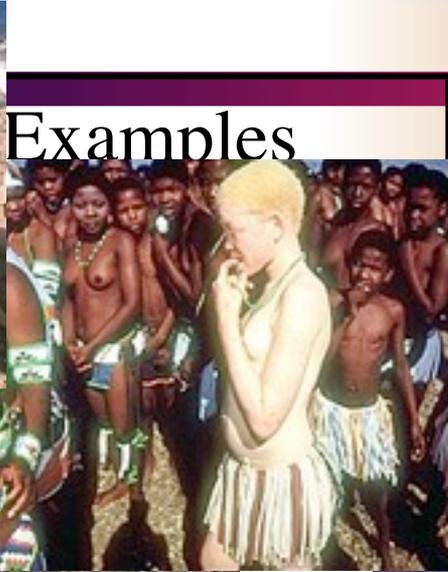
A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.

? IV STAGE (1992-1993) INDICTMEN OF SOCIAL PROBLEM

Themes

- ✓ under-development:
- * child-labour
- * dirty baby
- ✓ race-deviance-illness: *albino girl in a tribe
- ✓ ecology:
- ✓* recycling
- ✓* cormorant
- ✓ violence:
- ✓* interview
- ◆* electric chair

Examples



A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.

◆ IV STAGE (1992-1993) INDICTMENT OF SOCIAL PROBLEM

◆ Themes

Examples

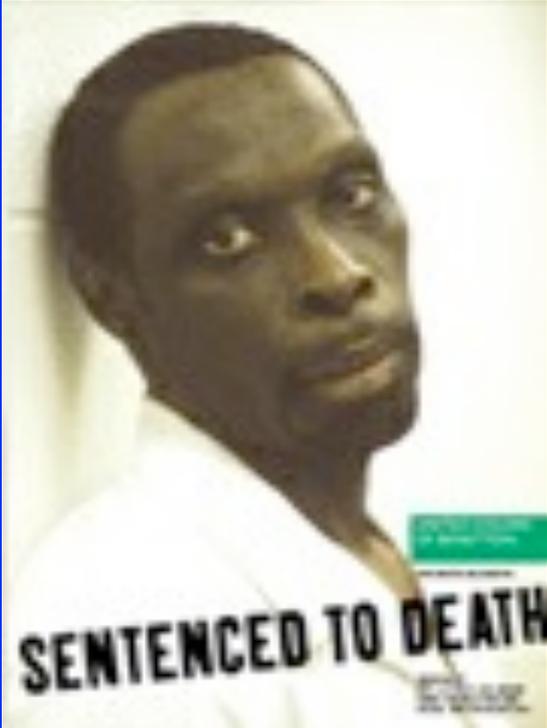
✓ race-
deviance-
illness

*albino girl in
a tribe chair

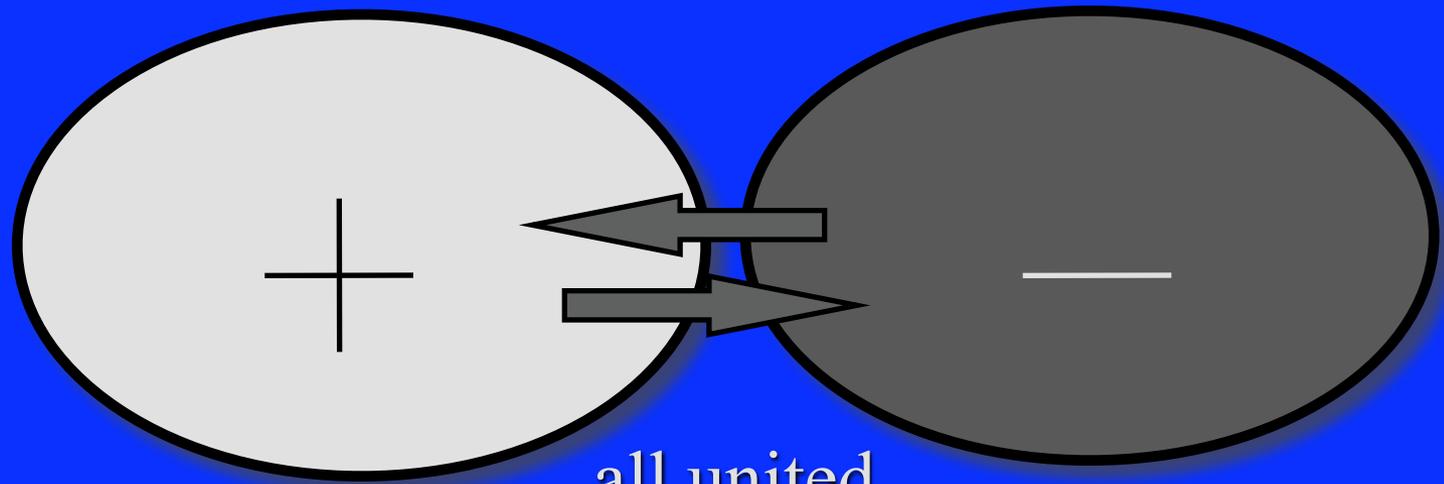


A brief history of the Benetton advertising campaigns.

◆ 2000 Face to the death

Messages Themes	Stylistic elements	Example	Communicative Strategies
‘Real protagonist in the death row of American prisons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Photo-journalism➤ No words		<ul style="list-style-type: none">□ Message shock

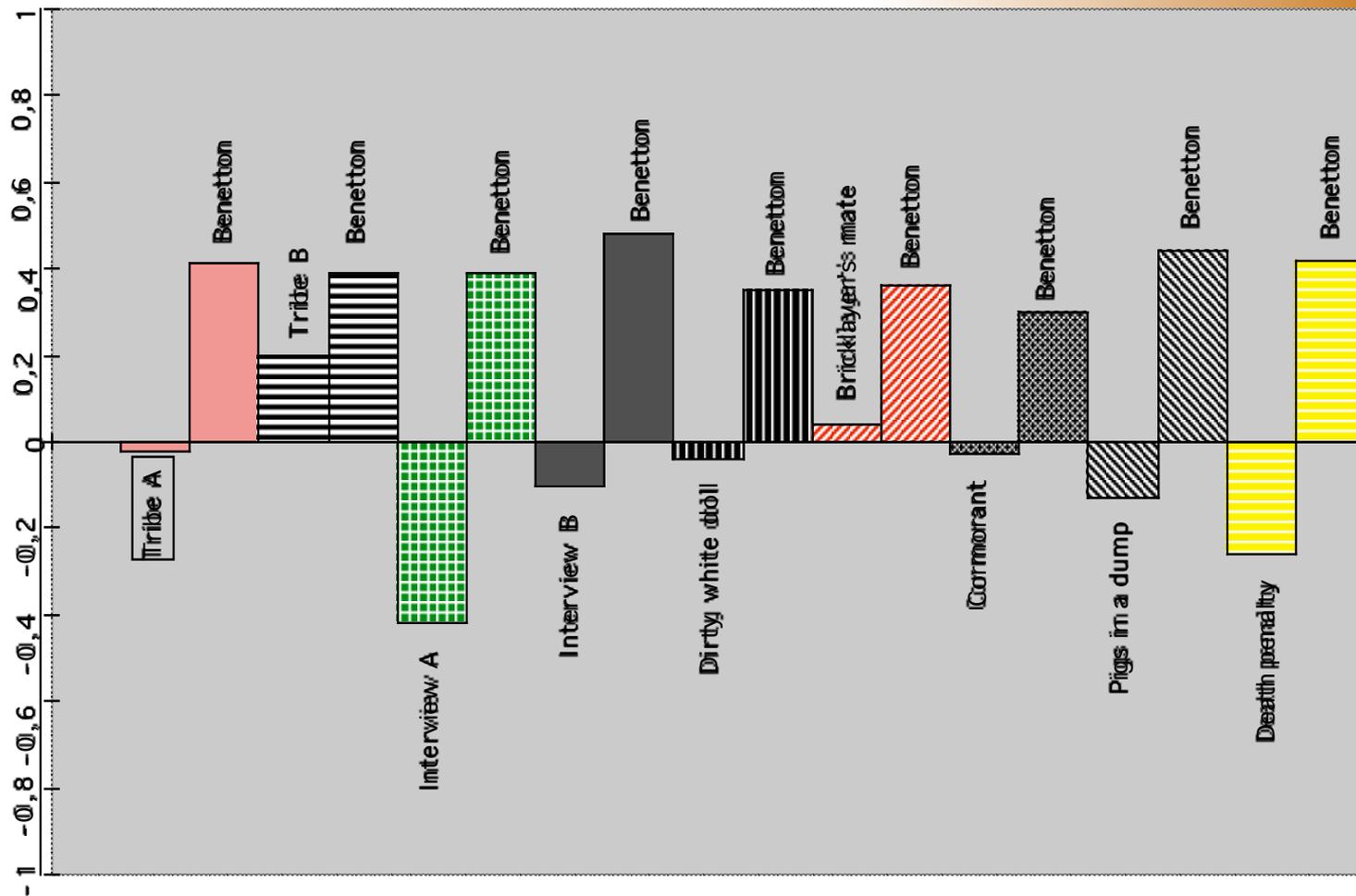
*From 'controversial' S.R.
towards 'consensual' effect*



critically communicating
in the name of benetton

Some EMPIRICAL RESULTS

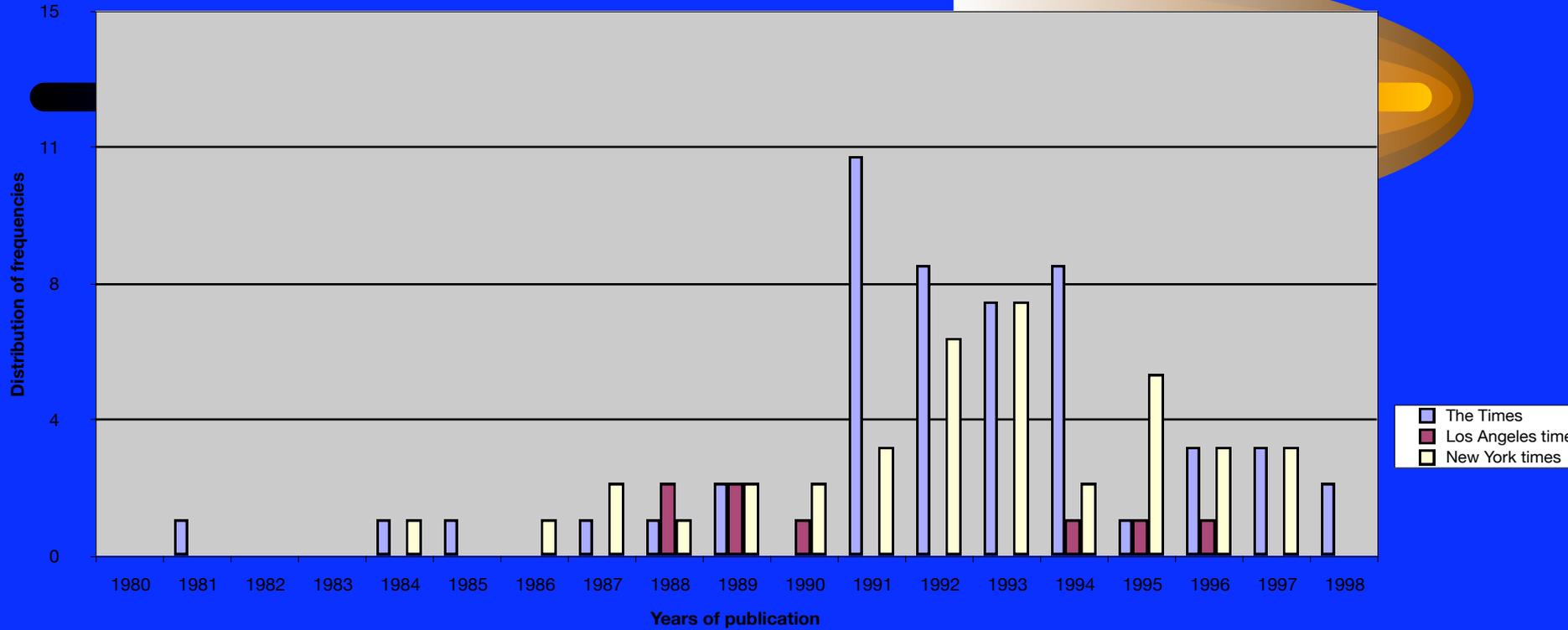
Graph. 1. Index of polarity related to the seven images
and to Benetton



Note: The same graphical pattern identifies the group of the subjects who answered both the stimuli "image" and "Benetton" (brand).

The echo effect in the print media

Fig. 28 - Distribution of frequencies of the articles about Benetton appeared in three newspapers (



Two Strategies - Two Processes

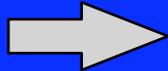
de-objectification



the object (Product) disappears
in the Advert: no Image - no Text

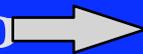


objectification



advertising makes real
and shocking the reality

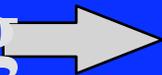
de-anchoring



making un-familiar what's
familiar: advertising as illegitimate
context for "social issue"



anchoring



controversial social debate
anchored to Benetton brand-name

A conclusive remark: “Social Representations” in the globalised cultural scenario

*“In the modern worldt he fluidity between cultures can produce paradoxical situations for a researchers, since what are often presented as comparison across cultures turn out on closer inspection to be rather studies of how a **single more globalised culture** is spreading across the world.*

*If people engaged in the market economies of the West turn out to have similar ideas about economic processes to the people engaged in similar activities in the East, is this really a comparison across cultures, or simply an indication that in some important sector of life both West and East find themselves participating in a **common culture**”(Duveen, G. , 2007, p. 549)*

One of the tasks as social psychologist is to try to understand the tone and nuances of the same music plaid by different orchestra in different places in the world. This will be never

*A conclusive remark: “Social Representations”
in the globalised cultural scenario*



One of the tasks as social psychologist is to try to understand the tone and nuances of the same music played by different orchestras and people in different places of the world.

This will be never the same, although we will more and more speak one same language (mostly English).

Culture is not a “machine”!