

Lost in Translation: From Influence to Persuasion

Jorge Correia Jesuino

Quand un fait particulier est conforme à nos observations constantes, et aux rapports uniformes des autres, nous y appuyons aussi fermement que si c'était une connaissance certaine, et quand il est conforme au témoignage de tous les hommes, dans tous les siècles, autant qu'il peut être connu, c'est le premier et le plus haut degré de probabilité; par exemple que le feu échauffe, que le fer coule au fond de l'eau. Notre créance bâtie sur de tels fondements s'élève jusqu'à l'assurance.

Leibniz, *Nouveaux Essais*, 1765

Semantics of influence and persuasion

Social influence and persuasion are not synonymous. The Oxford dictionary entries are, respectively: 'to influence' – to have an effect on the way that it behaves or thinks especially giving them an example to follow – his writings have influenced the lives of millions; to be strongly/greatly/deeply influenced by something; and 'to persuade' – somebody (into something/into doing something) to make somebody do something by giving them reasons for doing it.

One could say that 'persuasion' is a modality of (social) influence. Influence not qualified by social would refer to effects produced by other ecological factors such as climate or habitat or even biological features such as handicaps, health or even mood. Social influence is less comprehensive unless we argue that everything is, sooner or later, social. Persuasion restricts the influence to social exchanges, adding the important but sometimes neglected proviso of giving reasons for the intending effect on the addressee.

Accepting the distinction it could be said that the exertion of influence of someone over somebody is not necessarily intentional, as it is when we talk about persuasion. Although distinct, it is a fact that the two concepts greatly overlap and very often even social scientists are not overly concerned with these semantic details. I don't think this is a minor issue.

Copyright © UNESCO 2008

SAGE: Los Angeles, London, New Delhi and Singapore, <http://dio.sagepub.com>

DOI: 10.1177/0392192107087921

Examination of the literature suggests that the two processes of social influence and persuasion gave rise to separate research traditions that only recently have tended to become articulated. But, as I attempt to show, it is not always clear whether it is the same process operating either at the more distal level of social influence or at the more proximal level of persuasion.

Equally important are the distinctions introduced by Talcott Parsons (1963a, 1963b), namely between (political) power and influence, both conceived as communication media symbolically generalized. Persuasion is herein considered as a positive intentional mode in contrast to the medium power that operates through the negative mode of deterrence. Modes are defined by Parsons as 'types of sanction and of effect' that become operationalized in messages by codes: the code of influence would be 'solidarity' in contrast with 'effectiveness', which is the code of power. Such are not only nominal but real distinctions in that influence as media exerts hierarchical control over power. However, such 'ideal types' are very often actually confounded, being difficult to disentangle power from influence. But it is I suppose easily acceptable that, strictly speaking, trying to change the behavior or the attitudes of someone using threats is not to persuade but to coerce. More subtle ways such as manipulation make the boundaries much fuzzier. The point to retain from Parsons is that this is not a lexical and negligible detail. To change media is to change code, that is, to move to another language game or another 'communication contract' (Ghiglione, 1986).

Another distinction found in the literature is the one between persuading, demonstrating and proving as clearly explained by J.-B. Grize (2004). Persuading is here related with arguing, as is computing with demonstrating, and convincing with proving. This also helps us to see that however much persuading aims at changing the attitudes of someone by giving reasons, and preferably good reasons (Boudon, 1997, 2003), this does not amount to saying that such reasons correspond to the formal logic of truth. Rather, this has more to do with the rhetoric of truthfulness (see Williams, 2002).

As is also stressed by Grize, arguing does not address itself only to intelligence; it also has to emotionally move: '*Le pathos s'ajoute au logos*' (Grize, 2004: 42), which proceeds to the highlighting of some facets of the argument to the detriment of others. Certainly to argue is not to be neutral; it aims to 'enlighten' someone, but by itself, concludes Grize, never succeeds in persuading. At best, it might help the target to become self-persuaded.

Views from social-psychology

Studies on persuasion currently aim at examining the changes that can be observed to take place, or the attitudes and/or behavior of individuals, as a consequence of being exposed to some sort of symbolic communication. By and large the social context is behind the scenes, as a silent and ignored background, the attention being almost exclusively focused on a unidirectional message. The source is not clearly distinguished as a subject, but reduced to a sort of external attribute of the message, operationalized as a rule in terms of credibility.

This is the experimental tradition that goes back to the famous studies initiated by C. Hovland, I. Janis and H. Kelley (1953) at the University of Yale. The research strategy adopted the communication model of examining separately the effects of the components – such as the source, the message and the channel – on a recipient. The paradigm was, and still is, deliberately functionalist – emphasis on the outcomes as well as on the cognitive information-processing.

This research tradition mainly developed by North-American scholars has achieved high levels of sophistication as documented by the cumulative evidence gathered namely by the 'Elaboration Likelihood Model' (ELM: Petty and Cacioppo, 1981, 1986) or the 'Heuristic-Systematic Model' (HSM: Chaiken, 1980, 1987), the two theories that succeeded in hegemonizing the field. Both models gave rise to an impressive number of 'normal science' studies, usually technically perfect – otherwise they would not have been accepted by the standards of the peer review system. Although both models go 'beyond the message', recognizing that the recipient is a motivated subject who pays attention to other cues, opening the way to the dual-processes meta-model (Chaiken and Trope, 1999); this does nonetheless alter the intra-psychic focus of such a research strategy.

Studies on persuasion also sought to identify techniques that could be applied in advertising, political propaganda, or in campaigns to change consumption habits or unsafe behavior. A typical example is the 'foot-in-the-door' technique, which begins with a modest request in order to gain eventual compliance with related larger requests. The technique is grounded in experimental evidence as documented by Freedman and Fraser (1966). A similar and to a certain extent symmetric is the 'door-in-the-face' technique, which starts by making a larger request that will most likely be refused to be followed by a smaller request that most likely will succeed (Cialdini et al., 1975). Those experiments on persuasion usually do not go very far in terms of identifying the mediating processes that lead the targets to comply. Anyway, they show that persuasion operates very often by indirect means and involves non-conscious, probably subliminal processes. This raises an epistemological problem of classification – whether are they modalities of soft power or manipulation. Again, the boundaries are fuzzy.

Manipulation is usually associated with deliberate intentions by the source to obtain compliance using covert tactics, but indirect influence can also take place, as will be seen, without hiding the persuasive intention of the source.

Studies on social influence, in contrast with the literature on persuasion, although also interested in examining the changes in attitudes and/or behavior of individual subjects, do not isolate the target from the social context, but rather locate him in a sort of Lewinian interacting field. In this light it could be said, in part against the dictionary and even against the logicians, that what distinguishes social influence from persuasion is not so much the presence or absence of arguing but whether the change is thematized in terms of individual or group processes. In the former approach, social change is no more than the aggregation of individual changes completed, at best, by the eventual emergence of statistical interaction effects. An alternative approach, rather than reducing the individual to the holistic pressure of social causes, would be the constructivist or genetic paradigm according to which changes observed at the individual level are always linked to the network of actual

or virtual interactions among contextually embedded subjects. It therefore comes as no surprise that studies on social influence were developed as a group phenomenon, whereas the persuasion studies borrowed from non-systemic communication models.

The former research tradition owes a great deal to European social-psychologists who emigrated to the United States, such as Moshe Sherif, Solomon Asch, Fritz Heider and of course Kurt Lewin, who introduced the novel approach of 'group dynamics' as well as the underlying meta-theoretical metaphor of group behavior as a field force. It was also Kurt Lewin who showed how change can be achieved through group processes and even with more sustained results than through unidirectional communication from a source to isolated target, no matter how persuasive the message may be. This new orientation led two former students of Lewin to introduce a famous distinction that could be traced back to Leibniz, between *normative* and *informative* social influence upon individual judgment, rapidly espoused by the researchers and still in favor at present, now under the label of 'dual processes' in information processing.

When facing the task of solving a problem, or answering some question, or emitting a judgment involving some degree of uncertainty, we may turn to others for two distinct reasons. One is to get information that we can validate using logical or quasi-logical analysis. This applies to individuals as well as groups. In the case of a group, the informational influence would amount to a mere exchange of information, supposedly distributed among the members, and then combined in order to achieve, in the best of all possible worlds, a sound consensual response. The alternative normative process is conceived in affective, imitative terms, that is, individuals do not care about the informative content but only about the position of others, converging to an accommodating consensus, the aim being social integration, individual or collective, rather than intellectual judgment.

A similar distinction was introduced by H. Kelman (1958) who posited that attitude change could take place at three levels: compliance, identification and internalization. The difference seems marginal if we consider that both compliance and identification are modalities of the normative social influence, whereas internalization corresponds to the informational social influence. It could, however, be added that Kelman's trichotomy also addresses the issue of the intensity of change, which would be minimal in compliance and maximal in identification. Such is not a minor nuance, as we will see. I would, however, argue that the 'dual processes' conceived as two orthogonal dimensions lead to an additive logic that does not exclude interaction effects except in statistical terms. In other words, psychological emergence is once again related to a rather mechanical combination of modular dimensions.

I would not say that such research is flawed or that we should disregard the cumulative empirical evidence so far achieved. Instead what I would like to suggest, in the first place, is that there are other ways or even other possible worlds, and second that what seems to be paradigmatic change does not always correspond to a real alternative. For example, the fact of changing the level and embedding the social context does not necessarily imply a change of paradigm. Neither the fact of looking at more proximal processes, nor at the interactions, necessarily alters the strategy of

focusing on intra-psychic processes; nor again that those processes be not finally restricted to the rational processing of information.

Kruglanski and Thompson (1999) also argue that since both informational and normative influence follow the superordinate syllogism of 'if . . . then', persuasion could be more economically understood in terms of a single rather than a double route. This certainly always has to start (and end) with individuals, but it all depends on what is meant by an individual and what is the role attributed to its subjectivity. Rational computation, as claimed by the philosophy of mind, requires hard- and software but not necessarily wetware.

Paradigm shift

If the role of subjectivity is ignored or, at best, put into parentheses by the micro-rational individualistic approach, the opposite holistic oversocialized perspective does not seem to offer a better alternative. In both cases, either computing machines or social sleepwalkers, the 'model of man' in these opposing paradigms does not seem to have space for the construct of meaning by the subjects. Dialogical constructivism, as claimed by European authors such as Piaget, Bakhtin, Vygotsky and Moscovici (see Marková, 2003), greatly contributed to the overcoming of this dilemma. Serge Moscovici, given the advances he made in the logic of social influence and persuasion, is my most significant guide here. I would like to not distort his thinking which, complex and rich as it is, does not seem to be an easy task.

What I will try to argue at this point is that the two research traditions, one focused on social influence and group processes, apparently more attractive to European social scientists, and the other focused on individual attitude change through persuasive communication, mostly developed by American scholars, could be re-examined from a different vantage-point that casts a new light on the continuities between the two processes. As remarked by G. Montmollin, 'Le découpage s'explique plus par l'histoire et la sociologie de la recherche en psychologie sociale que par des raisons théoriques. En fait, la proximité est grande entre l'approche des changements par communication persuasive et celle des changements par influence sociale. Peut-être ces deux approches seront-elles un jour décloisonnées puisqu'elles parlent autrement des mêmes choses' (Montmollin, 1984: 93).

This must not be confounded with the many attempts aimed at integrating the diversity of models and empirical findings that have accumulated through decades of 'advanced' research. Most such attempts, for example the 'Theory of Social Impact' (Latané and Wolf, 1981), the 'Elaboration Likelihood Model' (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981) or the more recent 'Context/ Comparison Model of Social Influence' (Crano and Alvaro, 1998), are grounded in a functionalist paradigm limiting the scope of alternative explanations. An integrative attempt based on a more constructivist approach, given the primacy attributed to conflict, was proposed by Pérez and Mugny (1993). The model introduces the moderating effect of the task group modalities, but does not seem to be more than a typology.

With Moscovici (1976) the functionalist model is replaced by what he calls, a 'genetic model', which implies a radical change in how social influence is thematized.

tized. Social influence is now viewed as a *symmetrical* relation between the source and the target, aimed at *social change* rather than social control, through *conflict management and negotiation* instead of uncertainty reduction, and mediated by *behavior styles* instead of institutionalized dependence (Moscovici, 1976/79: 238). More than a change of theoretic model we have a metatheoretical change of paradigm.

If functionalism aims at disclosing the mechanism that helps to regulate society as a whole, the genetic approach focuses on the processes that produce social change, but not in the sense that, to quote the famous dictum of Tomasi di Lampedusa (1991), 'if we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change'. This functionalist role of change proposed by Simmel (1999) met the violent criticism of Adorno to whom 'hypostatizing conflict as a formal category of society, independently of its specific social basis and content . . . is made to appear, through its isolation and formalization, as something fruitful. It may be said that, in the end, the only sense in which conflict could be credited with that kind of fruitfulness would be that social conflict can lead to the abolition of conflict' (Adorno, 2002: 67).

Moscovici also contrasts conflict and negotiation as a process of (real) social change with conflict as a mere cognitive dimension, aimed at reducing the uncertainty. In this restrictive, if not ideological sense, the norm invoked to solve conflictual problems is the norm of objectivity, to which Moscovici adds the norm of *preference* and *originality* (1976/79: 238).

Conservative politicians very often have difficulty accepting that 'wise and honest people around a table' cannot necessarily reach an agreement around what they think to be the 'one and only best way'. The functionalist paradigm in social psychology seems to adopt this conservative posture, having problems in explaining how social innovation is actually possible.

Underlying the genetic model there is also an alternative social psychology positing a triadic relationship between *Ego–Alter–Object*, instead of the traditional dualism opposing an *object* to a *subject*. The introduction of a mediating *Alter*, that is, a *social subject*, leads to a social dynamic triggered by difference and eventually to conflicts that, at best, are socio-cognitive, offering in that way an issue for negotiation.

Already in 1972, and reiterated in 1984, the object of social psychology, according to Moscovici 'should be the study of all that pertains to *ideology* and to *communication* from the point of view of their structure, their genesis and their function' (Moscovici, 1972: 55). By ideology is meant *cognitions* and *social representations* (Moscovici, 1984: 7), which lead to an anchoring of the dialogical exchange between *Ego* and *Alter* in the representations they share, but also those they constantly renew through mutual persuasion (Marková, 2003).

It could be argued that functionalist models, such as for example the ELM, do not reduce the subject exclusively to the epistemic dimension. In fact, the decision to pay attention and use the 'central route' is determined by motivational reasons. Presumably the stimulus is relevant and meaningful for the individual subject, which is a way of acknowledging a role for subjective preferences. But motivational processes never constituted a problem for functionalists in that they can also be reduced to a process of rational choice or, at worst, locked within a black box.

Thematizing the dialogue between *Ego* and *Alter* in terms of potential socio-cognitive conflicts also suggests some parallels that could be established with the

semiotic processes where (social) thought is always mediated by the 'work of the negative', generating cycles of 'contraries and contradictories'. If change, according to Lewin (1948, 1951), requires a preliminary stage of 'defreezing', then the negative comes first, that is, we have to start by reducing the resistant forces and, at a later stage, provide the reasons for the alternative goal. Adopting the semiotic terminology, the transit to the contrary is mediated by the contradictory diagonal of the semiotic square (Greimas, 1976).

Minorities versus majorities

It is tempting to apply this scheme to the deconstructive research style of Moscovici, punctuated as it is by surprising gestalt switches in the reinterpretation of social influence processes. Take Asch's classic (1956) experiment where a naïve subject under the influence of a majority of confederates is led to conform to an obviously incorrect judgment about an objective perceptual stimulus – the comparative length of a set of lines.

Although Asch's initial idea in conceiving the experiment was to show that subjects were able to be independent notwithstanding the pressures to conformity exerted by the majorities, the results showed that circa one-third of the judgments were apparently influenced by the wrong majority. The experiment was replicated many times and in many ways, but maybe the most interesting variant, already observed by Asch, was that when the confederates were not unanimous, the conformity effects became negligible. The experiment caused an enormous impact in showing that individuals could be victims of social pressures leading them to deny even the most obvious evidence. The findings of the experiment – the great majority of the subjects did not conform – do not authorize such a negative generalization but that is what was finally retained.

An example of Moscovici's deconstructive style is given by the way he has reinterpreted Asch's experiment. Instead of considering the group of confederates as a majority, he claimed that they were a minority in the sense of defending an awkward judgment against obvious evidence, whereas the naïve subject, although in a minority of one, could be reinterpreted as a representative of the majority, the majority constituted by commonsense individuals who would not have any doubts about the relative length of the lines (Faucheux and Moscovici, 1967). Such a reinterpretation, although not exempt from its own problems, had the merit of opening the walls of the laboratory by embedding it in a larger eco-social context. Contextually redefined, the criteria for considering the confederates as a minority was the *coherence* of their *behavioral style*, which became for Moscovici the social factor endowed with the most persuasive potential.

The subsequent experimental work conducted by Moscovici and associates was to some extent a continuation of the Asch paradigm with important *nuances*. He used what became known as the 'blue-green' paradigm. That is, some of the subjects who were exposed to non-ambiguous blue slides were, under the influence of minority confederates, persuaded to change to a perception of green. The most innovative feature of those experiments was, however, the idea of measuring the lasting effects

of social influence via the after-image perceptions, objectively revealing that even when subjects did not publicly conform, they had actually changed in private, they were *converted* (Moscovici, 1980).

Such experiments, although difficult to replicate (Martin, 1998), had an immense heuristic impact generating an ever-growing corpus of variants and refinements. In a relatively recent one it was found, surprisingly, that the confederate himself, after repeating so many times that the blue slide was green, started to hesitate about the real color (Laurens and Moscovici, 2005). Once again, the deconstructive research style is at work.

But it is one thing to discover some intriguing psychological effect and another to explain them. The influence of minorities has become a well-established fact but, to remind ourselves of the famous movie, something seems to be 'lost in translation' when re-analyzed through the lens of the cognitive-functionalist paradigm. It's not that the subtle and elegant experiments and models focusing on the details of intrapsychic information-processing are invalid. Certainly this is excellent science. What seem, however, to be lost are the more distal and hidden effects that the laboratory is unable to control, starting with the presumed naïvety of the experimental subjects. As often stressed by Moscovici, and as documented by the reinterpretation he suggested for the Asch experiments, individuals are more than mere epistemic subjects; their minds are peopled by a background mass of structured as well as the non-structured representations that they (un)consciously project in novel situations, be it in the laboratory or in everyday life. Discounting such a background amounts to a return to the traditional stimulus-response model, which is maybe more economic, but not necessarily more heuristic, nor does it contribute to the development of what is specifically social in social psychology. Being so, it comes as no surprise that such features as behavioral style, 'shared representations', as well as the 'return of the unconscious' (Moscovici, 1993) are forgotten concepts in the cognitivist literature about minority-majority sources of influence.

Here socio-cognitive conflicts are once again reduced to cognitive individual differences in weighing the cues (Gigone and Hastie, 1996) and, benefiting from the progress achieved by means of automatic computation, researchers are at last able to replace the 'naïve subjects' by the much more docile and manipulable 'cellular automatons' to simulate group behavior (Latané and Wolf, 1981; Latané, 1996; Kennedy and Eberhart, 2001). Once again I am not suggesting that those methodological procedures lead to false or even less interesting findings. However, not only might they contribute to reinforcing an epistemic paradigm but also to conveying the image of a serialized society, which just might become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Group polarization

Another example of this 'lost in translation' syndrome is given by the no less important contribution of Moscovici and close associates to the intriguing polarization effect observed in group decisionmaking. The first study was published in 1969 (Moscovici and Zavalloni, 1969), the year of the first studies on minority influence (Moscovici et al., 1969).

Theoretical continuities between these two lines of research contribute, I think, to a better understanding of Moscovici's claim of 'a more social social psychology'. The effect of group polarization starts with the unexpected finding in a masters thesis developed at MIT that groups, when facing the task of achieving a consensus on issues involving risk, instead of converging to the mean of their initial individual positions tend to adopt not only a collective riskier position, but also to shift at the individual level, as reflected in their answers to a post-decision test (Stoner, 1961).

The 'risky shift' effect, as it was dubbed at the time, was confirmed by Wallach et al. (1962) and found, as documented by successive replications *un peu partout*, to be rather robust. The problem with the 'risky shift' effect was that it apparently was in contradiction with the no less well-grounded findings of Sherif (1936; Sherif and Sherif, 1967), which stipulated that individuals tend to polarize while groups tend to regress to the mean. Already, in 1924, Allport had also sustained that groups are more conservative than individuals. Exciting as this finding may be, this is not the place to follow what has become a 'little narrative' around the numerous proposed explanations of this controversial issue.

The contribution of Moscovici, also 'narrated' in an essay in honour of M. Sherif (Moscovici, 1992), was decisive in showing, once again, that the effect was not limited to problems involving risk but was also observable in situations where individuals who *share common beliefs* and who are invited to achieve a consensual position tend to become more extreme, that is to *polarize*. Such was the case with French students who, after group discussion, became more anti-American but also more pro-de Gaulle (Moscovici and Zavalloni, 1969).

The innovation introduced by the French social psychologists, which was henceforth adopted, was not limited to the terminology or even to the broadening effect of group judgment and/or decisionmaking. Instead of adopting then current attempts at explanation in terms of the informative–normative dichotomy, they attributed the polarization effect to the 'normative commitment' of group members. The hypothesis was validated through an astute comparison between the more personal *attitudinal* Lickert scales and the more impersonal *judgmental* Thurstone scales, as well as to measures of categorization dispersion, supposedly correlated to involvement with attitudinal objects. It is worth noting that this explanation in terms of 'normative commitment' is not to be confounded with 'normative influence' (Deutsch and Gerard, 1955). While this latter leads to conformity with the majority only because they are the majority, the former is related to sort-of an in-group minority influence moving from somewhat less extreme to more extreme positions. In the words of the author:

Our studies on minority influence obviously helped to refine the original hypothesis on group polarization. Inasmuch as discussion allows the minority to have its say and a minority is usually committed to its position, it was to be expected that consensus would not be in the nature of a compromise. Usually decisions result from the conflict between the forces of conformity and the forces of innovation in the group. The consensus expresses a compromise between these two forces'. (Moscovici, 1992: 119)

The remark that 'a minority is usually committed to its position', as I understand it,

invokes the 'behavioral style' but also the *socio-cognitive* conflict implied by the triad Ego–Alter–Object.

In this light it comes as no surprise that Moscovici goes even further in his reinterpretation, coming to a view of the group polarization effect as an instance, amplified by the laboratory, of the genesis of social representations. The argument is fully developed in 'Dissensions and Consensus', a book written with the cooperation of Willem Doise, published in 1992, probably the work where the multiple branches of Moscovici's thought are linked together in a coherent architecture. 'La formation du consensus n'a pas pour but d'agréger des opinions ou préférences individuelles, de les corriger par de meilleures informations, etc., mais de les transformer en opinions et préférences sociales. C'est pourquoi il est approprié de parler d'un travail spécifique de la décision qui les incorpore dans la vie sociale courante' (Moscovici and Doise, 1992: 247). It is tempting to speculate about making a parallel with the controversial distinction established by Rousseau between 'volonté de tous' and 'volonté générale'.

Looking, however, to the explanations for group polarization that have survived, the pendulum seems to have again swung in favor of the functionalist paradigm, for which the very notion of group dynamics is reduced to individual dynamics. It is in fact the model of 'persuasive arguments' (Burnstein and Vinokur, 1975, 1977; Vinokur, Trope and Burnstein, 1975) that apparently succeeded in being incorporated into mainstream social psychology. For example, among many others, Myers in his well-known manual on social psychology writes about group polarization that 'according to the best-supported explanation, group discussion elicits a pooling of ideas, most of which favour the dominant viewpoint . . . Other ideas may include persuasive arguments that some group members had not previously considered . . . But when people hear relevant arguments without learning the specific stands other people assume, they still shift their positions' (Burnstein and Vinokur, 1997). 'Arguments, in and of themselves, matter' (Myers, 2004: 199). Group *changes* are thus reduced to aggregated individual *choices*.

The consensus around the concept of polarization, universally credited to Moscovici and Zavalloni, has not entailed the same enthusiasm when it comes to their explanation of the phenomenon in terms of 'normative commitment'. Moscovici succeeded in drawing attention to the dialectic minority–majority and its role in social change and innovation, in part yielding to adopt the functionalist experimental strategies which, to a certain extent, correspond with an in-group strategy. At least there was a common language, identical concepts, as well as some acceptable new ones, like conversion or indirect influence, which helped to incorporate some of the 'new look' into the functionalist paradigm.

There are, however, limits for the role of persuasion when what is at stake are the basic metatheoretical tenets of opposite and conflicting paradigms. Minorities are able to induce changes, but these are more easily achieved within their own paradigms (Crano and Alvaro, 1998). Out-group minorities might have their chances but they certainly require much more time and persistence.

Coda

There seem, however, to be signs that the genetic paradigm, although not persuasive enough to displace the information-processing models, is making its way, mobilizing the attention of a growing number of social scientists. This could be due mainly to renewed interest in the unconscious (Moscovici, 1993), as well as in the automatic processes, both well known for some time, but not actually the object of a systematic examination. The bad press around figures like Freud or Jung did not help.

Probably more confident in their analytical tools and the progress achieved, mainstream cognitive scientists, as they now prefer to be known, are starting to open the 'black box' in order to disentangle the mysteries of 'priming' in inducing non-conscious effects (Bargh, 2006). Inside the box, instead of well-structured monological conceptual networks it seems there are dialogical webs of speech acts, from which emerge higher levels of partially conscious representations. If one adopts this point of view the boundaries between social influence and persuasion become more indistinct but not less pervasive. But on the other hand it seems that the Lewinian metaphor of the force field must be embedded in a social terrain much like a huge rhizome, with no centre nor clearly defined shape or perimeter. Persuasion, in the enlightened sense of redirecting humans onto the right track, seems to lose ground to the myriad of social influence processes that constantly impinge on and affect our conduct. The metaphysical and moral problems that might follow are beyond the scope of this paper.

Jorge Correia Jesuino
ISCTE, Lisbon

References

- Adorno, T. (2002) *Introduction to Sociology*. Lectures given in 1968. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Allport, F. (1924) *Social Psychology*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Asch, S. (1956) 'Studies of Independence and Conformity: Minority of One against a Unanimous Majority', *Psychological Monographs: General and Applied*, 70: 1–70.
- Bargh, J. (2006) 'What Have We Been Priming All These Years? On the Development, Mechanisms and Ecology of Non conscious Social Behaviour', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 36: 147–68.
- Boudon, R. (1997) *L'art de se persuader*. Paris: Fayard.
- Boudon, R. (2003) *Bonnes Raisons*. Paris: PUF.
- Burnstein, E. and Vinokur, A. (1975) 'What a Person Thinks upon Learning He Has Chosen Differently from Others: Nice Evidence for the Persuasive Arguments Explanation of Choice Shifts', *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 11: 412–26.
- Burnstein, E. and Vinokur, A. (1977) 'Persuasive Argumentation and Social Comparison as Determinants of Attitude Polarization', *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 13: 315–35.
- Chaiken, S. (1980) 'Heuristic versus Systematic Information Processing and the Use of Source versus Message Cues in Persuasion', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 39: 752–66.
- Chaiken, S. (1987) 'The Heuristic Model of Persuasion', in M. Zanna, J. Olson and C. Herman (eds), *Social Influence: The Ontario Symposium*, Vol. 5, pp. 3–39. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Chaiken, S. and Trope, Y., eds (1999) *Dual-processes Theories in Social Psychology*. New York: Guilford.
- Cialdini, R., Vincent, J., Lewis, S., Catalan, J., Wheeler, D. and Darby, B. (1975) 'Reciprocal Concessions Procedure for Inducing Compliance: The Door-in-the-Face Technique', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 31: 206–15.

- Crano, W. and Álvaro, E. (1998) 'The Context/Comparison Model of Social Influence: Mechanisms, Structure and Linkage That Underlie Indirect Attitude Change', in W. Stroebe and M. Hewstone (eds), *European Review of Social Psychology*, Vol. 8, pp.175–202. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons.
- Deutsch, M. and Gerard, H. (1955) 'A Study of Normative and Informational Social Influence upon Individual Judgment', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 51: 629–36.
- Faucheux, C. and Moscovici, S. (1967) 'Le style de comportement d'une minorité et son influence sur les réponses d'une majorité', *Bulletin du CERP*, 16: 337–60.
- Freedman, J. and Fraser, S. (1966) 'Compliance without Pressure: The Foot-in-the-Door Technique', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 4: 195–203.
- Ghiglione, R. (1986) *L'homme communiquant*. Paris: Armand Colin.
- Gigone, D. and Hastie, R. (1996) 'The Impact of Information on Group Judgment: A Model and Computer Simulation', in E. Witte and J. Davis (eds), *Understanding Group Behavior: Consensual Action by Small Groups*, Vol. 1, pp. 221–51. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Greimas, A. (1976) *Sémiotique et Sciences Sociales*. Paris: Seuil.
- Grize, J.-B. (2004) 'Le point de vue de la logique naturelle: Démontrer, prouver, argumenter', in M. Doury et S. Moirand (eds), *L'argumentation aujourd'hui. Positions théoriques en confrontation*. Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle.
- Hovland, C., Janis, I. and Kelley, H. (1953) *Communication and Persuasion*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Kelman, H. (1958) 'Compliance, Identification and Internalization: Three Processes of Attitude Change', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 2: 51–60.
- Kennedy, J. and Eberhart, R. (2001) *Swarm Intelligence*. London: Academic Press.
- Kruglanski, A. and Thompson, E. (1999) 'Persuasion by a Single Route: A View from the Unimodel', *Psychological Inquiry*, 10(2): 83–109.
- Latané, B. (1996) 'The Fate of Opinion Minorities in Groups', in E. Witte and J. Davis (eds), *Understanding Group Behavior: Consensual Action by Small Groups*, Vol. 1, pp. 193–219. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Latané, B. and L'Herron, T. (1996) 'Social Clustering in the Conformity Game: Dynamic Social Impact in Electronic Groups', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70: 1218–30.
- Latané, B. and Wolf, S. (1981) 'The Social Impact of Majorities and Minorities', *Psychological Review*, 88: 438–53.
- Laurens, S. and Moscovici, S. (2005) 'The Confederate's and Others' Self-Conversion: A Neglected Phenomenon', *Journal of Social Psychology*, 145(2): 191–207.
- Leibniz, G. W. (1765) *Nouveaux Essais sur l'entendement humain*, Livre iv, ch. xvi, para 6.
- Lewin, K. (1948) *Resolving Social Conflicts*. New York: Harper.
- Lewin, K. (1951) *Field Theory in Social Science*. New York: Harper.
- Marková, I. (2003) *Dialogicality and Social Representations: The Dynamics of the Mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Martin, R. (1998) 'Majority and Minority Influence Using the Afterimage Paradigm: A Series of Attempted Replications', *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 34: 1–26.
- Montmollin, G. (1984) 'Le changement d'attitude', in S. Moscovici (ed.), *Psychologie sociale*. Paris: PUF.
- Moscovici, S. (1972) 'Society and Theory in Social Psychology', in J. Israel and H. Tajfel (eds), *The Context of Social Psychology: A Critical Assessment*, pp. 17–68. London: Academic Press.
- Moscovici, S. (1976) *Psychologie des minorités actives*. Paris: PUF. (First edition in English, *Social Influence and Social Change*, 1979.)
- Moscovici, S. (1980) 'Toward a Theory of Conversion Behaviour', in L. Berkowitz (ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 13, pp. 209–39. London: Academic Press.
- Moscovici, S. (1984) 'Introduction. Le domaine de la psychologie sociale', in S. Moscovici (ed.), *Psychologie Sociale*, pp. 5–22. Paris: PUF.
- Moscovici, S. (1992) 'The Discovery of Group Polarization', in D. Granberg and G. Sarup (eds), *Social Judgments and Intergroup Relations: Essays in Honour of Musesafer Sherif*, pp. 107–27. New York: Springer-Verlag.

- Moscovici, S. (1993) 'The Return of the Unconscious', *Social Research*, 60: 39–63.
- Moscovici, S. and Doise, W. (1992) *Dissensions and Consensus*. Paris: PUF.
- Moscovici, S. and Zavalloni, M. (1969) 'The Group as Polarizer of Attitudes', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 12: 125–35.
- Moscovici, S., Lage, E. and Naffrechoux, X. (1969) 'Influence of a Consistent Minority on the Response of a Majority in Colour Perception Task', *Sociometry*, 32: 365–79.
- Myers, D. (2004) *Exploring Social Psychology*, 3rd edn. Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Parsons, T. (1963a) 'On the Concept of Political Power', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 107(3) June.
- Parsons, T. (1963b) 'On the Concept of Influence', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, spring.
- Pérez, J. et Mugny, G. (1993) *Influences sociales: La théorie de l'élaboration du conflit*. Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé.
- Petty, R. and Cacioppo, J. (1981) *Attitudes and Persuasion: Classic and Contemporary Approaches*. Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.
- Petty, R. and Cacioppo, J. (1986) 'The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion', in L. Berkowitz (ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 19, pp. 123–205. New York: Academic Press.
- Sherif, M. (1936) *The Psychology of Social Norms*. New York: Harper.
- Sherif, M. and Sherif, C. (1967) 'Attitude as the Individual's Own Categories: The Social-Judgment–Involvement Approach to Attitude and Attitude Change', in C. Sherif and M. Sherif (eds), *Attitudes: Ego Involvement and Change*, pp. 105–39. New York: Wiley.
- Simmel, G. (1999) *Sociologie: étude sur les formes de la socialisation* (1908), French transl. by L. Deroche-Gurcel and S. Muller. Paris: PUF.
- Stoner, J. (1961) *A comparison of individual and group decision involving risk*. Unpublished masters thesis, MIT.
- Tomasi di Lampedusa, G. (1991) *The Leopard*, transl. A. Colquhoun. New York: Knopf.
- Vinokur, A. Trope, Y. and Burnstein, E. (1975) 'A Decision Making Analysis of Persuasive Argumentation and the Choice Shift Effect', *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 11(2): 127–48.
- Wallach, M., Kogan, N. and Bem, D. (1962) 'Group Influence on Individual Risk Taking', *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 65: 75–86.
- Williams, B. (2002) *Truth and Truthfulness: An Essay in Genealogy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.