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I shall play the role of the devil's advocate in relation to Colin Fraser's paper "attitudes, social representations and widespread beliefs". I intend to argue for the alternative perspective which Colin identifies briefly, but does not discuss, at the beginning of his paper and to which he returns at the end - namely, that social representations and social attitudes are epistemologically incompatible theories.

The nub of the matter concerns the similarities, and differences between the two concepts. I thought this matter had finally been resolved in a classic paper by Jaspars and Fraser (1984). Indeed I regard their joint paper as a minor classic in the literature on social representations for precisely this reason. They made two quite distinct but, I believe, equally important observations. The first was that Moscovici's notion of social representations is very similar to Thomas's notion of social attitudes. This is an imaginative and. I believe, truthful insight on which I shall presently comment. The other, equally important, observation was that the study of attitudes is no longer as social as it once was. Jaspars and Fraser were quite precise as to how this state of affairs came about. They identified G.W. Allport (1935) as being responsible for individualising Thomas's notion of social attitudes. I have pursued this particular line of inquiry much further and this leads me to my present position of believing there is an epistemological incompatibility between social representations and attitudes. Jaspars & Fraser (1984), then, argued for the similarity between social representations and social attitudes and for the dissimilarity between social attitudes and attitudes. I find both of their arguments convincing. I have always accepted both the similarity and the dissimilarity which they identified. I am now confused when Colin appears to argue for the similarity between social representations and attitudes.

Social Attitudes and Social Representations

The context within which it is possible to consider the similarity between social representations and social attitudes was that of social science at the University of Chicago in the 1920s. Social representations per se, of course, were not yet around, but collective representations were. Chicago, and its university, was the port of entry into the United States of America for a great deal of European social science, including the sociology of Durkheim. Many of the classics of European social science were translated into English and published by the University of Chicago Press.

The only three Americans to understand the significance of Wundt's Völkerpsychologie (19002()) (henceforth VPs! were all at the University of Chicago - Mead, in philosophy; Judd in education and Thomas in sociology. Mead had studied with Wundt at Leipzig (1888-89); he reviewed, in English and at Chicago, the successive volumes of Wundt's VPs as they rolled off the presses in Leipzig (Mead, 19()4, 1906) and he began his annual course of lectures in social psychology at Chicago with Wundt's concept of the human gesture which appears in the first two volumes of VPs. Judd used Wundt's VPs to stress the important role of culture in relation to education in much the same way as Vygotsky in Russia was

influenced by Wundt's <u>VPs.</u> As I have demonstrated elsewhere (Farr, 1983) Thomas studied with Wundt at Leipzig in 1907-8 during the time when Wundt was writing and publishing his <u>VPs.</u> The objects of study in Wundt's <u>VPs</u> - language, religion, customs, myth, magic and cognate phenomena were the same as Durkheim's collective representations. Durkheim had visited various German universities, including Leipzig, in 1885-86 and was impressed by what he saw, especially by Wundt.

Jaspars and Fraser (1984) were right, then, to draw our attention to the similarity between Thomas's conception of social attitudes and current notions of social representations. They also made some interesting observations concerning the technology of attitude measurement. They discuss this more fully in regard to Guttman but they also mention Thurstone. Fraser, in the paper to which this is a response, makes an interesting and a new point about Likert scales. Of the three persons mentioned here the most important, in the present context., is Thurstone since he was an integral part of the Chicago scene during the 192()s. Likert and Guttman developed their techniques for attitude scaling somewhat later, in the 1930s and 40s respectively. The point made by Jaspars and Fraser is that the techniques devised by Guttman and by Thurstone imply a common collective representation of the object of the attitude scale on the part of those involved in its construction. In his classic scales which Thurstone constructed in the 1920s on divorce, war and peace and the church he trawled the mass media of communication of his day in search of good opinion items. Sampling the media as well as people's opinions is comparable to the methods used by modern social psychologists who investigate social representations. The inference I make from the arguments adduced by Jaspars and Fraser (1984) is that those who study social representations should now consider the possibility of working with Thurstone scales since there is a compatibility here between theory and method (Farr, 1993).

All of the above is part of the pre-history of social representations. None of the above, as far as I see it, poses any problems for Moscovici. The similarity between social representations and social attitudes, to which Jaspars & Fraser drew attention, can be accounted for in terms of Moscovici and Thomas drawing on some of the same sources for their theoretical inspiration i.e. the sociology of Durkheim and the <u>VPs</u> of Wundt. Whilst Moscovici did not begin to write about his theory of social representations until the modern period of social psychology (i.e. since the end of World War II), he did not devise it within a cultural vacuum. He chose Durkheim as the ancestor for this modern French tradition of research in social psychology (Deutscher, 1984). He also drew on Bartlett who, in his turn, drew on both Durkheim and Wundt (see Saiko, 1994).

Moscovici himself is not averse to the point made by Jaspars & Fraser (1984) when they noted the similarity between social representations and Thomas's notion of social attitudes. He is quite happy to think of his theory of social representations as being a sort of retro-revolution (Moscovici, 1981) i.e. a return to a time when social psychology was much more explicitly social than it has been in America during the modem era. The antecedent identified by Jaspars & Fraser is interesting for another reason. Thomas identified social attitudes in such a way that he could then define social psychology as being the study of social attitudes. I think this was Moscovici's intention when he set out to study social representations empirically. Having identified the explicitly social nature of his object of study Moscovici, like Thomas before him, then re-defines the discipline as being the study of that object. I think, therefore, that Moscovici himself adopts the perspective that Fraser mentions but does not discuss i.e. that social representations and attitudes are epistemologically incompatible entities. At an early stage in the development of the theory Moscovici ventured the following

opinion "The concept of social representations could usefully replace those of opinion or image, which are relatively static and descriptive" (Moscovici, 1963, p.252).

The Individualisation of Social Psychology

Thomas and Znaniecki were both sociologists. It is in the context of sociology that there is a rapprochement between social attitudes and social representations. As Jaspars & Fraser (1984) showed G.W. Allport (1935) psychologised the concept of attitude by editing out the social and collective components of the various definitions he considered. It has remained a key theoretical concept in psychological forms of social psychology ever since. G.W. Allport was not the only person to individualise the social. Graumann (1986) has demonstrated that F.H. Allport was the main culprit when it comes to the individualisation of social psychology in America in the inter-war years. Allport's behaviourism was the main engine driving this particular process of individualisation. Clearly, in the light of the analyses by Jaspars and Fraser and by Graumann, the two Allport brothers have a lot to answer for when it comes to the individualisation of social psychology. After World War II the other social sciences in America became individualised when, collectively, they were referred to as "the behavioural sciences".

Behaviourism represents the perspective of the observer of others. It is an individual perspective and not a social one. In the history of social psychology in America there was a further wave in the individualisation of the social beyond the one described by Jaspars & Fraser (1984) and by Graumann (1986). This came about as a direct consequence of the migration of the gestalt psychologists from Austria and Germany to America (Farr, in press). Its effect was not felt until after World War II. This time the social was individualised through perception, rather than through behaviour. This is what Campbell (1963) calls 'the view of the world" approach to the study of attitudes in contrast to "the consistency of response" approach which was the behaviourist perspective. These arc both partial perspectives and they are also both individual perspectives. They are also, if Jones and Nisbett (1972) are to be believed, incompatible perspectives. The two together do not constitute a social science. Campbell (1963) further individualised the concept of attitude by physiologising it. He mapped theses two individual and incompatible perspectives into the one central nervous system.

My principal reason for believing there is an epistemological incompatibility <u>between</u> attitudes and social representations is that there is an epistemological incompatibility <u>within</u> the tradition of research on attitudes between the "view of the world" approach to their study which is associated with gestalt psychology and the "consistency of response" approach associated with behaviourism.

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