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Abstracts

Ivana Marková
Persuasion and Social Psychology

This editor's introduction to the issue recalls the main methodological approaches to persuasion, rhetoric and propaganda in social psychology. It summarizes the classical theories issued from Hovland's Yale Communication Program in experimental social psychology, like dissonance, attitude changes, inoculation approach, elaboration likelihood model. Yet there are, today, competing perspectives on persuasion, which turn attention to the meaning of persuasion in modern complex societies, in technology and the media. These perspectives place emphasis not on changes of attitudes, but on communication, social influence and group processes. It is shown that the collection of articles in this issue brings out these diverse approaches in social psychology. Broadly, it encompasses social psychological studies based on the research of attitudes and attitude changes on the one hand, and those based on the studies of influence and communication on the other.

Stéphane Laurens
Hidden Effects of Influence and Persuasion

This paper revisits the different notions of influence, persuasion and influence-bound subjects. It illustrates and critiques the dominant prevailing concept of influence and its effects, which, though diversely denominated and presented through various theories, always comes down to reaffirming the relationship of dominance and the possibility of the nullification of the subject within the relationship with the other. With this aim, it studies the classical theories of interpersonal influence and brings to attention some of the bodies of information which have been systematically neglected or set aside, particularly concerning suggestion, possession, mesmerism and somnambulism.

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Luca Maria Scarantino
Persuasion, Rhetoric and Authority

The author argues that the persuasive process is articulated within a dynamic linking beliefs and emotions. The different possible states of equilibrium balancing these two aspects define a persuasive process as more inherently rational or more inherently rhetorical. This latter, being marked by an immediate emotional participation, functions within a social context of the community type. It is dominated by an aesthetic form of communication, where epistemic belief proceeds out of a conformist adherence to the ethos of the group. Its extreme form is represented by the discourse of propaganda. Linked to the epistemic structure of the rhetorical discourse there corresponds a moral structure of resentment and an authoritarian social structure. Although rational elements and emotional elements still coexist within concrete discourses, the possibility of distinguishing them in terms of autonomous functionalities represents the specific adjunct brought by philosophical reflection to the determination of the epistemic structure of persuasion.

Ivana Marková
Persuasion and Propaganda

This paper aims to show that propaganda and persuasion are underlined by two forms of communication, one aiming at a monologue, and the other aiming at a dialogue, which in practice do often coexist, with one or the other prevailing at a particular time. In order to understand propaganda or persuasion, we need to study them as part of the systems (e.g. institutions, organizations, communication) to which they belong, rather than treat them as decontextualized phenomena. Both propaganda and persuasion involve conscious and unconscious communicative processes. Nevertheless, the majority of social psychology experiments still assume that the experimenter should deal with phenomena only at a conscious level. In dialogical communication, however, latent and unconscious thought, inner dialogue, and 'the depth of consciousness', are presupposed to be unavoidable aspects of communication, whether it is concerned with influence processes, persuasion or social representations. They all are established through cultural-historical processes and determine symbolic meanings of social communication of the present and future.

Richard E. Petty and Pablo Briñol
Psychological Processes Underlying Persuasion: A Social Psychological Approach

In this article, the authors review a contemporary social psychological perspective on persuasion with an emphasis on explicating the *psychological processes* that underlie successful attitude change. Those mechanisms by which variables in the persuasion setting can influence attitude change are: (a) affect the amount of information processing; (b) bias the thoughts that are generated or (c) one's confidence in those

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thoughts (or other structural features); (d) serve as persuasive arguments or evidence or (e) affect attitudes by serving as simple cues and heuristics. By grouping the persuasion processes into meaningful categories, the authors aim to provide a useful guide to organize and facilitate access to key findings in this literature. They also describe a theoretical framework to understand the circumstances for which the different processes are more likely to influence our judgments, such as when variables precede or follow thought-generation, and when the extent of thinking is relatively low, medium, or high.

Martin W. Bauer
Social Influence by Artefacts

A review of the paradigms of social influence – suggestion, imitation, normalization, conformity, compliance, conversion – leads me to diagnose a triple malaise: the shrinkage of paradigms to cognitive dual-processing theories of information; the dominant methodology of laboratory experiments falls short of the reality of (mass) communication; and the focus of social influence on inter-subjectivity is only half of the story. I will suggest two extensions of social influence theory to include mass media communication and the inter-objectivity of artefacts. We need to be able to conceptualize the modalities of why, how and to what effect somebody might put up a wall to influence neighbours instead of contenting themselves with putting up a public note 'Do not trespass!'. Social influence by fait accompli needs to be within the remit of social psychology, otherwise it loses its relevance in a technological society where artefacts mediate most inter-personal relations.

Hélène Joffe
The Power of Visual Material: Persuasion, Emotion and Identification

This paper integrates literature from the social sciences and humanities concerning the persuasive impact of visual material, highlighting issues of emotion and identification. Visuals are used not only to illustrate news and feature genres but also in advertising and campaigns that attempt to persuade their target audiences to change attitudes and behaviours. These include health, safety and charity campaigns, that attempt to socially engineer change in people's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours. With the increasing presence of such visuals comes a more emotive media environment with which people are forced to engage, and, under certain circumstances, disengage.

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Margarita Sánchez-Mazas
Violence or Persuasion? Denial of Recognition and Opportunities for Action in Contemporary Societies

Reference to human rights, not as abstract consensus but as shared object, issue for action and principle of innovation, is ignored in Huntington's theory of the clash of civilizations. The psychosocial processes of relegation to alterity are a form of exclusion which, beyond discrimination and contempt, deny the possibility of a common world. They prevent actors from experiencing their diversity of positioning as a rational diversity and prevent societies from democratically inhabiting the divisions that run through them. The author argues, relying on authors like Etzioni, Moscovici and Crespi, that recognition of minorities' influence will be the best bulwark against the divisions that undermine contemporary societies' democratic purpose when they are eliminated or radicalized. She analyses the relations between connected phenomena such as persuasion and the common world, the struggle for recognition in the legal sphere, and the denial of esteem.

Jorge Correia Jesuino
Lost in Translation: From Influence to Persuasion

Social influence and persuasion are not synonyms. This paper traces back the different approaches and distinctions constituting the two concepts and argues that the two research traditions focused respectively on social influence in group processes and on individual attitude change through persuasive communication, could be re-examined from a different vantage point, casting a new light on the continuities between them.

Li Liu
***Yang* and *Yin* in Communication: Towards a Typology and Logic of Persuasion in China**

In contrast to the individualistically focused paradigm, this article suggests that persuasion is a relationship- and context-specific phenomenon. The article analyses how interpersonal and mass persuasion operates in Chinese daily life. The key concepts of filial piety and *guanxi* as a major feature of persuasion in the public sphere are thoroughly analysed. It is argued that persuasion is indispensable in dialogical relationships between the self and other, and between the individual and society; yet at the same time it is indigenous to the socio-cultural context.

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Clélia Maria Nascimento-Schulze
Science and Society: To Indicate, to Motivate or to Persuade?

This paper deals with the recent policies introduced in Brazil in order to foster a public interest towards science. Persuasive messages and strategies aiming at increasing a public awareness of the importance of scientific literacy for the development of the country are introduced at different levels and targeting different kinds of publics. These policies are analysed in view of classical models of social influence and persuasion.

Maria Emery
Review

This is a review of H. Duméry's volume *Imagination et religion. Éléments de judaïsme, éléments de christianisme*. The author studies biblical religion and the origins of the Christian religion, classifying and recording the imaginative element that feeds the narratives of piety: hence the rehabilitation of the myths that frame the functioning of religious representations. The author suggests that the imagination, in its deepest resources, forges the human social, has the power to invent all social roles, and causes the emergence of attitudes of devotion or renunciation which are a human prerogative.

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