Introduction

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In the field of social psychology, and perhaps in science in general, there are very few researchers who have originated several 'major theories'. By 'major theories' we mean theories that have given rise to a great deal of work, carried out by researchers from all over the world and over long periods of time. These theories are often the work of a lifetime and many researchers would very much like to propose at least one of the kind during their career… But in a few exceptional cases there have been among them those who proposed even two ! This was, for example, the case for Leon Festinger who, after formulating his theory of social comparison (1954), would later develop his theory of cognitive dissonance (1957). It was also true for Serge Moscovici who gave to our discipline the theory of social representations (1961) and the theory of minority influence (1976). This is even more remarkable for both Festinger and Moscovici since the theories they forged address questions that are relatively far apart. The theories they proposed were not the developments of any initial theories. During his life as a researcher, Serge Moscovici was thus able to offer us two major theories dealing with very different aspects of interaction and social thinking.

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In 2017, we organised a small international workshop in Greece, to confront our ideas about the two theories of Serge Moscovici. It was then a question of tracing the perspectives of the legacy he had left us. This book is the collective trace of this work. It is organised in three parts.

The first part deals with the epistemic and theoretical questions raised by Serge Moscovici's work. It begins with a historical reminder of his contribution to the formation of the European Association of Social Psychology.

The second part of the book presents recent developments in the theory of minority influence. The actual and potential developments of this theory will be discussed.

The third part is devoted to the theory of social representations. The topics discussed show that this theory has become a reference theory in social sciences for the analysis of societal issues.

One could see in this book a form of homage to the work of Serge Moscovici. But it should above all be seen as a tribute to the liveliness and relevance of the theories he has bequeathed to us.

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