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SCIENTIFIC MATERIALS

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"



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

Social Representations in the 'Social Arena'

Edited by Annamaria Silvana de Rosa

Social Representations in the 'Social Arena'

'This book is a state-of-the-art showcasing of work in social representations theory, focusing on its application to contemporary social issues. The major thinkers of this approach are included alongside up and coming figures. *Social Representations in the 'Social Arena'* will be of particular interest to psychologists struggling to develop theoretically informed interventions into social life.'

(Brady Wagoner, Associate Professor, Aalborg University, Denmark.)

Social Representations in the 'Social Arena' presents key theoretical issues and extensive empirical research using different theoretical and methodological approaches to consider the value of social representation theory when social representations are examined in real world contexts.

This comprehensive text brings together international experts to explore the relevance of a variety of applications of social representation theory in both institutional and organizational settings, and discusses how social representation theory compares with other constructs of social psychology. Areas covered include:

- justice
- leadership
- health and mental illness
- intergroup relations
- identity
- politics
- environment and tourism
- economics.

This book will appeal to a range of academic researchers and practitioners from a variety of fields who are concerned with the application of social representation theory to various contexts as a heuristic tool for addressing and understanding relevant societal issues faced with 'social demand'.

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Introduction

Taking stock: a theory with more than half a century of history

Annamaria Silvana de Rosa

The revision of this book (which followed a long gestation) was undertaken during 2011, a year which saw the proliferation throughout the world of scientific events (symposia and international workshops,¹ books (Almeida *et al.* 2011; Galli 2012 forthcoming), special issues of journals (Camargo and Tomanari 2011; Howarth *et al.* 2011 forthcoming)² with the purpose of both celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the book *La Psychanalyse, son Image et son Public*, that represents the official act of birth of the theory, and to pay homage to its author, Serge Moscovici, who in over sixty years of intense scientific and intellectual work has produced at least three theories which have marked the history and destiny of the social sciences: (a) the theory of social representations; (b) the theory of innovation – commonly termed ‘of active minorities’; (c) the theory of collective decisions and social consensus. These three theories are subtly linked together by his strong passion for the processes of innovation that have characterized the history of sciences.³

Among the publications which appeared in 2011, the Italian edition (edited by the present writer) of Moscovici’s *opera prima*, *La psychanalyse, son image et son public*, caused an unavoidable (and somewhat awkward) conflict among publishing priorities, so that the publication of this book was postponed from 2011 to 2012.

Nevertheless, this unusual circumstance provided an opportunity to take stock of Moscovici’s theory by means of analysis both retrospective and prospective. These analyses go in the direction recommended by Michael Billig in an article on the publication of the English edition of *Psychoanalysis, its Image and its Public*: ‘Its current re-publication encourages us now to reflect historically on the representations from which the theory of social representation was born’ (Billig 2008: 355).

These analyses are presented to the readers of this book so that they may gain more thorough knowledge of the theory, as the necessary basis for understanding the importance of its applicability in the social arena faced with social demand.

The *retrospective analysis* starts from the theory’s embryonic period, enucleating its ‘stem cells’ in the period 1952–61. It then conducts systematic comparison between the 1961 and 1976 editions of Moscovici’s *opera prima*.

The *prospective analysis* considers the theory’s developments until the present day and its influence on the international scientific community. It concludes by

emphasizing its vitality, topicality and its interest in regard to the subject of this book: *Social Representations in the Social Arena*.

The social representation theory in gestation: Notes on the theory's embryonic period and its stem cells

Although 1961 is unanimously indicated in the literature as the year of birth of the theory of social representations, in coincidence with publication of *La Psychanalyse, son Image et son Public*, Moscovici had begun his research around one decade before that date, and he had also published preliminary results well before 1961.

In an article published in 1952 – when presenting the ‘Premiers résultats d’une enquête concernant la psychanalyse’ in the same *Revue Française de Psychanalyse* that in 1935 had published a survey conducted by Marie Bonaparte with ‘extreme polemical finesse on an enterprise that could be presented as analogous’ (Moscovici 1952: 386, my translation) – the young Moscovici, at that time a twenty-eight-year-old *stagiaire* at the CNRS, immediately made clear that his study did not concern the validity of psychoanalysis, ‘but the study of psychoanalysis as the object of collective representations’. Although this was to resume Durkheim’s concept, the antecedent of that of social representation, already recurrent in this article was the notion of social representation, subsequently elaborated by Moscovici not only as a construct but also as a theory of the relations among representations, communication, and the system of social relations: ‘a study of opinions – which seeks to be somewhat scientific – must comprise and analyse, through certain images and how they are produced, the conditions of interactions within a group, individual behaviours, and social representations, without seeking to explain them by isolating them from one another’ (Moscovici 1952: 387; my translation). Nevertheless, the focus of this article by Moscovici (as of other publications prior to 1961: Moscovici 1953, 1954a, 1954b, 1955a, 1955b, 1956; Moscovici and Durain 1956) is instead on methodological aspects concerning the measurement of opinions and attitudes, the limitations of traditional approaches, and the application of information theory (Wiener 1948) to the construction of scales of attitudes (an extremely innovative endeavour at that time).

Reading through the bibliographies annexed to these articles is extremely useful for identifying the authors and the theoretical–methodological referents for the problems then being delineated by Moscovici. It also shows how, in these publications preliminary to the work that we may call Moscovici’s *Opera Prima* of 1961, he had already adopted a critical stance towards the classic concepts and constructs of social psychology. In particular, when reflecting on the operational distinction between the inter-individual nature of the concept of opinion (which ‘enunciates the possibility of individual behaviours taking the in-group as the frame of reference’) and the intra-individual nature of the concept of attitude (which defines ‘a component of that behaviour by taking as the frame of reference both the in-group and the personality which participates

in several groups and dominates that participation', Moscovici 1952: 412, my translation).

In those years, Moscovici's methodological training received further development from his collaboration with Jean Stoetzel, the only professor of social psychology in France (at Bordeaux) during the 1950s, and the director of an institute for the study of public opinion in Paris. This opportunity to receive instruction on the classic methods of opinion survey – also for contingent reasons to do with professional services rendered to that institute – soon made Moscovici dissatisfied with the atomistic and superficial notions underpinning the methods of inquiry into public attitudes and opinions widely used in social psychology until the Second World War. These, he believed, could never lead to development of a *social psychology of knowledge*.

The young Moscovici's intellectual formation was also shaped by Wiener (1948) and his brilliant essay on cybernetics, which announced an audacious new form of science that unified diverse fields of knowledge through the joint contribution of researchers working in both the natural and human sciences:

Somehow, it fitted my own idea of social psychology as a new science in itself. Moreover, it comprised an interesting blend of the mathematical theory of information with the 'socio-physical' theory of communication. I vividly remember a paper by Roman Jakobson on that topic by the time I had already begun my pilot study on the diffusion of psychoanalysis. Both information theory and communication theory brought me closer to the idea of representation.

(Moscovici 2000: 232)

In another article informative on the sources of inspiration for his theory of social representations, Moscovici (2003: 10–13) declared that his discovery of cybernetics had provoked

'one of the most indelible intellectual emotions experienced in his life.' Cybernetics led him to consider social psychology as an 'hybrid science', a term that has become today a must for epistemological reflection, as a science that is studying and inventing phenomena that no other science can approach in a significant way.

(Jodelet 2008: 426)

It is significant that, in his closing speech delivered during the international conference on Social Representations held in Tunis in 2010, Moscovici reiterated the influence on him of Norbert Wiener's (1948) work, evoking the emotional correlates of enthusiasm and happiness associated with the cognitive dimension of discovery (a 'Eureka' feeling equivalent to that provoked by discovery of the book by Einstein which had marked his life since childhood, 'replacing the Bible'). Indeed, Moscovici had brought the book with him, as if to visualize retrospectively its tangible influence on his thought: an influence due above all to the

impact of discovering the substantial difference between individual and social information, and to the fertility of physical–mathematical reflection applied to social facts. This interest led at that time to an invitation for Moscovici to attend an advanced seminar organized by Claude Lévi-Strauss on mathematics and the social sciences. And he long cultivated it as a further linkage between his interests in both the social and the physical–natural sciences (and especially in the dimension of discovery in the history of science and the influence exerted by intellectual innovation). Suffice it to consider his work with the physicist Galam, which led to formulation of a psycho-mathematical model of the theory on change in preferences and attitudes induced in and through the group. This model shed new light on group dynamics, on the genesis of minorities and majorities, on the relations between influence and power, and on the evolution of groups (Galam and Moscovici 1991).

Moscovici's identification of a point of hybridization between his methodological and theoretical interests aroused by cybernetics induced him to apply information theory to Guttman attitude scales in order to determine the socially shared mental (representational) structure expressed by the redundancy of individual replies, and to evidence error phenomena (or 'noise' in the terminology of information theory) consisting in deviation from the collective mental social structure. It was henceforth, therefore, that Moscovici's burgeoning conception of a social psychology of knowledge began to delineate the relational and *phenomenologically* interdependent (here one notes a certain influence of Merleau-Ponty) primacy of social representations with respect to attitudes and opinions as declinations of communicative messages and specific dimensions of social representations themselves.

But aside from an interest which might be mistaken for mere technicism and youthful methodological exercise, a careful reading of Moscovici's articles published before 1961 shows that he was already concerned with the problem of the evolution of the relations between theory and practice in psychoanalysis and its impact (informational, communicative and experiential) on society: an area of inquiry which, in those first writings, Moscovici defined as pertaining to cognitive social perception, the sociology of knowledge, and the psycho-sociology interested in the study of opinions and attitudes (and above all sought to show the limitations of its conceptual and operational definition). It should be borne in mind that the academic institutionalization of psychology (and especially social psychology) was still at the embryonic stage in those years, and that the boundaries among the social sciences (and also between these and philosophy) were highly uncertain and permeable. Suffice it to consider that Daniel Lagache, Moscovici's tutor at the Sorbonne, had been a philosopher and a disciple of Sartre and Merleau-Ponty before he became a psychoanalyst, and that Moscovici has repeatedly declared that he approached the discipline as an autodidact.

To understand the impact of Wiener's (1948) work at the unique moment in the inventiveness of Moscovici's research on the image of psychoanalysis in society, one may fruitfully read the final chapter of Wiener's book entitled *Information, Language and Society*, which evinces how his attention was also devoted

to the communication media as instruments with which to transmit and transform social thought.

Obviously, the ‘stem cells’ of the theory of social representations consist in more than the two referents thus far identified in *cybernetic information theory* and in *revision of the traditional methods used to study attitudes and opinions*. I have dwelt on these elements characterizing the theory’s *embryonic* period because they are usually somewhat neglected, whereas – with the repeated citation of canonical sources more taken for granted, though significant (for example, Durkheim and the concept of *collective representation*⁴) – among its popularizers the theory too often becomes ‘*un moulin à clichés*’, as Moscovici (2010) himself complains.

Tracing in reverse (like a salmon swimming upstream) the course of Moscovici’s developing theory in order to identify all its sources of inspiration would require philological analysis which considered longitudinally (according to the point of intersection with Moscovici’s theory or the entry point into it) the contribution of a series of intellectual figures somehow significant for the development of Moscovici’s thought (and of his various, and only apparently distinct, theories⁵) in diverse domains of the history of ideas and of thought not only scientific, but also philosophical, humanistic and literary, as well as anthropological, sociological, and psychological: from Tarde to Durkheim, from Lévy-Bruhl to Lévi-Strauss, from Freud to Lagache, from Galileo to Einstein, from Lucretius to Vico to Marx, from Khun to Koyré, from Lenoble to Holton, from Husserl, Merleau-Ponty to Cassirer, from Piaget to Vygotsky and Bruner, from Le Bon to Wundt to Weber, from James, Mead, Heider, Lewin, Sherif to Festinger, from Proust, Tolstoy, Mann to Solzhenitsyn; and obviously even this long list is only partial and provisional.

Nevertheless, this philological inquiry (which is in itself a research program that hopefully will be eventually undertaken by an impassioned and cultured researcher) would distract us here from the objective of briefly synthesizing some distinctive features of Moscovici’s *opera prima* in its two editions, and which launched a theory that has been an intellectual and institutional enterprise in constant expansion for more than fifty years.

The sections that follow reconstruct the salient phases of this extraordinary and unremitting intellectual adventure, which Bauer and Gaskell (2008) have recently described as ‘a progressive research program for social psychology’. One might add ‘not only’, given the impact of the theory across the various disciplinary areas of the social sciences.

For a systematic comparison of the 1961 and 1976 editions of Moscovici’s *Opera Prima La Psychanalyse, son image et son public*: 1961, the theory’s official year of birth; 1976, its reformulation

Even before 1961, and despite the ‘period of latency’ in the diffusion of social representation theory evidenced by empirical data based on meta-analysis (de Rosa 1994a, 1994b, 2001a, 2001c, 2002a, 2006a, 2008a, 2013b; de Rosa and

d'Ambrosio 2003, 2008), and also emphasized by Jodelet (2008) as a first-hand witness and protagonist of the history of this area of scientific inquiry, the ideas put forward by Moscovici in previous publications had already exerted some influence, considering that they had induced the daughter of Talcott Parsons, Ann, to come to Europe to prepare a doctoral thesis by conducting research, couched in terms of social representations, on the penetration of psychoanalysis in France and the United States.⁶ However, *La Psychanalyse, son image et son public*, in its 1961 edition, is without doubt the *opera prima* as well as the *opus magnum* in which Moscovici systematically set forth his theory of social representations developed from his empirical research on the phenomenon – never so topical and controversial as at that time – of the diffusion of psychoanalysis in France.

Moscovici's choice of psychoanalysis (as both a theory and a therapeutic practice) – an object of knowledge/ experience much discussed in France during the 1950s – was prompted by his intent to study the transformations, the similarities and/ or differences between expert knowledge and everyday knowledge, between science and common sense, between '*reified universes*' and '*consensual universes*' with their specific modes of operation (processes) and functions in the broader symbolic system of social relations and ideological positions mediated by communication systems. By surveying the field through detailed analysis of the social representations of psychoanalysis in the French press – marked by the strong ideological antagonisms of that time between the Catholic and Communist world views, between American and Soviet culture – Moscovici showed how the various forms of *diffusion*, *propagation*, and *propaganda* are structured in communication systems, giving rise to representations of diverse types.

The heuristic value of the theory of social representations set out in the two editions of Moscovici's 'monumental' and 'documental' book transcended the specific object of study (psychoanalysis) on which his first exemplary inquiry centred, and extended it to the most varied objects of social knowledge through a tight-knit conceptual framework. This theory has subsequently become an epistemology used to investigate (and somehow to rehabilitate) the common sense that governs the anthropology of knowledge and practices in everyday life amid dynamic interrelations among subjects, objects, and systems for the construction and transmission of knowledge itself. And it has been employed to determine how a science *of* reality becomes a science *in* reality, almost a physical dimension of reality itself. Moscovici identifies the study of social representations as the specific '*mission*' of social psychology compared with the other social sciences, albeit in close collaboration with them.

The original 1961 and 1976 editions of *La Psychanalyse, son image et son public* respectively mark the birth and revision of the social representations theory developed by Serge Moscovici, whom Leon Festinger subsequently described in 1981 as 'the most important and creative thinker in contemporary social psychology'.⁷ Moscovici was excessively modest in terming the two editions as respectively a 'thesis' and a 'book' if his thesis supervisor, Daniel Lagache – with the pride of any supervisor who has inducted an

outstanding doctoral student into the art of research – declared in the preface to the first edition:

Tackling the problems of the sociology of knowledge, by discussing very recent events, and what is sometimes a hotly contested debate, is a new and brave undertaking. Moscovici tackles them with an understanding of the problems, with a sureness of touch and a writerly elegance that make him one of the ‘young masters’ of Francophone social psychology.

(Lagache 1961, English edn 2008: XXI)

The insistence with which Moscovici has described only the second, profoundly revised, edition of his *opera prima* as a ‘book’ induced me to conduct a meta-theoretical analysis of the two editions, my purpose being systematically to identify continuities and innovations in Moscovici’s reformulation of his theory.

Since this was a highly specific case of meta-theoretical research on two successive editions of a work by the same author, besides applying *the grid* (de Rosa 1994b) – devised for a research project on the meta-theoretical analysis of all scientific publications on social representations – to the eighteen chapters of the 1961 edition and the sixteen chapters of the 1976 edition (to which can be added the appendix to Chapter V *Quinze ans après*, which, however, because of its uncertain status between a section and a chapter has not been numbered as a free-standing chapter), I integrated the meta-theoretical analysis with systematic comparison between:

- The tables of contents in the two books, in order to verify whether Moscovici’s reformulation of the manner in which he presented his research and its underlying theoretical concepts, or those which developed from it, led in the second edition to an expository restructuring such to alter organization of the contents;
- The bibliographies in the two editions, in order to identify the authors who had significantly entered Moscovici’s intellectual universe in the fifteen years between the first and the second editions.

Comparison between the tables of contents of the two books shows that, in both editions, the work is divided into two parts:

- The first part reports the results of a survey conducted on six groups representative of the population (for a total of 2,265 interviewees) with the purpose of determining how psychoanalysis had penetrated into French society and with what effects. The intent is not solely to describe opinions on the diffusion of psychoanalysis; it is also to analyse those opinions in light of the specific positions of the individual and the group in the psycho-social context, and to conduct detailed (and ideologically audacious at that time) examination of the ideological mapping that characterized French society in the years after the Second World War.

- The second part consists in study of the images of ‘*psychanalyse*’ conveyed by the French press (analysing 1640 articles published in Paris and the provinces between January 1952 and March 1953 in 230 newspapers and magazines of different ideological orientations).

Demonstrating the fact that, in rewriting his *opera prima*, Moscovici was more conceptually interested in modelling the theory of social representations than in furnishing an updated description of the phenomenon studied (an empirical occasion to elaborate on his theory), the research work set out in the two editions is substantially the same. In fact, Moscovici does not present a follow-up on his study of fifteen years previously, and in explicit response to demands by Marxist commentators that he should update the chapter on the anti-psychoanalytic propaganda of the Communist Party, he merely added a section/chapter⁸ entitled ‘Fifteen years later’, in which he declared his unwillingness to write a new book based on follow-up research and new analyses, not seeing any valid reason to do so, and asserting the continuing currency of the systems of communication identified. In this section/chapter, Moscovici briefly refers – and not without overt scepticism concerning the genuineness of the *rapprochement* between the communist vision of the world, society, science and ideology, on the one hand, and psychoanalysis on the other – to certain circumstances which had reduced hostility and even led to some sort of armistice between communists and psychoanalysts (such as their pacific coexistence during the 1960s at international level and in Gaullist France, followed by denunciation of the horrors and crimes of the Stalinist period, the splitting of psychoanalysis into a science and an ideology) and events (such as Althusser’s legitimization of psychoanalysis, and particularly the compatibility between Marxism and the Lacanian structuralist school at the Communist Party Conference of Argenteuil). He put forward conclusions based on an analysis of the content of eighty-four articles published in *L’Humanité*, *France Nouvelle* and *La Nouvelle Critique* which suggested that the communicative forms of communist propaganda against psychoanalysis, predominant in the 1950s, had given way in the 1960s to forms of propagation similar to those applied ten years earlier to communication guided by the values of the Catholic Church.

As expressly stated in the introduction to the second edition, the differences with respect to the first edition consist in Moscovici’s declared intent to modify his manner of expounding facts and ideas, and to eliminate a large amount of technical and theoretical details understandable only by a small and expert audience. It is for this reason that Moscovici called the second edition a ‘rewriting’ which marked his personal and intellectual evolution.

It appears that the reason for the theoretical modelling and a certain shift of focus, in the second edition, from the object and its contents (psychoanalysis) to the theory of social representations and the communication systems which transmit them in relation to the symbolic positionings of social actors stemmed from Moscovici’s desire more to re-orient the ‘mission’ of social psychology systemically than to attenuate the ‘*scandal*’ provoked by the first edition. What is

certain is that Moscovici's perception of the impact of his first work is evident when, in the introduction to the second edition, he declares:

When it was published, the thesis provoked certain unease. Psychoanalysts [...] regard this as an intolerable intrusion into their business and as a profanation of their knowledge – do they want it to remain sacred? And react, depending on their temperament, either with scorn or ill temper.

(Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: XXII)

Systematic analysis of the comparative Table 1 published in de Rosa (2011a) – which contains all the titles in French⁹ of the chapters, sections, and subsections of the first edition of *La Psychanalyse, son image et son public*, juxtaposed with those of the second edition – immediately shows the effects of the 'rewriting' of the work, which in 1976 comprises an entirely new section/chapter, even though the restructuring of the chapters reduces them by two, among those formally numbered,¹⁰ and the book is 144 pages shorter owing to the substantial cuts made to the text of the first edition.

Comparison between the titles of the chapters, sections and subsections in the two editions (1961 and 1976) of *La psychanalyse, son image et son public* shows a greater systematicity of content and a different conceptual framework behind the second edition. Testifying to this is a notable increase in the use of titles, which, besides giving rhythm to the reading, demonstrates the profound restructuring of the text, which steers the reader in its interpretation. Titles and subtitles (certainly more appealing and metaphorical in the second edition) are used to give guidance in reading a voluminous work, which in its second edition more than the first, assumes the form of a systematic exposition (and re-elaboration) of the theory of social representations.

To be noted in particular is that in the first part of the text, centred on interpretation of the results obtained by the questionnaire, the interviews and the free associations, the order of topics is practically reversed:

- The 1961 edition opens with eight chapters devoted to the scientific and naive image of psychoanalysis, the psychoanalyst, patients, and therapeutic practices. Only in the ninth chapter does it turn to more systematic treatment of the theory of social representations and the concepts associated with it, but it does so always in light of the discourse on psychoanalysis set out in the first chapters;
- The 1976 edition begins with four chapters centred on the theory of social representations and then resumes treatment of its various concepts simultaneously with the results of the interviews on the images of psychoanalysis, analysts, patients and analytical practices. In a certain sense, there is as an inversion of figure/ground between the object of study (the image of psychoanalysis in French society of the time) and the theory that, on the basis of this object, was conceived to furnish a refined reading of the relations between scientific knowledge and common sense, how they are manifest in everyday

exchanges, and their diffusion and re-elaboration by the media and social actors according to their ideologies and values.

But the work of rewriting the second edition was not a purely stylistic–narrative matter. As Moscovici himself informs us in the introduction to the second edition, he eliminated

technical and theoretical information that were of interest to only a small circle of specialists, or that have become common currency. This also corresponds, of course, to a shift in my personal and intellectual views on academic initiation rites and science.

(Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: XXII).

A systematic way to measure the conceptual reorganization of the second edition with respect to the first consists in comparing their bibliographical references, identifying the authors who appear in both editions (and therefore constitute some sort of common ground between them), the authors included only in the bibliography of the first edition (and who have therefore been deliberately removed from the second edition), and the authors who appear only in the second edition.

Rapid inspection of the Table 2 published in de Rosa (2011a), which lists these authors – according to the above three categories – and the dates of the publications cited, immediately evinces that the authors cited in the bibliographies of both editions are a minority with respect to those specific to the former or the latter. This highlights that Moscovici did not compile the bibliography of the second edition by integrating the bibliographical items of his first work with new ones. There are then authors who – although influential on his thought, as testified by references made to them by Moscovici in other publications, lectures, or also in personal conversations – are not systematically cited in the bibliography of the *opera prima*: an example is the book on the history of science by Robert Lenoble (1943) *Essai sur la notion d'expérience*, discovered in the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* and which, as Moscovici himself declares (2003), first attracted his attention to the concept of collective representation, and then to other readings.

It is too simple to argue that these are works published after 1961 and therefore ones which Moscovici would not have been able to consult when writing the first edition of *La psychanalyse*. This is the case of Berger and Luckmann (1966), Birnbach (1965), Burnstein (1967), Canguilhem (1966), David (1966, 1967), De Saussure (1967), De Soto, London and Handel (1965), Foucault (1963), Garfinkel (1967), Giese (1967), Hymes (1968), Maslow (1963), Pontalis (1965), Roqueplo (1974), Rose (1962), Zajonc and Burnstein (1965)¹¹.

But it is not this simple temporal criterion alone that explains the inclusion of new items (nor their selection rather than other sources available at that time), considering that the second edition's bibliography also contains an abundance of publications well anterior to 1961: for example Abelson and Rosenberg (1958), Adorno *et al.* (1950), Asch (1940, 1946, 1958), Bruner (1957), Evans Pritchard

(1934), Jaspers (1954), Koelher (1937), Koyré (1939, 1950), McGuire (1960a, 1960b), Mead (1934), Sherif (1933), Tarde (1901), Weber (1949), Worf (1953), Zajonc (1960) – to mention some of the best-known authors in social psychology, sociology, linguistics, philosophy – evidencing the expansion of Moscovici's intellectual horizons and the change in his sources fifteen years after his *opera prima*.

The cuts that reduce the second edition by 144 pages partly concern the sociology of knowledge: 'The discussion of the sociology of knowledge disappears: having said all that was necessary, Moscovici does not hark back on his reflection. There are now references to the social psychological literature and to major thinkers in sociology, psychology and linguistics.' (Jodelet 2008: 419).

It is also interesting to note that removed from the bibliography of the second edition are references to Moscovici's own publications prior to 1960, their place being taken by some of his publications subsequent to 1961 (Moscovici 1962, 1963; Moscovici and Zavalloni 1969) largely concerned with attitudes and the effects of the group as their polarizer, communicative processes and the properties of language, but also the *human history of nature* (Moscovici 1968, 1972).

This analysis of the sources – as regards both authors that were somehow important referents for Moscovici (because of intellectual affinity but also because they represented conceptions from which he differed) and other works and theories produced by Moscovici in the meantime – would require much closer philological and conceptual examination than is possible here. Merely to be pointed out is that, in 1976, Moscovici published not only the second edition of *La Psychanalyse*, but also a book in English, *Social Influence and Social Change* (thus anticipating by three years the French edition of *Psychologie des minorités actives*). Hence, the conceptual universe of this fertile and innovative author had already extended to produce another theory, which would bring him fame well beyond Europe. Although Moscovici was inclined to keep the strands of empirical research inspired by his various theories distinct – also by involving his assistants separately – it is evident that his mind could not but be a conceptual space for synthesis of these various inspirations and the hybridization of ideas, and that his writings could not but be influenced by these developments of thought and research in the meantime matured in other directions.

Dispelling any doubts about the close interconnection between the theory of social representations and the theory of innovation and active minorities is Moscovici's reply in the well-known interview given to Markova: 'If we do not have the same representation then the behavioral style has no effect' (Moscovici 2000: 266). As regards the level of integration (which obviously does not exclude the development) of Moscovici's thought – besides the distinction among the lines of research that he launched around his three theories subsequently concretized by those who continued them – one agrees with Jesuino:

there is not a first, second, or even a third Moscovici. It is true that he has worked at different levels of analysis and has used a wide variety of methods, but the underlying deep structure of his thought is quite consistent and systematic, being comprehensible both when he conducts

experimental analysis of the micro-processes of change and when he reflects on macrosocietal phenomena such as the underlying dialectic which opposes the consensual world against the one reified into the theory of social representations.

(Jesuino 2009: 126–7, my translation)

If we shift our attention from comparison between the tables of contents and the comparison between the authors cited in the bibliographies of the two editions (1961 and 1976) of *La psychanalyse, son image et son public* – as indicative respectively of the core concepts and intellectual influences by authors that characterize the two editions – to some of the more significant empirical results obtained by the meta-theoretical analysis applied to Moscovici's *opera prima* in its 1961 and 1976 versions,¹² we find a number of differences. These pertain to Moscovici's differing focus on certain paradigmatic aspects of his theory, such as the genesis, functions, processes, transmission, and transformation of social representations, or references to other constructs and theories (de Rosa 2011b).

As regards the purely theoretical nature of the treatment – as compared with the presentation of empirical findings – the editions do not exhibit substantial differences, given that the purely theoretical chapters account in both editions for over one quarter of the entire work, and the chapters in which the theoretical treatment is supported by results anchored in empirical data represent, to a largely similar extent, 79 per cent of the 1961 edition and 77 per cent of the 1976 one.

With respect to the various specific paradigmatic components of the theory of social representations (functions, processes, genesis, transmission, transformation), the meta-theoretical analysis of the two editions reveals a predominance of references in both editions to the 'functions' of social representations: such references amount to 31 per cent in the first edition and 30 per cent in the second. However, more analytical consideration of specific functions (which, though groupable into the two broad classes of cognitive functions of *reality ordering* and functions of *intra- and inter-group communication*, can be diversified in their turn into further ones) shows some similarities and differences between the two editions.

The function most frequently described in both editions is that of *guiding behaviour in social interactions and intra- and inter-group relations*, so that a social representation, in so far as it constitutes a set of interrelated symbols, thoughts, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, images, ideas, collective memories, practices, etc. – and, as such, is a system of interpretation of reality – becomes the symbolic mediator of interactions among the members of a group on the basis of their shared codes, and among individuals belonging to different groups, ordering their perceptions and guiding/prescribing/justifying their behaviours and social practices. However, this function appears with a frequency of 48 per cent in the first edition, but of 26 per cent in the second (assuming 100 per cent as representing the total frequencies of all the functions mentioned).

Also references to *social identity functions* decrease – albeit to a lesser extent – in the second edition, diminishing from 14 per cent in the 1961 edition to 12 per cent in that of 1976. Social representations, as symbolic constellations, which closely

regulate relations among groups, create and stabilize the social identity based on cohesion among individuals and members of a group sharing a particular system of representations.

By contrast, the second edition makes more frequent reference to the function of *orientation and control of social reality*, together with the *familiarization* function. Both these functions are connected with the regulation of socio-cognitive processes. In particular, the *cognitive function of orientation and control of social reality* (a function that can determine, by helping or hampering, and therefore by organizing and filtering, the diffusion of a science in society) is described with a frequency of 4 per cent in the 1961 book, and with a greater frequency of fully 23 per cent in that of 1976. Of interest is the treatment in the second edition, with a frequency equal to 6 per cent, of a further function: *familiarization* of the strange, which is performed in concomitance with the anchoring process, so that a social representation is transformed for insertion into an already-existing interrelated symbolic system of social thoughts, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, images, ideas, collective memories, practices, etc.

The predominant attention paid to the multiple functional aspects of social representations evidences the indissoluble '*reality/representation*' linkage that Moscovici's theory establishes among constructs (attitude, opinions, behaviour, identity, social knowledge, intergroup relationships, communication, etc.) traditionally studied in fragmentary manner and used atomistically. In affirming the practical character of the heuristic of social representations, Moscovici argues that 'it has to be said that those relations and that reality are not "concrete" on the one hand and "represented" on the other. Their interweaving is total, and the analytic distinction between the two is fragmentary and artificial' (Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 32).

In terms of the importance of the paradigmatic constructs, the meta-theoretical analysis conducted on the two editions shows that, immediately after functions, it is reference to the '*genesis*' of social representations that records the highest frequency in both editions (25 per cent in the 1961 edition and 22 per cent in the 1976 one). The slight decrease found in the 1976 edition for references to the genesis of representations is offset by a slight increase in references to the '*processes*' and the '*transmission*' of representations.

In regard to *genesis*, predominant in both editions is the *socio-genetic dimension* (that of the socio-cultural and historical processes generated by representations). This records the highest percentages (26 per cent in the 1961 edition and 36 per cent in that of 1976). The emphasis on the socio-genetic dimension is well summarized by the following statement: '...world view, ideology, utopia, all stress the fact that these theoretical elaborations are the results of a collective interaction, the expression of a social organization' (Moscovici 1961: 306, my translation). This is followed (with percentages of 21 per cent for the first edition and 12 per cent for the second) by references to the *micro-genetic dimension* (that of the genesis of representations in the social and intergroup interactions by means of which individuals negotiate their social identities and seek to establish shared definitions in regard to reality). Finally, the *ontogenetic dimension* (that of the formation of the

social representations acquired as part of the development of an individual's knowledge and cognitive abilities) is measured by the meta-theoretical analysis as a category specific to the first edition, where it records 16 per cent of references.

This greater importance in the second edition of the *socio- and micro-genetic* dimension – to the detriment of the onto-genetic dimension – should be read in parallel with the ‘accentuating the importance of language and communication in the production, functioning and efficacy of social representations’. (Jodelet 2008: 419).

It should be pointed out that this distinction among the genetic processes of social representations – which was the basis for the categorial criterion in my grid used to analyse the paradigmatic element relative to ‘genesis’ – has been drawn from Duveen and Lloyd (1990), and is therefore subsequent to both the first and second editions of Moscovici's work. The distinction should therefore not be regarded as attributable to Moscovici – even less should it be considered a rigid classification. It only indicates the prevailing focus of the theory, given that the three genetic dimensions are intimately bound up with each other in Moscovici's conceptualization.

Connected with interest in the socio- and micro-genesis of social representations is interest in their ‘*transmission*’. This assumes such importance in the theory that it forms one of its constitutive elements. It, too, has therefore been subjected to my meta-theoretical analysis. In particular, the various *transmission systems* identified by Moscovici form a heuristic element central to the sensitive issue of the relationships between representation and social influence. It is therefore interesting to determine empirically whether there are significant differences between the 1961 first edition and that of 1976 (which was also the year in which Moscovici published his book on *Social Influence and Social Change*). However, this is not what the empirical analysis found, given that – at least from the point of view of the recursiveness of the categories used in the two texts – it recorded very similar frequencies in both editions. Rather than disappointing, however, this finding induces us to value Moscovici's *opera prima* even more, and to regard as excessively severe his judgment that it was merely a doctoral ‘thesis’, rather than a ‘book’, given that it already contained, amongst other things, a systematic account of the relationships between representation and social influence.

This conceptualization of the dynamics of social influence, which in the *opera prima* Moscovici addresses from the perspective of the relations among the various communicative genres, driven by the ideological positions of different newspapers, and their readers with their reference social groups, formed the core of his subsequent theory on the relationships between minorities (and their patterns of behaviour) and the majority (Moscovici 1976). The same hypothesis concerning the interest in social influence shared by the *opera prima* (1961 and 1976) with regard to the structuring and transmission of social representations in and by the mass media, and the book on *Social Influence and Social Change* (1976) in interpersonal communication in specific experimental conditions, has also been advanced by Gerard Duveen (2008: XIV–XV).

The fact remains that, when re-reading Moscovici's *opera prima*, even after

having read and re-read his subsequent works, one is impressed by intuitions, which anticipate lines of thought woven together in theories of which the distinction is only apparent.

Empirical analysis of the two editions of Moscovici's book shows that references to the *transmission* of social representations, and to the communication systems that regulate them, appear – with respect to the other paradigmatic constructs evidenced by the meta-theoretical analysis grid – with a frequency of 21 per cent in the first edition and 24 per cent in the second – in which, moreover, every generic reference to this construct (that is, references that do not specify a particular transmission system) disappears. More specifically, the *transmission systems* termed, according to their characteristics and modes of discourse production/organization, *diffusion*, *propagation* and *propaganda*, configure a generative dynamic of social representations – not banally as a contagion effect by the media or some other source of influence, but rather as a 're-elaborative' and 're-constructive' dynamic performed by subjects according to the social contexts in which and through which new knowledge objects are socialized. This attention paid to the transmission systems, innovative with respect to the traditional unilinear conception of the 'power of the media', is strictly isomorphous with the nature itself of the concept of social representation, which is never a photograph replicating reality (see Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: XXX). Likewise, for Moscovici, at the level of the media,

communication is never reducible to the transmission of the original messages, or to the transfer of data that remains unchanged. Communication differentiates, translates and combines, just as groups invent, differentiate between or interpret the social objects or representations of other groups.

(Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: XXII)

Much the same attention is paid to the transmission system termed '*diffusion*' in the two editions, given that the percentages are very similar (19 per cent in the 1961 edition vs. 17 per cent in that of 1976). This system differs from both *propagation* and *propaganda* in that it is characterized by a concrete, attractive, and rapid style which 'it attempts to get as close as possible to what is assumed to be the taste and vocabulary of the reader' given that 'in diffusion, the problem of the adaptation of sender to receiver, and the former's dependence on the latter, is fundamental' (Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 216).

This style typifying the relations between the source of communication and the transmitter (which tends to become the expression of the receiver, turning the media into megaphones for the opinions of their readers/audiences – a sort of *vox populi*) confers relatively neutral influence on diffusion. The audience does not consist of a highly structured and oriented group, and the source of information is not overtly capable or desirous of orienting its readers; rather, it is a means to transmit common knowledge that must be shared.

The representations transmission system which Moscovici terms '*propagation*' –

and whose operation he demonstrated mainly in the Catholic press – (10 per cent in the 1961 edition, rising to 20 per cent in that of 1976) is characterized by a certain ‘*pressure to uniformity*’ (although this is not the manifest and authoritarian uniformity exacted by propaganda). In fact, the purpose of the ‘propagation’ system is to incorporate socially important objects of representation into a frame of already-existing conceptions, favouring assimilation and adaptation in order to prevent tensions and to create convergence (guiding behaviours without evident coercion) on a doctrine acceptable to the reference group. The latter is assumed unitary and definite, although smaller than the atomistic and indistinct target of the diffusion, and its attachment to and respect for authority is promoted through an educational function. A ‘propagation’ system is less concerned to foster opinions on specific problems (this being typical, according to Moscovici, of the diffusion system) than to develop ‘attitudes that can influence both representations and behaviours’ (Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 282) so that the transmitter’s degree of implication is apparent, in the sense of dependence on principles and a shared values system, rather than on the readers.

The ‘*propaganda*’ system is more markedly ideological. It seeks to impose uniformity on the representations and behaviours of the recipients of the communication (in this case to be enlisted as followers and activists by persuasive strategies). Moscovici showed how the propaganda system works by analysing the ways in which the French communist press of the time represented psychoanalysis. He devoted equal attention to propaganda in both editions (in fact, the percentage frequencies recorded by the meta-theoretical analysis were exactly 26 per cent in both cases). In this system of representations transmission, the meaning of a behaviour is not renewed; instead, it is created and reinforced with manipulative devices. Iterative and rhetorically armed communicative strategies induce strongly dichotomous and polarized ‘stereotypes’ evocative of emotional reactions to conflicts among visions of the world and schemas predicated on the binary logic of true/false, authentic/alienated. Contrary to traditional sociological analyses of propaganda and the doctrines of its omnipotence, in Moscovici’s investigation on various levels of analysis (situational, cognitive, linguistic, and psychological), propaganda instead becomes a ‘mode of expression used by a group in a situation of conflict, and as the instrumental or action-oriented elaboration of that group’s representation of the object of the conflict’ and a ‘process that shapes and instrumentalizes representation’ (Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 314 and 338).

One should carefully read and re-read Moscovici’s book in its entirety and possibly in both editions. This will counter the schematizing simplifications of Moscovici’s thought that too often reduce his conception of the communicative systems of *diffusion*, *propagation* and *propaganda* to separate univocal and binary channels in the production of opinions, attitudes and stereotypes. One will thus realize that Moscovici was a young intellectual in an adoptive country, but always to some extent extraneous to it if not a foreigner (and therefore strongly motivated to decipher its codes of communication and styles of influence in

relation to a composite representational, ideological and social mapping) and both the child of and witness to the historical tragedies of a Europe riven by Nazism and by Stalinism. For these experiential reasons, he was all the more engaged in reflecting on French society of the years following the Second World War and on its ideological polarizations in the global context of a world still divided into blocs separated by an iron curtain and by a mental cleavage. Driven by these motivations, he proved a perspicacious social scientist able to bracket off his views of social phenomena imbued with a strong moral ethos (but making no compromise with either history or certain intellectual conformisms of the time). With the attitude of those who intend to study phenomenologically and empirically the psychological processes operating in social reality (not only and not so much at individual level, but at the interpersonal and intergroup ones), he states

that we have to clarify some of the central problems raised by the development of the communicational phenomena: – Which psychological processes intervene in these phenomena; – What are the objective preconditions for the production of communicational phenomena, and – what are the elements that perpetuate or transform them – What are the links between psychological processes and those preconditions.

(Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 286)

One wonders whether, fifty years later, Moscovici's explanation of the correspondences between communication systems and modes of behaviour construction still holds, notwithstanding the changes that have taken place in the great ideological systems and their fruition by social and institutional subjects, but also in the polyphony of the apparatuses of communication systems in the current and prospective scenario of the cross-media. Thanks to new technologies, the latter have transformed the transmitter–message–receiver relationship, both in the sense of the oneness–multiplicity of the subjects involved (with the demise of the one/many communicative model), and in that of how messages are structured and the reference population segmented. I shall deal more thoroughly with these prospects of development in research on social representations and communication in other publications (de Rosa 2011a, 2011c, 2012b forthcoming). Here suffice it to emphasize that Moscovici's constant endeavour since the first edition of *La Psychanalyse* has been to go beyond the traditional approaches that merely ascertained the existence of ties between the content of what is being communicated and the responses of a particular recipient of the message, replacing 'the recording of global effects with the analysis of specific interactions and processes, once they have been clearly identified' (Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 359). But it is respect for the fineness and phenomenological dynamism with which the categories have been defined by Moscovici, that enjoins that they must not be hypostatized, thereby sterilizing the heuristic capacity of his theory with a simplifying orthodoxy that rigidifies intuitions into mummified notions. How is it possible to imagine that people can, for instance, develop only opinions or only attitudes or only stereotypes according

to the newspapers that they read? Alternatively, that newspapers can induce only opinions or only attitudes or only stereotypes according to the ideological orientation that modulates the relationship with their readers? This consideration does not solely concern the multiple and competing exposures of people to the complex contemporary polyphonic and cross-media world. Moscovici repeatedly warns, while describing his research on the social representations of psychoanalysis, that the same newspaper – depending on the topic treated and its greater or lesser sensitivity for the reference values system or ideology – may adopt the communicative mode of diffusion for one topic and that of propagation or propaganda for another; or that the same newspaper – according to the evolution of a particular ideological world-view and its relationships with the history of ideas and development of the intellectual climate – may convert a propaganda communicative system into a propagation one (see the section ‘From propaganda to propagation’ in Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 354).

Besides the paradigmatic elements of the theory outlined thus far – mainly to show possible differences of focus between the first and second editions – particular mention should be made of the *processes* by which a social representation is elaborated. These processes are *objectification* and *anchoring*. Compared with the other paradigmatic elements discussed above (functions, genesis, transmission systems), the results of the meta-analysis show that references to processes of objectification and anchoring amount to 13 per cent in the first edition and 18 per cent in the second, thus revealing that closer attention is paid to them in the 1976 edition. On more specific assessment of the importance assumed by each of the two processes, the frequency of *objectification* increases from 21 per cent to 25 per cent, that of *anchoring* decreases from 21 per cent to 18 per cent.

In the first edition (1961), it is not until Chapter Ten (‘Dynamics of social representations’), and particularly pages 311–36, that there is a section devoted to ‘Description of the two Major Processes’ which concur in the ‘formation’ of social representations. Here Moscovici specifies that the term should be understood neither genetically nor chronologically, but rather as denoting the outcome of a series of analyses on the concatenation of phenomena. In the second edition (1976), Chapter III, entitled ‘*Ideas that become common-sense objects*’,¹³ is entirely devoted to *objectification*. This is the reification of abstract thought into objects through the following procedure: (a) the selection and de-contextualization of information, which is similar to the conventionalization described by Bartlett;¹⁴ (b) *schematization*, whereby concepts are transformed into images (schemas or figurative nuclei) able to reify imaginative and visual thought, as opposed to abstract scientific thought; (c) *naturalization*, or the concretization of abstract notions to render them tangible – a sort of ‘animism in reverse’ (see: Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 69).

Language with its multiform versatility (between scientific language and common-sense language) once again has an essential role in the transformation of scientific ideas into common-sense objects (Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 69).

But it is not enough to transform an idea into a visible element of concrete reality – in a word, to ‘objectify’ a scientific theory. For an idea to become domesticated and made familiar, it must be positioned in the sphere of common sense populated by the objects of everyday life through being ‘classified’ and ‘named’. Language thus becomes a sort of semantic hinge between the two processes of objectification and anchoring. It acts as an instrument of mind–culture–society which transforms mental images into *social categories of language*: indeed, there is a passage in which Moscovici attributes the verb ‘classify’ to the process of objectification rather than to that of anchoring.

Naturalization and classification are the two fundamental mechanisms of objectification. One makes symbols real, and the other gives reality a symbolic appearance. One broadens the range of beings that can be attributed to an individual (and in that sense we can say that images play a part in our development), whilst the other detaches certain of those beings from their attributes so as to keep them within a general picture that is in keeping with the system of reference established by society.

(Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 56)

Thus, in the second edition, Chapter Four – entitled ‘Homo Psychanalyticus’¹⁵ – gives salience to ‘classifying’ and ‘naming’, two practices of thought which follow the naturalization of the core of the social representation and enable individuals to orient themselves in relation to others and the environment; whilst the first section of Chapter Six, entitled ‘The Psychoanalysis of Everyday Life’,¹⁶ describes the second key process: that of *anchoring*.

Whilst objectification explains how the emblematic elements of a scientific theory, or of any socially significant item of knowledge, are transformed into common-sense objects, anchoring shows how new common-sense objects, opportunistically classified and named, are inserted into the mapping of already-existing knowledge and contribute to the constitution and expression of social relationships, thereby orienting the behaviours of individuals and groups.

Anchoring inserts new items of knowledge into the social world in a hierarchy of reference values and along a scale of preferences within existing social relationships, favouring the social recognizability of such knowledge through the shifting of salient characteristics, and establishing practices by which representations constitute and orient social relationships. In this way, anchoring confers functional value on social representations, which, as grids for the interpretation of reality, become systems which mediate between the individual and his/her environment by furnishing repertoires and typologies that serve for the classification of events and behaviours.

Although some texts popularizing the theory of social representations (for example, Galli 2006, Jesuino 2009, Wagner and Hayes 2005) tend to reverse the order of presentation of the two fundamental processes, Moscovici – in both the first and second editions of his work founding the theory of social representations – described first the process of objectification and then that of anchoring

(expressly calling it the second process¹⁷). This choice should not be regarded as a purely narrative–descriptive expedient. Rather, it reflects a specific operational phenomenology of such processes, although the before/after relation should not be taken to be a strictly temporal constraint, given that in some cases such processes operate in synergy, if not simultaneously (Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 104). As Jean-Marie Seca has aptly stressed (2001): ‘the connection between the two processes (objectifying and anchoring) is dialectical. [...] Objectification and anchoring proceed in parallel and in context’ (Seca 2001: 66).

Once again it is language – and especially *thematic language* – which mediates and resolves the conflicts that arise in society over new knowledge. ‘The process of anchoring is a process of elaborating this verbal mediator, without which it can neither develop nor survive’ (Moscovici 1961/1976, English translation of the 1976 edn in 2008: 151).

Language is conceived by Moscovici, not as a neutral vehicle of information, nor as pure individual cognitive expression, but as an intrinsically cultural element, in which the inseparable mind–culture–society linkage and the interweaving among cognitive–symbolic–cultural processes dispels the traditional dichotomies between individual and society, rational and irrational, scientific and non-scientific thought. It is this conception that leads Moscovici in search of a correspondence between social situation and cognitive system extraneous to any deterministic logic *from the social to the cognitive* (much in vogue during the 1960s) or *from the cognitive to the social* (much in vogue today, owing to the development, and in some respects the hegemony, of first cognitivism and then neurosciences).

Before concluding this rapid review of some of the results obtained from systematic comparison of the two editions of Moscovici’s book, I shall present two graphics showing the importance assumed in the 1961 and 1976 versions by the constructs and concepts of social psychology. Those with low frequencies have been eliminated because they would have made the graphics illegible (see Figure 0.1 and Figure 0.2).

The two figures below illustrate both the importance of certain constructs in comparison to others in each edition and the differences between the two editions in the frequencies of the constructs to which Moscovici refers. Consideration of the figures highlights the following:

- The predominant reference in the 1961 edition is to the construct *opinion* as a means of expression and exchange among the members of a group in regard to socially significant issues. This predominance is due to the popularity that the construct had enjoyed in the social sciences, and particularly in social psychology, in previous decades (‘Every opinion or social representation is marked by socialized expressions’: Moscovici 1961: 9, my translation).
- The *image* is the second most frequently used construct in the 1961 edition, and it is closely connected in Moscovici’s theory with the construct *opinion*, as already evident in the 1952 article cited at the outset. That image is an important construct – although not necessarily declined in its iconic and figurative aspect

(a key element in the objectification process) but as a mental image as well¹⁸ – is also evinced by the fact that it appears in the title of Moscovici's first work, *La Psychanalyse, son image et son public*, and that it remains unchanged in the second, profoundly revised, edition of 1976. In fact, although fifteen years had passed since the formulation of the theory of social representations, which from the end of the 1960s onwards spread among researchers, especially in France (producing a first wave of studies on topics ranging among health, education, childhood, justice, etc., as well as the first experimental studies on the structural properties of representations and on the effects exerted by intergroup relations on the formation of representations, or on the role of social representations in social relations and practices), Moscovici did not replace the more common term of 'image' with that of 'social representation'. In this regard, Jean Claude Abric has repeatedly said, referring to the time when Moscovici's theory began to circulate among his colleagues, '*we still said image*'.

- The third construct prominent in Figure 0.1 is that of *communication*, whose importance is due to acknowledgement that it not only transmits a message or information but also forms, deforms and re-elaborates social representations, establishing symbolic relationships between individuals and groups within society (see: Moscovici 1961: 9).
- These three constructs (*opinion, image, communication*) are followed by a second, broader group (*language, judgment, behaviour, social processes, stereotype, value*) which record greater frequencies than other constructs – *belief systems, common sense, self, perception, identity, ideology* – which in their turn are more frequently cited in the 1961 edition than other popular constructs, most notably *attitude*, together

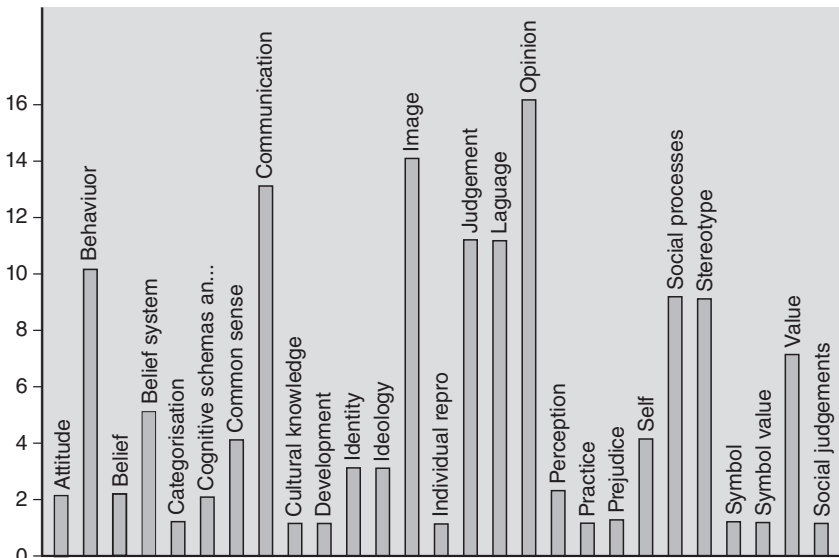


Figure 0.1 Constructs and concepts of social psychology identified in the 1961 edition of *La Psychanalyse*

- with *beliefs, cognitive schemas and processes, categorization, cultural knowledge, development, individual representations, practices, prejudice, symbol, judgment*.
- In the 1976 edition, one notes the marked prevalence of the construct *language*, immediately followed by *communication*, which confirms various considerations made hitherto concerning the thematic–conceptual re-focus of this second, profoundly revised, edition – and which, as I have already emphasized elsewhere (de Rosa 2011a), is also visible in the reformulation of the titles and the sections (see Table 1 in de Rosa 2011a). Also confirmed is the high frequency of the construct *behaviour* (which is not yet replaced by the construct *practices*, although it already appears in the first edition), while the constructs *opinion* and *image*, though still important, are considerably less frequent than in the 1961 edition, as are those of *stereotype* and *social processes*. Interesting among the principal differences is the greater recursiveness of the construct *attitude*¹⁹, followed by *values, common sense, and ideology* (which have nearly equal frequency rates in the two editions). Besides the constructs that appear less frequently, from the first edition (*belief systems, cognitive schemas and processes, cultural knowledge, development, identity, perception, practices, self, symbol*) there also appear in the figure relative to the second edition constructs such as *archetypes, myth, norms, propaganda*. These constructs that did not appear in the figure relative to the most significant constructs in the first edition due to a threshold effect of the frequencies shown

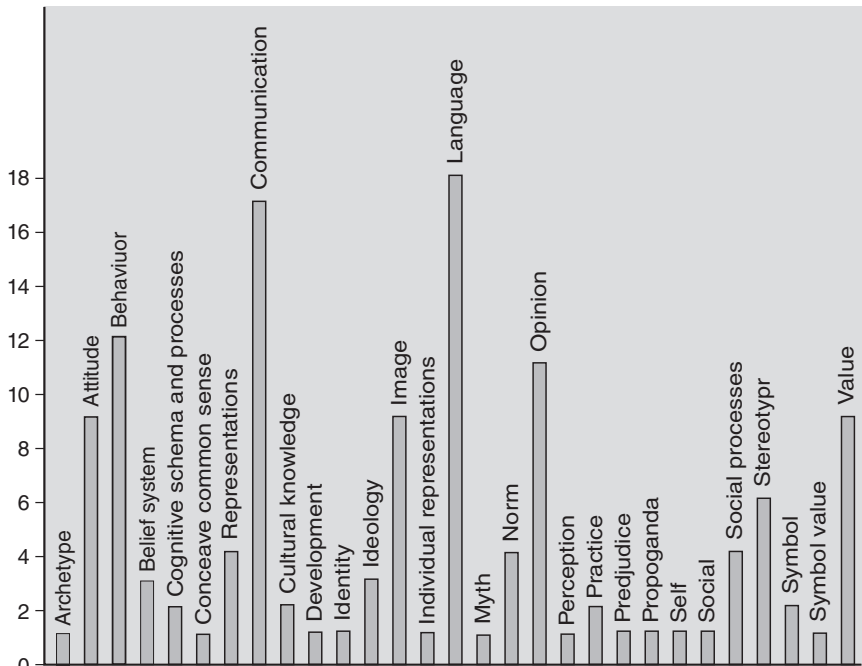


Figure 0.2 Constructs and concepts of social psychology measured in the 1976 edition of *La Psychanalyse*

(although many of these terms were already cited and also the subjects of specific chapters, for instance Chapters Sixteen and Seventeen on *propaganda*).

It is also interesting to compare the importance of these constructs and concepts as emerges from the meta-theoretical analysis conducted on the two editions of Moscovici's book with the findings of meta-theoretical analysis on a large multi-lingual corpus of literature produced by the international scientific community centred on the theory of social representations (for a total of 2065 bibliographical references among book chapters, articles and, to a marginal extent, also conference papers and doctoral theses). In fact, these analyses (de Rosa 2013b) – as well as a previous meta-analysis conducted on 1,629 abstracts presented at the first eight International Conferences on the Social Representations, from the first held in Ravello in 1992 to the eighth held in Rome in 2006; de Rosa and d'Ambrosio 2008) – found that the construct recording the highest frequency was '*attitude*',²⁰ with the manifest intention among the authors of *integration* in regard to that of social representation (in 91 per cent of cases), while only in 4.3 per cent of cases it was *differentiation*, or in 2.8 per cent simple *comparison*, or in 0.2 per cent *substitution*.

The widespread tendency to interrelate the concept of social representation with other constructs of psychology testifies to the unifying value of the theory, as claimed by Moscovici. Though emphasising the distinctive elements and the epistemic principles that constitute pre-requisites for the social representation construct, to the point of transforming it into theory²¹ – he has repeatedly argued that this is not a new label for an old concept, nor a new instrument to augment the methodological apparatus, but rather a new conception of the discipline and its structures (see also Markova 2003; Moscovici and Markova 2006). The most recent results of the meta-analysis conducted on the corpus of 2,065 bibliographical references selected on the basis of various criteria of paradigmatic specificity in regard to the theory of social representations (de Rosa 2013b) show that the fifteen most frequently cited constructs (with N greater than 400) recall the main approaches of social psychology: a) classic transversal constructs to various paradigmatic traditions (*attitude, opinion, image, behaviour*); b) the socio-cognitive perspective (*cognitive schemas and processes*); c) and the socio-cultural and interactionist ones (*cultural knowledge, beliefs, social processes, values, practices, identity, communication, language, action, common sense* (see also Valsiner and Rosa 2007).

After these detailed observations based on systematic meta-theoretical analysis, I shall conclude this section comparing the two versions of Moscovici's book by setting out the salient points identified for each edition by Denise Jodelet (2008) in her excellent essay entitled 'The Beautiful Invention' and the subsequent article 'Returning to past features of Serge Moscovici's theory to feed the future' (Jodelet, 2011).

In regard to the 1961 edition, Jodelet identifies three elements of innovation qualifying a social psychology as authentically 'social':

- 1 The focus on common sense, as a specific form of knowledge socially

produced in interpersonal exchanges and not the product of mere cognitive structures (a subject somewhat extraneous to the social psychology at the time of *La Psychanalyse*, with some exceptions for symbolic interactionism and the psychology of Heider or Lewin);

- 2 The role of social representations in the constitution of reality, far anticipating the constructionist models usually identified with the subsequent books by Berger and Luckmann (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality* and Gergen (1982), *Toward a Transformation in Social Knowledge*, and entirely superseding the sociological models of theories of knowledge through innovative attention to the correspondence between the organization of social relations and social representations, between cognitive processes and social interactions, between the workings of natural and logical thought, and among the cultural, symbolic and imaginary forms of social thought;
- 3 The holistic framework, which superseded the classic society/individual dichotomy or the linear determinism dominant in the 1960s (social structure – psychological structure) and the binary (structure–superstructure) logic through a composite and interdependent conceptualization of the reciprocal influences among society, culture and the individual. This framework anticipates complexity theories with the connected requisites of inter-disciplinarity and hybridization between the physical and social sciences.

In regard to the 1976 edition, the three main aspects reported by Denise Jodelet as resulting from reorganization of the text in the second edition are the following:

- 1 The disappearance of discussion on the sociology of knowledge, with closer reference made to the psychological-social literature and the principal thinkers in sociology and linguistics. 'As a consequence, the relation between social factors and social representations is no longer treated in terms of determination but in terms of an isomorphism between social regulations and the structure of social representations' (Jodelet 2008: 419).
- 2 An emphasis on the importance of language and communication (see also Moscovici 1967) in the production, functioning, and effectiveness of social representations, thus highlighting 'jointly the constitutive role of interpersonal, intergroup and of media communications and discourses' (Jodelet 2008: 419), with the following two consequences:
 - a A more thorough analysis of the properties and functions of social representations, including their influence on communicative actions and practices, assuming representations to be '*meanings*' – rather than information or knowledge – and therefore expressing a group dimension and at the same time ways to name and classify social reality, thereby domesticating its extraneous and unfamiliar dimension;
 - b A criticism of the linear subject–object models characterizing the mechanistic reductionism of classical psychology (not only behaviourism, but also the radical versions of cognitivist behaviourism, which replaced observable

behaviour with the cognitive behaviour of information processing). As an alternative, Moscovici proposes the triangular ‘Subject–Other–Object’ model, which synthesizes the intrinsically social nature of knowledge, not because it concerns social objects (a limitation characteristic of the literature generally included in the macro-category of *social cognition*²²), but because it is socially generated by the dynamics of social interactions with the Other (individual, group, institution) and because it performs social functions for and in communication.

- 3 The conceptualization of other forms of thought (ideological, scientific, magical) besides common sense and beliefs, until the conceptualization of a new trans-historical form that has led Moscovici to elaborate, together with Vignaux, the concept of *Themata* (Moscovici and Vignaux 1994).

Apart from rewriting and conceptual reorganization, the features which are theoretical aspects common to the two editions of *La Psychanalyse*, as well as being heuristic principles which give marked capacity for influence to the theory of social representations are – again according to the analysis by Denise Jodelet (2008: 418) – the following:

- 1 The joint analysis of knowledge processes and products at both individual and social level. ‘Here we have the double and inseparable aspects of social representations as both constituting and constituted forms of thinking’, allowing the elaboration of systemic and complex theoretical propositions concerning representational contents, functions, products and processes on the basis of empirical observations and the analysis of discourses, images, texts, and iconic forms in media messages and social practices (Jodelet 2008: 418; see also Jodelet 2012 in this volume);
- 2 The dynamic relation between social representations and public issues in the ‘social marketplace’ as an arena for the symbolic positioning of groups with similar or conflicting interests and visions of the world, thus conferring intrinsic social relevance on the choice of objects of study.

These two elements form a linkage between two works published in 1961 and 1976. Both of them centre on the following key aspects identified by Jodelet (2008: 418):

- a The description of the content of social representations in terms of different dimensions (information, attitude, and the field of representations) and its modes of elaboration (information dispersion, inference pressure, focalization);
- b Analysis of the processes of formation of representation (objectification, anchoring);
- c Detecting the logical properties of natural thinking (formalism, informal repetition, analogy and cognitive polyphasia);
- d Exploration of the functions of representations (the orientation of behaviour and communication).

Martin Bauer and George Gaskell (2008: 351) identify four further salient features of the theory of social representations, in their conviction that it will continue to be a research program for the development of social psychology:

- a Its framing of diversified common sense as creative resistance;
- b Its analysis of communication processes;
- c Its concern with science in society;
- d Its methodological implication.

I could continue with illustration of views or interpretations concerning a work which has been much discussed, cited or, unfortunately, distorted. However, owing to the limits within which I must confine this comparison between the two editions of *La Psychanalyse*, I shall stop here. I thus conclude this section by recommending that Moscovici's theory be first approached from its source: that is, by reading the *opera prima* without being intimidated, so that subsequent interpretations of the work by others are taken for what they are without detriment to the quality of Moscovici's '*beautiful invention*'.

Towards a prospective analysis.

1961–2011 and beyond: fifty years of history from an idea to 'more than a theory'

Fifty years of history of a successful idea – which in the form of a theory set out in an *opera prima* (Moscovici 1961 1st edn, 1976 2nd edn) has generated a trans-disciplinary field which today counts thousand of publications, in numerous languages, and disseminated in all the continents – deserves much more space than a single section. Indeed, this will be the purpose of a book already announced in the *Social Representations and Communication: Media and Society* series with the title *The Biography of a Theory: A Meta-Analysis Survey on the Birth and Diffusion of Social Representation Theory*, in which the present writer illustrates – with analysis supported by empirical data and interviews with researchers from various generations today protagonists of this scientific field – the various phases in which the idea has been socialized well beyond the confines of the mind of a young researcher brimming with innovative ideas and his narrow circle of colleagues, to engender a theory which, whilst reconstitutive of social psychology, has also extended beyond its boundaries to hybridize and enrich all the social sciences.

The third chapter of this book, 'Research Fields in Social Representations: Snapshot Views from a Meta-theoretical Analysis', presents some of the results of a research program – which lasted for several years – aimed at the progressive and systematic mapping of the scientific production inspired by the theory of social representations. The reader is referred to this chapter for an overview of the theory's development and the various paradigmatic approaches, supported by a selection of empirical results from our meta-theoretical research.

This introduction outlines some other aspects of this research, which in itself has helped disseminate a fascinating scientific theory, especially if one considers the volatility of the micro-paradigms which appear and then disappear in social psychology in the space of barely a decade (if they are successful!).

Francesca Emiliani and Augusto Palmonari write that:

if at a distance of over forty years (and its fiftieth birthday has now been reached!) we are still discussing and reflecting on the heuristic power of the theory set out in this book, we must recognize that the author has sought to redefine ‘the problems and concepts of social if psychology’ starting from the phenomenon of social representations.

(Emiliani and Palmonari 2009: 37)

Nikos Kalampalikis and Valérie Haas go even further:

if the social representations approach encountered such a development within and outside the discipline, it has happened because it [...] has gone beyond a ‘simple’ theory, or ‘additional’ theory. Indeed the past half century has amply proven that it is *more than a theory* [...], *a new map of social thought*.

(Kalampalikis and Haas 2008: 450)

On this *new map of social thought* – plotted by the theory of social representations – generations of researchers have not only oriented themselves in their study of the most disparate objects of psycho-social investigation but also marked out new avenues for inquiry by developing specific paradigms and approaches. Whilst sharing the unitariness of their original inspiration and therefore belonging in the literature on social representations, these paradigmatic approaches – which have developed on fertile ground thanks to Moscovici’s unwavering rejection of canonical principles or intellectual orthodoxies, favouring innovation and autonomy regardless of his personal preferences – have acquired a characterization and a resonance such that they can be identified in distinctive manner, thereby testifying to the fertility and vitality of social representations theory.²³ The diagram (Figure 3.1) in the third chapter of this book (de Rosa 2013b) depicts the findings of examination of the literature used as the source for the meta-theoretical analysis. It illustrates the development of the literature, offering a view more integrated than that more conventionally focused on the two paradigmatic approaches whose renown has elevated them to the status of schools (in particular, the ‘Aix school’ and the ‘Geneva school’), associated with the institutions to which the researchers who have contributed to their formalization belong. These two approaches are flanked by the dialogical approach, the anthropological and ethnographic approach, and the modelling approach, each characterized by specific theoretical options and methodologies (see the third chapter of this book).

Nevertheless, the fertility of social representations theory does not consist only in the development of new paradigms. It also concerns the birth of a scientific community which draws the core of its identity and its rationale from the theory, and whose members travel from one continent to another for conferences dedicated to it, research meetings in specific thematic area, initiatives in the training of young researchers, publishing activities, and so on.

It is for this reason that, in agreement with Michael Billig, who regards the delay of the English edition of *La Psychanalyse* as timely and opportune (but the same can evidently be said for the Italian and Portuguese editions of 2011), besides the apparently paradoxical formulation: ‘the delay is timely’), we fully concur that:

the re-publication is timely, because it should encourage us to reflect on the origins of the theory of social representations itself. [...] Moscovici’s arguments about the diffusion of scientific ideas points reflexively to his own first book as a resource for examining the birth of an idea that has become more than idea – that has become the identity for a community of academics.
(Billig 2008: 355–6)

In broad outline, Moscovici’s original and audacious research – supported by the gestation of a complex of innovative ideas – has triggered a chain reaction of scientific developments which can be synthesized as follows:

- 1 The official birth of the theory of social representations with Moscovici’s book published in 1961;
- 2 The theory’s reformulation with the second, profoundly revised, edition of 1976;
- 3 Its diffusion in France (end of the 1960s/early 1970s) and from France through Europe (end of the 1970s/early 1980s and thereafter), then from Europe to the world (from the late 1980s onwards);
- 4 The proliferation of a literature vast in its thematic choices, geographical affiliations, methodological and paradigmatic orientations, and in the critical debate that it has provoked in the broader scientific community, arousing an animated dynamic of controversies, ripostes, and confutations from both the mainstream perspective and the more radical one of discourse analysis (see de Rosa 1994a, 2006a, 2006b; Howarth 2006b);
- 5 The birth of an international scientific community which has made this theory the core of its cultural identity, and which today comprises thousands of researchers working in all the continents;
- 6 Scientific events and other institutional forms of scientific communication and exchange: for instance, the bi-annual international conferences on social representations (ICSR) organized since 1992 or the JIRS (Jornada Internacional sobre Representações Sociais), or the CBRs (Conferencia Brasileira sobre Representações Sociais);
- 7 The creation of a specialized journal in 1992: *Papers on Social Representations* (<http://www.Psych.Lse.Ac.Uk/Psr/>), and the large number and variety of

journals in different disciplinary areas which publish articles on the social representations;

- 8 The renaming of university courses – traditionally centred on Attitudes and Opinions – as Attitudes and Social Representations, with the restructuring of academic programs for the purposes of paradigmatic redefinition (this being the case, for example, of the course taught since 1992 at the Faculty of Psychology of the Sapienza University of Rome, currently part of the Faculty of Medicine and Psychology; or the course introduced in 2007 at the Instituto de Psicologia of the Universidade de Brasília/Brasil);
- 9 An international doctorate devoted specifically to research training in the area of social representations and communication (European PhD on Social Representations and Communication: <http://www.europhd.eu>), approved by the European Commission in 1993 and fully operational since 1996. This international doctorate course leads to a qualification awarded by six universities in four European countries (Sapienza, Rome, Italy; University of Provence, University Paul-Valéry Montpellier III and University Lumière Lyon 2, France; Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic; University A.I. Cuza, Iasi, Romania) in cooperation with a broader institutional network of universities. The consortium currently consists of an ‘institutional’ network of twenty-two universities in fifteen countries in the various continents: seventeen universities in nine European countries (AT, CZ, FR, IT, PT, RO, ES, CH, UK) and five extra-European universities in North America (Canada), Latin-America (Argentina and Brazil) and Asia (China). It has recently begun cooperation with companies and extra-academic research centres. It is coordinated by the Sapienza University of Rome and has a dedicated infrastructure: the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication Research Centre and Multimedia Lab (see de Rosa 2009b, 2009c);
- 10 The creation of a thematic network of excellence on social representations and communication (SoReCom THEmatic NETwork: <http://www.europhd.eu/SoReComTHEmaticNETwork>), approved by the European Commission in 2004, and which comprises more than a thousand researchers and some hundreds of academic and non-academic partner institutions in all the European countries, and affiliated specialized research centres throughout the world. This network systematically pursues the following aims:
 - a To acquire all *scientific documentation* produced in this field (with the implementation and constant development of a bibliographic inventory currently comprising more than seven thousand bibliographical entries (<http://www.europhd.eu/cgi-bin/WebObjects/euorphd.woa/wa/biblio>), and a virtual library with more than one thousand publications (<http://www.europhd.net/cgi-bin/WebObjects/euorphd.woa/wa/virtualLib>), as well as a progressive research program in the meta-analysis of the entire body of literature on social representations, currently being conducted on more than three thousand bibliographical sources (see Chapter 3 in this volume));

- b To promote *research training* (through its institutional core represented by the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication, from which the much broader thematic network has originated);
- c To facilitate *networking* among the members of the international scientific community (registered in the SoReComTHEmaticNETwork Scientific Community online database: http://www.europhd.eu/html/_onda03/04/01.00.00.00.shtml), news about which is communicated monthly through So.Re.Com.THEmaticNETwork@-NEWS (http://www.europhd.eu/SoReComTHENET_@-NEWS).

In recent years, this scientific community has promoted initiatives aimed at (a) the creation of thematic sub-networks,²⁴ and (b) the regionalization of research centres especially in the Latin-American countries, but also in Canada, Europe and Asia.²⁵

- 11 The recent creation of dedicated series of publications, such as the series directed by Jaan Valsiner in which this book is published (Routledge: *Cultural Dynamics of Social Representations*) and the multilingual (English–Italian–French) series *Social Representations and Communication: Media and Society*,²⁶ directed by Annamaria Silvana de Rosa for Edizioni Unicopli, inaugurated with the Italian edition (de Rosa 2011a) of the second edition (1976) Moscovici's *La psychanalyse, son image et son public*.
- 12 In regard to *research* – among the numerous projects on the most diverse of topics, also based on intercontinental collaborations – the launching of a new research program of especial significance within the ritualistic and symbolic context of the birthday/baptism celebrated in 2011: the follow-up on the research on social representations in psychoanalysis fifty years later, as a special occasion for study of the stability and possible transformations of social representations amid the changes taking place not only in the three apexes of the Subject–Other–Object epistemic triangle but also in their socio-historical and communicative context (de Rosa 2011c, 2012b forthcoming).²⁷

A supra-disciplinary research field unified by a meta-theoretical perspective and a strong societal focus

In short, in more than fifty years of life the theory of social representations, although originally European, has become a multi-lingual, worldwide research field (with important scientific communities in Latin America, Canada and more recently also in Asia). It has become a globally developed supra-disciplinary research field because – contrarily to the fragmentation of traditional social science disciplines – it represents a unifying meta-theoretical perspective on the social construction of knowledge and its relation with socially situated practices. Acting as a bridge between disciplines including psychology, social psychology, sociology, and a pragmatic approach to language, semiotics, socio-history, anthropology, and communication studies, it has important applications for many

sectors with major implications for institutional and organizational contexts, education, culture and health practices, intergroup relations, ideology and politics, economics, the environment, etc.

Because of its strong relevance to societal issues and its special emphasis on the social dimensions of knowledge production and diffusion, the theory has expanded into a substantial body of literature. Interested in the transformation of scientific knowledge developed by lay people and the media into common sense, this supra-disciplinary field has also activated, from the standpoint of social psychology, a dialogue among social, human and natural scientists in a wide range of internationally recognized research programs. These concern public understanding of the sciences and discoveries in different fields, such as medicine, environmental studies, biology, informatics, economy, political science etc., and the social representations of complex new multidisciplinary topics like biogenetic foods, medical innovation, globalization and climate change, new forms of interaction and social practice through new media, the risk society, immigration, minority groups, racism and multiculturalism, human rights, European integration and enlargement, etc.

By studying ‘what’ people know and ‘how’ it relates to the social groupings to which they belong and to the polyphonic system of different media and communicative contexts (Mazzara 2008), empirical research programs concern the social construction and representation of particular objects and how they are transformed into everyday knowledge. The ‘objects’ studied have a strong societal impact and important practical applications in many spheres of social and institutional life.

One of the main characteristics of this supra-disciplinary field is its great consistency in terms of paradigmatic and theoretical inspiration and its rich diversity both:

- From the *thematic point of view* – as expressed in the variety of research topics. These relate to controversial societal issues in contemporary society related to macro-areas including: Science and Social Representations, Culture and Globalization, Communication, Media and Social Representations, Collective Memory, Identity, Gender, Politics, Health, the Environment, Education, Economics, Marketing and Organizational Contexts, Risk, etc.;
- In terms of *methodological approaches* (qualitative, monographic, anthropological, experimental, descriptive, structural, multi-methodological, etc.) developed both by individual scientists and by international network research teams in a synergic and complementary way;
- With respect to the *applied contexts* and domains of expert and lay knowledge production and transmission.

Thanks to its societal relevance, the field of study on Social Representation deals with the various contexts in which social issues are debated in regard to social demand, giving voice to people in the public and private arena. Some examples follow:

- *The media industry*: the popularization of new scientific discoveries among non-experts, the effect of knowledge dissemination and transformation due to the convergence of traditional and new media, the redefinition of security/privacy in the new communicative scenario;
- *Health organizations*: the introduction of medical innovation and confronting patients' resistance to new therapeutic practices, prevention of illness thanks to the dissemination of lay representations anchored to expert knowledge rather than to a persistent 'magic' dimension of collective thinking, the role of the social representations of body and beauty in the diffusion of pathologies like bulimia and anorexia;
- *Education and community services*: the impact of new normative dispositions on learning community practices, the impact of the new media on self-learners' knowledge building and sharing compared to traditional educational settings, the change in family relations and generational conflict, group dynamics, competition and cooperation and learning contexts;
- *Tourism and environment*: the relations between place-identity and social representations of cities for residents and visitors; memory, representations, symbolic places and urban territories; social psychology of tourism; controversial environmental issues (debates between central and local authorities and communities concerning the installation or conversion of nuclear power plants; alternative forms of energy; conversion of brownfield sites; use of territory for waste recycling, high-speed train transportation systems, etc.);
- *Financial institutions*: the social representations of risk among investors or the process of familiarization with the euro when an EU country replaces its old currency, or resistance to new money systems;
- *The political arena*: controversial social issues related to social integration/exclusion of minority groups, immigration and multiculturalism, the links between regional, national and supranational identities, globalization and new practices in the interactions and organization of social movements via the digital world, the personalization of politicians' perception and voting behaviour in the wake of the crisis of traditional ideological systems, complex cultural objects (such as: US, Europe, West, East, Islam, Terrorism, War, Peace) in a global-local perspective;
- *Commercial enterprises*: brand images and marketing strategies, customers' social representations of products and companies, and the communicative strategies needed to detect and respond to new customers' needs; in particular in the *automotive and transportation industries*, dealing with social representations of driving, speed, and risk taking;
- *All institutional and organizational contexts*: the influence of social representations 'of' and 'in' the institution/organization itself and of relevant socio-psychological dimensions, such as, for example, *stereotypes* (gender and sex, race, etc.);
- *All trans-sectoral and transversal areas*: the influence of the *new media system* (internet, web2, interactive video-conferences, integrated traditional and new media, etc.) in the regulation of social interactions.

The added value of this book to the field

It is well known that the social sharing, transmission and transformation of knowledge through interpersonal interactions mediated by various communication systems, in more or less institutionalized forms and contexts, is the core of the social representations theory. However, the enormous variety of societal 'objects' of knowledge – largely corresponding to the multi-faceted domains of social reality, and therefore to almost any field of applied social psychology and other sister disciplines – that social scientists have studied using social representation theory as a heuristic tool has contributed to fragmenting the literature into numerous different domains, as testified by the tremendous number of scientific journals in which this literature is published and in a certain sense dispersed.

This means in concrete terms that – although societal issues have already been investigated in many well-known studies in relation to several objects of knowledge and with regard to the variety of the social contexts in which professionals, professional trainees, and ordinary people interexchange their world views mediated by expert and lay knowledge – the attention devoted in the literature to these contributions is usually concerned with their object of study, rather than with the impact of this field of investigation in developing a meta-reflection on the theory itself.

The book advocates the application of the social representations theory as a heuristic tool for addressing and understanding social issues by presenting the theory in contexts faced with 'social demand'. Its goal is to set out some key theoretical issues and empirical examples of the relevance of social representations theory in various social fields. These include social representations 'in' and 'about' institutional and organizational contexts, criminal justice, leadership, culture and health practices, intergroup relations, ideology and politics, environment and tourism.²⁸

The uniqueness of this book resides in its integrated nature, where the empirical investigations presented in the second and third parts are not a simple collection of chapters dealing with different topics under the same theoretical umbrella, but rather are deeply consistent with the assumption that social representations should be investigated in the social arena faced with social demand. The unifying meta-theoretical perspective of this paradigm implies that social representations are different from individualized isolated cognitions and should be investigated not only as regards their 'objects' but also as and when they constructed and enacted in the social contexts where they are socially co-produced, diffused and transformed, also in relation to their distinctive communication systems (interactive inter-individual micro-contexts, organizational and institutional contexts, traditional and new communication media).

Of course, the book cannot claim to cover all the fields of application and all the contexts (both organizational and institutional) for investigation inspired by social representations theory. However, each of the various fields investigated is assumed to be an '*object*' or/and a '*context*' for elaborating, transmitting and transforming knowledge (see Jovchelovitch 2006). The book, in fact, considers both

of these aspects in a synergic and dynamic way. This implies that the authors do not speak simply ‘about’ or ‘of’ the fields, as if they were sets of knowledge contents or objects of the social world (health, environment, politics, economy...). Rather, in focusing on them, they also consider the interplay between the expert and lay knowledge systems and the settings ‘in’ which this knowledge system is shared, transmitted, elaborated and innovated. This perspective also implies that the various fields under investigation are treated simultaneously as ‘contents’ and ‘processes’ of knowledge involving different social actors, among them individuals, professional groups, specialized institutions, and society as whole.

The kind of integration of different fields of application of the Social Representation theory has to date not been undertaken elsewhere.²⁹

The first part of the book focuses on crucial theoretical topics of general interest, the purpose being to provide an overview of the multi-faceted fields of application for social representations research. Contributions from the founder of the theory (Serge Moscovici) and one of the most representative experts on it (Denise Jodelet) discuss the application of social psychology, and the interconnection between social representations and intervention, while the book’s editor (Annamaria de Rosa) provides an overview of the ‘state of the art’ derived from a meta-theoretical analysis of the literature.

Based on case studies or extensive research programs, and illustrated by different theoretical and methodological approaches, the second part of the book demonstrates the relevance of the theory within various fields. Investigated by well-known European scholars (Correia Jesuino, Doise, Devos, Echebarria-Echabe, Jodelet, Lage, Marques, Pérez, Palmonari, Valencia, Kirchler, Verges, among others), these fields all constitute specific social arenas in which to reveal the explanatory power of the theory, compared with other traditional constructs of social psychology.

The contributions in the third part of the book share a distinctive meta-perspective based on the articulation of social representations theory with other social psychology constructs or theories. They are based on large-scale research programs coordinated by the editor of this book, who has consistently adopted a ‘modelling approach’ based on the integration/differentiation of multi-theoretical constructs and multi-methodological research designs (de Rosa 1990b).

This is the first time that the *modelling approach* developed by the book’s editor has been presented as a sort of ‘*fil rouge*’ across different empirical research programs dealing with multiple objects and contexts within various social arenas (de Rosa, 2012a, 2012c). Again, it reveals the interest of social representations theory as a unifying meta-theory of the social sciences and of a research multi-method design fully justified and adequately complex in relation to the multiple theoretical articulation of this paradigm.

Indeed, according to the original editorial plan for this book, the range of objects and contexts covered by the empirical studies presented in the third part was much wider. The modelling approach was conceived in order to articulate the social representations with other theoretical constructs/paradigms or processes investigated by social psychology (such as attitudes, identity and identification,

images and imagery, emotions, collective memory and mass flashbulb memory, metaphors, cognitive polyphasia, etc.).

During the process of editorial revision, the decision to extend the chapters selected for the third part and to enrich their theoretical frameworks with an updated overview of the literature prevailed over the initial editorial plan to include many other ample chapters – covering a wider range of fields – that needed to be drastically reduced, owing to space limitations. However, the two research programs (de Rosa 2013a; de Rosa and Bocci 2013) chosen to provide an account of the *modelling approach* systematically pursued by the book's editor can be a route (or a roadmap) for further readings of publications in which she has consistently developed this approach with regard to other research fields relevant to the social arena (including multidimensional identities, social memory of traumatic collective events, organizational context and institutional image, corporate advertising, economics and finance, aesthetic surgery and beauty image, science diffusion in the social networking era, etc.). Some of these publications are mentioned below, also with the purpose of directing the reader's attention to certain research tools, like the associative network, the EuroSKYcompass, the *metaphorical semantic differential*, the conceptual network, the self-identification network, the systematic application of the photolanguage in focus groups, the body's map, etc. These techniques have been specifically designed in accordance with the *theory of methods* guiding the *modelling approach* to social representations (de Rosa, 2012a, in press). This theory of methods integrates qualitative and quantitative, structured and projective, textual and figurative techniques and multi-step data analyses as functions of specific hypotheses also concerning the interaction among the nature of the technique, the choice of the data analysis strategies, and the expected results. Among other thematic fields and social arenas, these research programs (which are not covered by the chapters in this book for reasons of space) concern:

- a A series of studies investigating the complex set of interrelated social representations, attitudes and stereotypes concerning Europe, the European Union and its member countries, the four cardinal compass points not as mere geographical parameters but as geo-political and socio-psychological entities (North–South–East–West), and the multidimensional identities centred on multiple objects of identification (Europe, European Union, Nation, Own/Other Countries, Own Region, Own City). For previous publications on the EuroSKYcompass research program, see: de Rosa and d'Ambrosio 2005a, 2005b; de Rosa *et al.* 2005a, 2005b and 2007. The EuroSKYcompass research program was developed as an extension of a baseline empirical study on multidimensional identities (local, regional, national and supra-national) and social representations of the European Union and its member states and people. Piloted in Italy in 1992–3, it was extended in 1994–5 to ten European countries, both members (Austria, Finland, France, Germany (former East and West), Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain (on Spanish, Basque, and Catalan samples), the UK), and non-members of the European Union (Switzerland,

the Geneva and Ticino cantons). This research program administered a complex set of instruments translated into several languages to parallel samples, for a total of about 4000 residents in ten countries. These studies have been the occasion to investigate also changes in social representations in concomitance with the political enlargement of the EU from 15 to 25 member states (de Rosa 1996, 2000, 2001b; de Rosa and Mormino 1997, 2000a, 2000b, 2002).

The EuroSKYcompass follow-up study on ten European countries and one Maghreb country (Tunisia) did not have the sole objective of verifying – ten years after – the changes that took place in the social representations of the European Union and its member states after enlargement to the East. Its purpose was also to introduce new dimensions of analysis. Through the creation of a new graphic tool called *EuroSKYcompass*, the research objective was to investigate the projection of the subject's self, of his/her own country, of his/her preferred European country, of the European Union, etc., in a graphic space structured by the subject according to the anchorage of his/her social representations of North–South–East–West as opposed to the World.

Another project in this thematic area – entitled ‘*Children's beliefs and feelings about their own and other National Groups in Europe*’ and conducted in cooperation with teams working in several countries: the UK (Surrey, Dundee), Italy (Rome and Padua), Spain (Girona and Malaga) – was aimed at developing an evolutionary perspective in the study of children's processes of construction of beliefs–knowledge–social representations and their attitudes towards their own and other national groups in Europe. The operational definition of the pilot study was to implement adequate tools and methodologies, given the lack of previous border studies between social psychology and developmental psychology and consolidated methodologies, especially in regard to subjects aged six years old. *Ad hoc* multi-methodological tools were also developed in this study (see: de Rosa and Bombi 1999, 2003), so that this transnational research program was a further opportunity to apply the modelling approach, in this case to the developmental perspective in social representations research (see Barrett *et al.* 2007a, 2007b).

- b A longitudinal research program – conducted on 522 participants in six waves of data collection from one month after the September 11 attacks to March 2003³⁰, the day after the invasion of Iraq – which examined the role of shocking images and their emotional impact on the construction of the mass flashbulb memory of the traumatic collective event of September 11 and its dynamic of forgetting/remembering.

The construct dimensions examined in this research program – which focussed on the interplay between social representations and collective memory – were the following:

- *Images* (both as research tools and objects of investigation, in the multiple

meanings of displayed stimuli, of mentally activated eidetic scenarios and socially chosen images);

- *Emotions* (individually evoked and socially negotiated in the impact with the images and elicited in a double temporal perspective: *then–now*);
- *Representational systems* (in relation to the specific event of September 11 and to *cultural objects* assumed to be interrelated, such as USA, Europe, the West, Islam, War, Peace, Terrorism).

In short, in terms of the modelling approach the main results from this research program (de Rosa 2004, 2005b, 2007) has yielded empirical evidence on the articulation of the main dimensions, below summarized, that are usually investigated separately in a specialized and fragmented literature:

- Iconic representations and photographic memory: flashbulb memory and social memory;
 - Emotional impact of images and the role of emotions in the construction and selection of remembrance;
 - Social sharing: informative, interpersonal, mass media and new media paths in the reconstruction of the event;
 - Representations of *cultural objects* strongly linked to the event and construction of conceptual networks in relation to: USA, West, Islam, Europe, War, Peace, Terrorism;
 - Perception of change in personal and collective life;
 - Risk perception at individual and collective level;
 - Perception of the individual and collective capacity to control events.
- c Another research area has arisen from interest in the heuristic potential of the theory of *social representations applied to the study 'of' and 'within' organizational and institutional contexts*. These latter represent a distinct arena in which not only to debate and shape representations but also to observe and investigate how they guide actions and orient the relations among social agents with their multiple roles (employers and users). At least two studies can be mentioned in this regard:
- c1 The first study was part of an extensive research program on *corporate advertising and image marketing: the case of Benetton*. In the 1990s, this investigation created the roadmap for a perspective theory, not yet fully developed, which sought to analyse the connections between '*Social Representations and Corporate Communication*' (Penz 2006; Usunier and Lee 2009). It may be divided into two main research lines which investigated the corporate image from an 'internal' and an 'external' perspective:
- The first, descriptive, research line identified the organizational dynamics of the Benetton company utilizing structural elements found in the

company's literature and documents. The objective was to understand the Benetton 'galaxy' and its complex communicative strategies in the globalized market. Since this was an internal view of the company, data were obtained from internal documents, including the company's publications, such as *Global Vision* and *Colors*, advertising, shop layout, website, etc. (de Rosa and Bocci 2009, 2012a), considering the marketing element as interaction between the company and the market (Kotler 1997, Moliner 1996, Nardin 1987, Semprini 1996, Tafani 2006).

- The second, empirical, research line analysed the social representation of the Benetton brand by using a large sample of Benetton's advertisements selected in order to identify the perceptive modalities of advertising messages and attitudes towards Benetton's communication strategies (de Rosa 1998, 2001d; de Rosa and Bocci 2009, 2012a; de Rosa and Kirchler 2001; de Rosa and Losito 1996). In this second research line, the relationship between social representations and corporate communication was presented from a dialogical perspective that examined the social discourse 'of' Benetton in regard to social issues. Examination was made of the various phases of advertising campaigns (1992–2008, with especial focus on one of the company's most controversial campaigns – Autumn–Winter 1992–3) and the discourse 'about' Benetton – the Benetton company seen through the eyes of its young target, which was considered to be not only recipients of the company's advertising campaigns but also potential buyers.

In terms of the modelling approach, the purpose of the techniques used to collect the data was to identify possible connections between the dependent variables linked to the message/advertisement (descriptions of the image, interpretation of the message, interpretation of the meaning attributed to the message by the source, memory reactivation processes, evaluation of the message's effectiveness, evaluation of the message's moral acceptability, identification of the message's topic) and variables external to the message (attitude to the message's topic, purchasing behaviour concerning Benetton products, socio-demographic data).

Given the role assigned in the modelling approach not only to different techniques for data collection but also to different strategies for analyzing the same set of data guided by different objectives and hypotheses, the data were analysed using different procedures and statistical softwares:

- *Analysis of lexical correspondence* using the SPAD.T program³¹ in order to identify the structure and content of the representational field associated with the various stimulus words.
- The *DiscAn* program³² in order to identify the organization of the functional roles of the texts' associative dynamic. The DiscAn program

shows the structure of the functional roles of the associative dynamics of texts.

- The *ALCESTE* program³³ was run on the textual data (free text) relative to the three open questions in the questionnaire (description of the image, subject's attribution of meaning and – according to the subject's opinion – meaning attributed by the source to the image).

The results from the empirical research line confirmed the success of Benetton's controversial communication strategy adopted in the 1990s (de Rosa 1998, 2001d). The social discourse 'by' Benetton 'about social issues' triggered a social discourse 'about Benetton', which then set up a meta representation of the brand name: the brand name was expanded and emphasized within self-reflecting circuits which fed off the contrasting forces activated by the source of the message. This process had a paradoxical effect whereby, despite powerful resistance by a large portion of the target audience against accepting Benetton's communicative style, a positive representation of the brand name was still created by communicative strategies able to arouse controversial attitudes to advertising campaigns anchored in controversial social representations.

In order to explain what these advertisements changed, what it was in their nature that made them certain of success, we postulated the connection between Benetton's advertising style and the company's behaviour as an active minority within the fashion world (de Rosa 1998, 2001d; de Rosa and Smith, 1997a, 1997b, 1998a, 1998b).

c2 The second study was based on research carried out using the Italian National Social Security Institute (INPS) as a case study on the social representations of an organization in transformation seen *from within* and *from outside* during a critical phase of institutional change. The purpose of the study was to investigate the social representations of INPS as an organization at a time when it was undergoing profound change intended to redefine its negative image for its employees and users. From the methodological point of view, the research was characterized by a series of tools (among them the 'metaphorical differential') specifically devised to detect the most significant metaphorical nuclei orienting the organization's image (de Rosa 2003b).

- d Another research field has concerned *economics and finance*, with the development of two distinct research programs of great importance for their theoretical implications (familiarization process, mass and group psychology, relations between representations, metaphors, knowledge, attitudes and practices among experts and non-experts) and significant because they opened a new applied field of investigation guided by the social representation theory (for instance, the psychology of the stock market). These research programs have concerned respectively:

- d1 The *euro* as an object and symbolic medium of social representations: familiarization processes three months after the introduction of the euro and five years later (Gioiosa and de Rosa 2005; de Rosa 2002c; de Rosa *et al.* 2003).

In compliance with the guiding principles of the modelling approach, the research program also included a media study, considering that the introduction of the euro was characterized by an extensive information and education campaign co-financed by the ECB and the national governments of all the countries.

The results of this investigation based on historical data, collected in Italy in a specific and non-replicable time period (between the last day of the euro/lira double circulation – 28 February 2002 – and 30 June 2002, the last day for handing lire into banks) and five years later, are of value:

- In highlighting the process of familiarization with the euro undertaken by the populations of a euro-zone country, which has had to face transition to a new monetary system, and
- In providing social scientists interested in familiarization processes with data collected in new societal conditions (within and outside the euro-zone).

- d2 *The psychology of the stock market and social representations of risk in the interface among media, financial advisors and investors.*

Owing to the global crisis in the financial markets that exploded in the media in September 2008, the thematic focus of this research program has become most timely. It deals with highly controversial issues concerning the interrelation between socio-psychological dimensions and the apparently objective worlds of economics and finance. Developed as a continuation and further development of a pilot study carried out in Italy since 2004 (de Rosa and Gioiosa 2004, 2008; de Rosa *et al.* 2005c, 2005d) and a model study on the psychology of the foreign currency market (Oberlechner 2004; Oberlechner and Hocking 2004), the international investigation launched at the beginning of 2008 has integrated different research lines (cultural context analysis, media analysis, field research) and a multi-methodological approach based on specific hypotheses grounded in various types of disciplinary expertise (social psychology, communication sciences, economics and finance). The study is organized into two main inter-related lines of inquiry.

- The first (media study) examines the *content and structure of the social representations of the financial market* and their relationship with the perception of 'risk'. It also seeks to determine whether and to what extent fluctuations in the stock market reflect the emotional impact of critical events with particular media importance. This media analysis has been conducted from two perspectives: a) a longitudinal perspective over time: before and after the crisis; b) a transversal perspective across different type of

media: print and digital; specialized and generalist. The study, in fact, is based on the analysis of the generalist press and of newspapers/magazines specialized in economics and finance and selected in many languages from those most widespread in the US, Europe (Italy, France, UK) and Asia (China), and on digital media, not only as channels for information dissemination (online press) but also as social networks (social forums) in which to compare the ideas of opinion-leaders, journalists and experts with different political and ideological positions and to express ‘expert’ and ‘lay’ knowledge (de Rosa 2008b; de Rosa and Bulgarella 2009; de Rosa, Bocci, Bulgarella and Sirolli, 2010).

- The second line of inquiry (field research) is a psycho-social analysis of social representations and metaphors of the stock market among (i) financial advisors (from traditional banks, innovative banks centred on personalized family bankers, and security companies as regards China), and (ii) different types of investors (investors through financial advisors, and autonomous online investors) from various cultural contexts with different histories of stock-market financial institutions and socio-economic development in Europe (Italy and the UK: two countries with differently developed financial institutions) and Asia (China, one of the biggest markets, with tremendous growth and development in the past two decades) (de Rosa 2012c).

Once again, in this study the modelling approach has led to the design of multi-faceted tools on the basis of specific hypotheses also concerning the interaction between the nature of the technique and the results. Owing to the large number of dimensions investigated, the modelling approach has been essential in constructing the conceptual frame, which attributes precise roles to the variables detected with the use of several techniques, including:

- The *associative network* (to explore the content, structure and polarity of social representations of the stimulus words ‘Stock Market’ and ‘Risk’);
- The *conceptual metaphor identification network* (to analyse the conceptual links between ‘stock market’ and relevant metaphors, and between ‘internet’ and its relevant metaphors);
- The *conceptual identification network* (to analyse the intensity of the subjects’ potential identification both with relevant ‘objects’, such the stock market, profit, saving, risk, chance, gambling, destiny, fortune, competition, security, past, present, future, etc., and with the heterogeneous agents, based on their trust/distrust and on evaluation of their capability in coping with the financial crisis);
- The *Stanford Time perspective inventory*;
- The *financial investment and gambling risk behaviour propensity*;
- As well as a series of *attitudes scales* designed for the purpose of the study, and used to identify mediational variables between personal profiles and the subject’s financial behaviour (also in relation to experiential changes

before and after the financial crisis, including detection of the *contrarian attitude* in stock market investments).

The topicality and importance of these issues for reflecting on social representations in the social arena faced with social demand are evident. The representations of the financial market and practices have expanded beyond the restricted community of financial experts to assume great importance for public opinion in general. The interrelated ‘complex objects’, such as economics, finance and politics, called into play by the financial crisis – once they have been displayed in the media and offered to the consumption of the general public – have been transformed from academic disciplines and reified universes of knowledge into cultural objects and social representations, which ordinary people discuss in the everyday conversational settings of their lives. Because the general framework focuses on the social representation theory, an interesting issue arises when considering the abrupt shift from a positive social representation of financial markets – seen as both the source and the expression of an effective strategy for social and economic development – to a negative social representation of financial markets – seen as a serious threat to the well-being of the so-called ‘real economy’. Our preliminary publications based on the media analysis (de Rosa *et al.* 2011a) report empirical evidence that, during the financial crisis, the representation of economics and finance based on theories and statistical models of economic behaviours has turned into an alternative vision dependent more on emotional and irrational dynamics of financial behaviour, also splitting media representations between ‘good’ real, work-based and productive economics and ‘bad’ speculative and virtual finance.

On the other hand, the preliminary results of the field study show empirical evidence of cultural sharing and differences among groups and countries in their social representations of the stock market and significant relations with the mediational psychological variables (de Rosa, 2012c; de Rosa, Bocci, Sun and Bulgarella, 2011, 2012).

- e Another recent research program pertains to the social arena in which we witness markedly increased social demand for body modification at the cross-roads between competing commercial interests in the field of *aesthetic surgery* and an *interrelated system of social representations of beauty and the body’s cultural and normative meta-system*.

Again adopting a modelling approach, the study followed an integrated multi-step path from exploration to experimentation, constantly integrating research lines from field and media studies in order to investigate social representations and communication systems:

- 1 ‘Field Study’, including several research lines studying the content, structure, polarity, imagined and emotional dimensions of the social representations of female and male aesthetic surgery, and employing the ‘body map’ – an innovative tool with a graphical referent concerning the

aesthetic surgery ranking of the various parts of the human body. Used for this purpose were: a) projective verbal techniques (associative network and self conceptual identification); b) projective graphic techniques (body-map and photolanguage); c) structured verbal techniques (involvement level scale and self-attractiveness scale);

- 2 'Media Analysis' to investigate the construction of social discourse about aesthetic surgery in advertising and meaning negotiation among members of discussion forums and 'web communities', including:
 - Research on the representations of aesthetic surgery in printed and online advertising through *semiotic* and *content analysis*;
 - Research based on the *textual analysis* of internet discussion forums;
 - *Conversational analysis* of free exchanges in social networks on the topic of plastic/aesthetic surgery;
- 3 'Experimental Investigation', including research on the generative activity of mental images and emotions in the social representations of beauty and aesthetic surgery.

The results – presented at international conferences and partially published (de Rosa and Holman 2010, 2011, 2012a and 2012b) – derive from a multi-method research plan and multi-step data analysis, providing further support to the interest in the modelling approach to the research on social representations. The results highlight cultural sharing and differences among groups, which give meaning to the interrelated objects of social representations in terms of contents, evaluations, emotional dimensions and referential system of values. They also show evidence of variables influential in terms of gender, education, psychological dimensions (such as self-identification with cultural referents), and the participants' countries, with different degrees of familiarization with the mass phenomenon of aesthetic surgery.

Cultural differences have also been discussed with regard to the diffusion of aesthetic surgery in the three countries, according to the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ISAPS: <http://www.isaps.org/>), a body which in 2010 represented 1925 practitioners in 87 countries (Nahai 2010).

The general assumption of our research program was that aesthetic surgery is at the same time a 'social practice guided by' and the 'object of' social representations. The social practice of cosmetic surgery has always been strongly related to the social representations of *beauty*, and our research attempted to highlight the correlated dynamics of the social representations of masculine and feminine beauty and aesthetic surgery as a social practice among various subject groups from different European countries.

The results suggested various connections between the social representations of beauty (masculine and feminine) and of aesthetic surgery. Interrelated

representational systems clearly emerged, being differentiated by the various social groups not only according to their gender (and the representations that male and female participants expressed when comparing their own or other gender-dependent criteria of beauty and aesthetic surgery) or university education (more focused on the body (sports students) or aesthetics (arts students), or less centred on both (students of informatics), but also closely related to psychological dimensions, like the participants distinguished by the highest self-identification with various cultural referents (Beauty, Body, Culture, Nature, Soul).

To conclude the overview of our selected research programs inspired by this approach, owing to space limitations, mention can be made of only three ongoing investigations recently begun in three different thematic areas.

- f The first investigation concerns the social representations of the current, future and ideal family (de Rosa, d'Ambrosio and Aiello, 2010a, 2010b, 2012 in press; de Rosa, Aiello, d'Ambrosio, Pascal, 2012). Its purpose is to explore the relations among social representations, collective representations, and their imaginary and normative dimensions among young adults – still living with their families of origin – economically dependent or already economically independent, resident in a metropolitan city and a small country village in two European countries (Italy and Romania).

Consistently with the modelling approach, the multi-method research design includes verbal and graphical projective instruments and a self-reported questionnaire:

- a Hand-drawings (three drawings of the current family, future family, ideal family);
- b Associative network (de Rosa 2002b, 2003a, 2005a);
- c FRT – Adult Version (Bene and Anthony 1965, in de Rosa 1991b);
- d Innovative instruments for the FRT (for an Italian version, de Rosa 2013c forthcoming);
- e Time Perspective Scale (Zimbardo and Boyd 1999);
- f A self-reported questionnaire.

Collective representations of the family are investigated through iconographic sources (history of art) and normative–legal institutional sources (laws reflecting transformation of the family structure, gender roles, and new forms of family).

- g Another research programme entitled '50 years later: *La psychanalyse, son image et son public* in the era of Facebook' concerns a fifty years later follow-up on Moscovici's study presented in his *opera prima* (1961 and 1976) as a special opportunity to study the stability and possible transformations of social representations amid the changes that have occurred not only in the three apexes of the Subject–Other–Object epistemic triangle but also in their socio-historical, ideological and communicative contexts (see note xxvii). Given the

hypothesized co-evolution of social representations and the above-mentioned fundamental axes of change, the follow-up does not consist in the mere cloning of the baseline research but necessarily considers compatibility between the ‘replicability’ of the seminal study and the introduction of innovative elements (new techniques besides the original interview–questionnaire) and its extension (in terms of populations, countries, media systems, objects of representations: psychoanalysis and psychiatry; psychoanalysts and psychiatrists).

This new bi-national research program – led by de Rosa and currently ongoing in Italy and France in co-operation with two European PhD research trainees (Emanuele Fino and Charline Leblanc) and a group of Erasmus master students – devotes particular attention to the research design, which extends the media system considered: from exclusive analysis of traditional print media (newspapers and magazines) to the inclusion of some of the most popular social networks (Facebook, Yahoo! Answers, Twitter), chosen because they differ in the technical constraints imposed on the communication (length of message, emotional expressiveness versus informational character, and semantic context-oriented type of affiliation). This research program shows the benefit of promoting research on social representations which – besides the traditional media and contexts for social interactions – takes account of *social networks* as new arenas for the social transmission and elaboration of knowledge through social exchanges among the members of the *thinking society* (see presentations at international conferences and recent publications: de Rosa 2011c, 2011d, 2012b forthcoming, de Rosa, Fino and Bocci, 2012).

- h The third ongoing research program recently activated is entitled: *Social Change, Political Arena and Social Representations of the relation Citizens-Institutions: polemical representations in action in two social movements (No-TAV and Occupy Wall Street)*. It concerns a new research area related to the investigation of the social representations of the relations between citizens and institutions in the political arena and the perception by social actors of their capacity to influence each other in the public sphere, orienting actions and policies. To this end, two exemplary case studies on recent social movements with different characterizations are currently under investigation by means of media analysis (including online newspapers with different ideological orientations and two different social networks: Facebook and Twitters, characterised by emotional expressiveness versus informational character):
 - 1 The first movement (*No TAV*) with a focus on polemical representations concerning the EU’s political decision to cross the French-Italian border with a high speed train transportation system. The various groups are positioned on the basis of their contrasting views of the environmental impact on the local community in Valle Susa versus national (and supra-national) economic interests concerning the inclusion of Italy in the new European high speed train transportation system;
 - 2 The second movement (*Occupy WALL Street*) – characterized by a rapid

expansion from the US to the global scale – with a focus on issues concerning economic policies and the effect of the financial crisis throughout the world, and within various cultural contexts in different world regions where the movement has assumed different forms of expression and styles of behaviour.

The two case studies show the epistemological interest of identifying inter-connections between the theory of social representations and the theory of active minorities in empirical field investigations attentive to the phenomenology of the genesis, development and potential decline or deviation of such movements from their *statu nascendi* to collective organized actions, and their potential influence on political decisions at the local-global scale.

Central to the empirical study is the attention paid to the new media and the use of social networks as *strategic tools to organize collective actions* and share representations of the reality concerning the relations among citizens, politics and community/world views. (de Rosa and Bocci, 2012b)

Given all the thematic areas examined by the chapters in this book, and by the above-mentioned research programs united by the theoretical perspective of social representation theory and a modelling approach, dialogue among different disciplines dealing with different social arenas (political, economic, scientific, etc) and involving the contexts and lives of ordinary people seems much needed.

It is time to conclude the introduction of this book, which is addressed to both academic researchers and practitioners concerned with contemporary social issues and the application of social representations theory in real-world contexts. It will nevertheless appeal to anyone (including university students and policy makers) interested in some of the various fields debated in the social arena considered.

I wish a pleasant and interesting journey to the book's readers, hoping that their interest in further developing the research fields presented will also repay the patience of the contributors in preparing their chapters for publication.³⁴

Notes

- 1 Among the various international symposia and workshops organized to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the birth of the theory of social representations to be mentioned in particular are the following: the international conference entitled 'Celebrazioni in onore di Serge Moscovici per il cinquantenario della sua Teoria delle Rappresentazioni Sociali' (Naples, 15–16 April 2011), the special session organized as part of the VII JIRS and V CBRS, 'Teoria das Representações Sociais 50 anos: Memórias, desafios contemporâneos e perspectivas' (Vitória, Brazil, 24–27 July 2011), the Conference at the London School of Economics announced in 2011 for the presentation on 22–23 March 2012 of a special issue of *Papers on Social Representations*

on the fifty years of the theory and for celebration of the journal's twentieth year of publication.

- 2 Already in 2008 the publication in English of *Psychoanalysis, its Image and its Public* (Polity Press) was the occasion to devote a special issue of the *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* (vol. 38) to current reflections on the book.
- 3 For a multi-voiced reflection on Serge Moscovici's work and a reconstruction of his publications from 1953 to 2001, see Buschini and Kalampalikis (2001).
Collecting the entire scientific output of Serge Moscovici into an *Opera Omnia* – providing a systematic and temporally organized presentation of his production – is a project which still awaits the scientific community (and a courageous publisher).
- 4 Besides the treatment in the *opera prima* on the similarity (and difference) between the concept of social representation and Durkheim's concept of collective representation, see also Moscovici (1989).
- 5 As said at the beginning of this chapter, Moscovici is known in the social sciences for at least three theories which have not necessarily concerned the same community of researchers, but have instead given rise to areas of inquiry and traditions of research whose integration is still today a theoretical and methodological endeavour as stimulating as it is incomplete; (a) the *theory of social representations*, first propounded in the *Opera Prima* of 1961 then reformulated in the second edition of 1976, and subsequently enriched with various further essays by Moscovici (see the collection in English published in 2000); (b) the *theory of innovation*, commonly called theory of minority influence or of active minorities, founded upon a genetic approach alternative to traditional unilinear studies on influence, which in light of a dynamic and multipolar conception of social influence recasts social conflict as a phenomenon able to induce change by 'active' minorities characterized by particular styles of behaviour and relations with the majority; (c) the *theory of collective decisions* centred on processes of social consensus and group/collectivity decision-making in which of crucial importance is the experimentally studied phenomenon of 'group polarization'.
- 6 The research (a doctoral thesis, see Parsons 1955) was published as a posthumous work, following the tragic death of Ann Parsons (Parsons 1969).
- 7 See the letter sent by Leon Festinger to Serge Moscovici congratulating him on the doctorate *honoris causa* awarded to him by the University of Geneva (Festinger 2001).
- 8 It is interesting to note that the reflections added to the 1976 edition in the section entitled 'Fifteen years later' have an uncertain status between being a new section of Chapter V (to which, however, a sequential numbering is not given) and a chapter itself (to which, once again, a distinct chapter number is not given, although it has the indentation that indicates new chapters in the table of contents and the beginning of a new page in the body of the book).
- 9 See the bibliographic references for the details about the various translations into English, Italian and Portuguese. For the translation into English, to prevent confusion in the reader, it should be pointed out that on p. VII of the *Contents*, and also on page 256 in the text, the term *Propagation* has been erroneously translated as *Propaganda*, although these terms refer to two very distinct notions.
- 10 In fact – especially in the first edition of 1961 – some sections present in the body of the text are not given in the table of contents.
- 11 For details on the bibliographic references cited here and in the next paragraph see de Rosa (2011a) or Moscovici's original editions (1961/1976).
- 12 This meta-theoretical analysis has been the subject of a degree thesis assigned by me as supervisor to Sara Di Michele, who – after spending a year of study and documentation at the EHESS of Paris as an Erasmus student – discussed her thesis entitled '*La psychanalyse, son image et son public: Analisi meta-teorica della prima e seconda edizione*' at the summer session of the 2002–3 academic year.
- 13 pp. 107–26 in the original French 2nd edition of 1976, corresponding to pp. 54–69 of the English edition of 2008.

- 14 In this regard, Denise Jodelet points out – following Mary Douglas (1986) – that also Bartlett was influenced by Wiener, the inventor of cybernetics, who worked at Cambridge with Bertrand Russell: ‘The correspondence between the two phenomena is evident by their relation to processes of communication and confirmed by a variety of studies on cognition.’ (Jodelet 2008: 426)
- 15 pp. 126–7 in the French 2nd edition of 1976, corresponding to pp. 70–89 in the English edition of 2008.
- 16 pp. 170–96 in the French 2nd edition of 1976, corresponding to pp. 104–20 in the English edition of 2008.
- 17 For the sake of philological honesty, however, it should be said that in the essay ‘The phenomenon of social representations’ (Moscovici 1984b, 2000), Moscovici reversed the order of description of these processes, first presenting *anchoring* and then *objectification*.
- 18 On the relationships among social representation, image, and imagery see Arruda and De Alba (2007); de Rosa, 1987a, 1987b, 1990b, 1997, 2000, 2001d, 2005b, 2007, 2009a; de Rosa and Farr (2001).
- 19 The closer attention paid to the construct of attitude is coherent with the comments made on the systematic comparison of bibliographical references, with more ample regard to publications on social psychology in the second edition than in the first (see also de Rosa 2011a).
- 20 On the much discussed connection between the notions of attitude and social representation, see the controversial positions taken up in the literature by – amongst others – Bauer and Gaskell (2008), Colucci (2004), de Rosa (1993), Doise (1989), Farr (1994), Fraser (1994), Howarth (2006a), Jaspars and Fraser (1984), Palmonari (1989), Pukhardt (1993).
- 21 Besides the two editions (1961 and 1976) of the *opera prima* on psychoanalysis (Moscovici 1961) see the essays by Moscovici (1981, 1984a, 1984b, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1994, 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2010).
- 22 For comparison among the epistemic principles that orient the theory of social representations and the various lines of inquiry which come under polysemous heading of ‘social cognition’, see de Rosa, 1990a and 1992.
- 23 For an analytical treatment of the paradigms on social representations see the book edited by Palmonari and Emiliani (2009).
- 24 Launched in 2010 was the *Réseau International de Recherche sur les Représentations Sociales en Santé* (International Research Network on Social Representations on Health) with partners in Portugal, Brazil, France, Argentina, Austria, Italy, Mexico, Scotland.
- 25 In Argentina, the CIEREPS – *Centre International d’étude en représentations et pratiques sociales* (International Centre on the Study of Social Representations and Practices) – at the University of Quilmes; in Brazil, the CIERS-ed – *Centre international d’études en représentations sociales, subjectivité et éducation* (International Center of Studies on Social Representations, Subjectivity – Education (http://www.fcc.org.br/pesquisa/ciers_eng.html)) – the LACCOS – *Laboratório de Psicologia Social da Comunicação e Cognição* (Social Psychology of Communication and Cognition Laboratory (<http://www.laccos.org>)) – at the Federal University of Santa Catarina, and the CIPREPS – *Centre international de recherche en représentations et psychologie sociale* (International research centre on representations and social psychology (<http://www.centromoscovici.com.br/>)) – at the University of Brasilia; in Mexico the RENIRS (*Red nacional de investigadores en representaciones sociales* (National research network on social representations)) and the CEMERS (*Centro Mexicano para el Estudio de las Representaciones Sociales* (Mexican centre for the study of social representations)); in Canada the GEIRSO – *Groupe d’étude sur l’interdisciplinarité et les représentations sociales* (Research group on interdisciplinarity and social representations (<http://www.geirso.uqam.ca/>)) – in Europe (Italy) the CeMeRS (*Centro Mediterraneo per lo Studio delle Rappresentazioni Sociali* (Mediterranean

centre for the study of social representations)); and in Asia (Jakarta-Indonesia) the *Yayasan Pusat Kajian Representasi Sosial* (Foundation of Social Representations Studies).

- 26 Inspired by social representations theory, the series *Social Representations and Communication: Media and Society* – led by A.S. de Rosa for Edizioni Unicopli, in cooperation with an editorial committee including Serge Moscovici, Denise Jodelet, Bruno Mazzara, Francesco Colucci and an international committee of blind reviewers – provides a forum for debate on the inter-relations among representations, communication and the polyphonic media system. In light of ongoing scientific debate concerning global/local communication, this multi-language international book series (primarily Italian, English and French) aims to respond to the need to investigate social representations not simply as referential systems or ‘discourses’, but as dynamic multifaceted social constructions in action in the media and in society. The phenomena studied, in relation to the new forms of socialization of knowledge and communication strategies and their applications to politics, health, the environment, economics, education, etc., are of clear societal interest and highly relevant to shaping social policies in our contemporary world.

Fifty years since the advent of the theory of social representations, as confirmation of its fecundity and vitality, this book series has started with the Italian translation of Moscovici’s seminal text in this scientific field, a text which has been defined as ‘a modern classic’. In addition to translations of classic texts, the series includes the publication of new books based on recent research inspired by this theory, doing so in critical and constructive dialogue with other paradigms of the social sciences.

- 27 In regard to the three apexes of the epistemic triangle, suffice it to consider the changes that have taken place:
- In the development of the ‘object’ itself of knowledge–experience (psychoanalysis/es) because of (a) an evolution within that specific field (history of psychoanalytic thought updated to the present day) and the broader one of different types of psychotherapy; and (b) the changes that have occurred in psychiatry due, on the one hand, to pressures for the radical revision of the nosographical and custodialist paradigms applied by the community psychiatry movement and the impact of anti-psychiatry in society and on the institutions, and on the other, to the great development of the neurosciences. Moreover, the domain of intersection between the representations of both psychoanalysis and psychiatry is constituted by their shared object of mental illness/health, whose social representations have been amply investigated in studies by now classic and paradigmatic (de Rosa 1987a, 1987b, 1988, 1991a, 1995, 1997 and 2009a; de Rosa and Bocci 2013; de Rosa and Schurmans 1990a, 1990b and 1994; Herzlich 1969; Jodelet 1985, 1986 and 1989a);
 - In social actors (Subject–Other) which – as individuals, groups or social institutions – necessarily cannot be those of France in the 1950s, given the changes in their socio-cultural milieu, lifestyles, practices relative to health, illness and therapies, exposure to scientific knowledge, in the organizational cultures of the institutions, and in the educational and work environments in which they operate, etc. Psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, trainee therapists, patients, but also people relatively distant in their expertise and experience from the object of psychoanalysis representation, cannot be the same as those in the years following the Second World War, and their representational systems – like their social relations – are no longer imbued (at least not in the same way) with the *Weltanschauungs* that animated and opposed groups, institutions, political parties and religious apparatuses at that time.

In regard to changes in the socio-historical and communicative context, suffice it to consider:

- The profound changes in ideological beliefs since the years of the immediate

post-war period when Moscovici carried out his inquiry (corresponding to the second wave of the diffusion of psychoanalysis in France) and also with respect to the fifteen following years when Moscovici added a new chapter to the second edition to explain how communist propaganda was turning into propagation;

- The radical evolution of systems of communication and use/construction of social representations, from an era when the press, cinema, and radio were the principal media complementary to educational socialization into knowledge to an era in which added to the media innovation of television has been the revolutionary impact of digital technology: a sphere in constant expansion which has radically redefined the one-directional relationship between the emitter of a message and its recipients (one-to-many) with the opening of interactive many-to-many communicative channels, which in their turn constantly redefine their boundaries thanks to the advent of social networks (in which interpersonal one-to-one communication has given way to online interactive exchanges with one-to-many or many-to-many multiplier effects supported by technologies allowing ubiquitous connections).
- 28 Education and development are not included among the fields covered by this book, because they have been already addressed in other books: see – among others – Bataille 2001; Chaib *et al.* 2011; Duveen and Lloyd 1990; Garnier 2002; Garnier and Doise 2002; Garnier and Rouquette 1999; Mugny and Carugati 1989; Parades 2001.
- 29 Existing books on the subject are usually conceived as textbooks or monographs and most of them have not been published in English. See for instance: Abric 1994 and 2003; Bonardi and Roussiau 1999; Breakwell and Canter 1993; Doise and Palmonari 1986; Galli 2006; Guimelli 1994; Haas 2006; Jodelet 1989b; Jodelet and Coelho Parades 2010; Jovchelovitch and Guareschi 1994; Mannoni 1998; Moliner 1996 and 2001; Palmonari and Emiliani 2009; Purkhardt 1993; Rouquette 2009; Rouquette and Râteau 1998; Seca 2001; von Cranach *et al.* 1992; Wagner and Hayes 2005.
- Other books are syntheses of conferences on social representation, such as the following: Almeida and Jodelet 2009; Farr and Moscovici 1984; Jodelet *et al.* 2011, forthcoming; Moreira Parades and Vizeu Camargo 2007; Valencia Abundiz 2006.
- Other books have dwelt on how social representations theory can be used to investigate specific fields or domains. However, most of them focus on a single topic, like AIDS, human rights, identity, race, economics, science and technology, or education (see note xxviii), as evidenced by the following titles, to provide just some examples: Aggleton *et al.* 1989; Doise 2002; Moloney and Walker 2007; Nascimento Schulze and Correia Jesuino 2010; Philogène 1999; Ronald-Lévy *et al.* 2001.
- 30 The six phases of the empirical data collection took place 5 weeks, 7, 12, 15, 17 and 18 months after the traumatic media event of the attack on the World Trade Center in the United States, and the day after the invasion of Iraq by the Anglo-American-Australian coalition.
- 31 SPAD-T is the acronym for *Système Portable d'Analyse des Données – Textuelles*. The software designed by Lebart, Morineau and Bécue is available for PCs and MAC. A DTM-VIC free version and a practical guide (2011) is available on <http://www.dtmvic.com>
- 32 DISCAN is the acronym for Discourse Analysis, a program designed by P. Maranda in the 1990s (<http://www.jstor.org/pss/30208127>).
- 33 ALCESTE is the acronym for *Analyse Lexicale par Contexte d'un Ensemble de Segments de Text*, a program designed by Max Reinert. ALCESTE analyses all types of texts captured with a word-processing, a scanner or by speech recognition (<http://www.image-zafar.com/english/alceste.htm>).
- 34 I thank all the contributors for the trust awarded to me, during the years in which the project to publish this volume was constantly challenged by other conflicting institutional or editorial priorities under my main responsibility, both from the side of the organisation of the multiyear series of training and scientific international events

dedicated to the European PhD on Social Representations and Communication research trainees and word wide doctoral or post-docs young researchers (see the web site the European PhD International Summer Schools and International Lab Meetings <http://www.europhd.eu/IntSummerSchools> and <http://www.europhd.eu/IntLabMeetings>) or the international scientific community working in the field of the Social Representations (<http://www.europhd.psi.uniroma1.it/8thICSR/>) and from the side of other concurrent editorial priorities, such as the Italian edition of the Moscovici's *Opera Prima* (2011) and the launch of other edited works (de Rosa 2008) and the multi-language series '*Social representations: Media and Society*' (de Rosa 2011a).

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