Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences

Bo Allesøe Christensen *Editor*

The Second Cognitive Revolution

A Tribute to Rom Harré

Springer

Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences

Series Editor

Jaan Valsiner
Department of Communication and Psychology
Aalborg University
Aalborg, Denmark

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences will fill in the gap in the existing coverage of links between new theoretical advancements in the social and human sciences and their historical roots. Making that linkage is crucial for the interdisciplinary synthesis across the disciplines of psychology, anthropology, sociology, history, semiotics, and the political sciences. In contemporary human sciences of the 21st there exists increasing differentiation between neurosciences and all other sciences that are aimed at making sense of the complex social, psychological, and political processes. Thus new series has the purpose of (1) coordinating such efforts across the borders of existing human and social sciences, (2) providing an arena for possible inter-disciplinary theoretical syntheses, (3) bring into attention of our contemporary scientific community innovative ideas that have been lost in the dustbin of history for no good reasons, and (4) provide an arena for international communication between social and human scientists across the World.

More information about this series at http://www.springer.com/series/15826

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Bo Allesøe Christensen
Editor

The Second Cognitive Revolution

A Tribute to Rom Harré

Springer

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Editor
Bo Allesøe Christensen
Department of Communication and Psychology
Aalborg University
Aalborg, Denmark

ISSN 2523-8663 ISSN 2523-8671 (electronic)
Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences
ISBN 978-3-030-26679-0 ISBN 978-3-030-26680-6 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019
This work is subject to copyright. All rights are reserved by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.
The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.
The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

This Springer imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Rom Harré, 2019. Image courtesy of Fathali M. Moghaddam.

This book is dedicated to the intellectual legacy of Rom Harré.

...a philosopher is a man who senses as it were hidden crevices in the build of our concepts where others only see the smooth path of commonplaceness before them.
Friedrich Waissman, *How I See Philosophy*

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Series Editor's Preface

On the Border of Normativity—and Beyond

This volume is not merely a celebration of the life work of a remarkable thinker whose travels across the divide of philosophy and psychology have provided a new outlook for the latter, but also a milestone for innovating our understanding of the human mind within society. The movement of 'Second Cognitive Revolution' in psychology led to the understanding of the normative nature of the human mind—thus giving human psychology a specific focus that psychology of non-human species does not have. It leads to the investigation into uniquely human psychology (as the Yokohama Manifesto outlined—Valsiner, Marsico, Chaudhary, Sato and Dazzani 2016). It opens the door to a new science of general principles of psychology where the universal human propensity for meaning-*making* and meaning-*using* is the centre of the investigation. The centrality of meanings makes psychology normative—as the meanings are suggestive of directions for *how to feel* about something. So, the simple question asked in very many cases—'*how satisfied are you with X*?'—implies the normative decoding of the expectation that the respondent *feels into* X with the *direction* of satisfaction and that feeling can be talked about in terms of some imaginary quantity.

Psychology has been a normative science in two ways. First, its human psychological phenomena are guided by social norms which grow out of our cultural histories. Moral imperatives linger behind our ordinary mundane discussions, actions and imagining of futures. These norms are constantly created and recreated, and they may be explicit or hidden—but they always are there, in our conduct and reflections upon it.

Second, the ways in which psychology approaches its subject matter are normatively structured. As Rom Harré himself (Chap. 18 in this volume, p. 173–184) noted:

> The first cognitive revolution was announced by Jerry Bruner and George Miller in the 1960s. It amounted to the *giving of permission to psychologists to use words* like 'thinking', 'remembering (as something a person does)' and so on in the planning and interpreting of

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

> psychological research into topics of significance. As Bruner ruefully remarked this was inadequate as a revolutionary declaration because it was quickly hi-jacked by computational modellers and neuropsychology, dead ends satisfying only to those who tried to develop a plausible psychology on an inadequate model of science (added emphasis).

The normativity of the field of psychology is demonstrated by the reference to 'giving permission'—it is indeed the case that psychologists over the last two centuries have negotiated socially the borders of permissibility to use one or another word to refer to what they study—all in the name of one meta-word—*science*. In the beginning of the twentieth century, the word thinking became outlawed both in American psychology (Watson 1913) and in Russian physiology (Pavlov fining his co-workers for using mind-related terms). So, in the 1950s, it became rehabilitated—but to our days one can observe avoidance in using the word *thoughts* in cognitive psychology (where the clumsy but 'scientific-looking' equivalent *cognitions* is used instead). Psychology over the twentieth century has been a normative language game—with vocabularies changed as a result of changes in the social power relations but the problem of knowing remaining unresolved.

There is a further paradox in the question—who has the authority to 'give permission' to scientists to think in one or another way? The act of giving permissions is a legal power act—and in that popes, kings, generals, presidents, judges and CEOs, of course, have the authority of political power to give permissions in general. But all these power-holders are by their nature incompetent in the matters of knowledge advancement—*Wissenschaft*. So, to accept their permission-giving role for science means to make science dis-guided by extra-scientific social powers. To avoid that scientific establishments have created their own social power institutions—yet the question of the epistemological role of 'giving permission' for thinking or doing science in new ways remains open. I claim that the 'permission' to think in terms of thinking that Watson (1913) introduced into psychology has delayed development in the field in substantial ways, and it is only with the Second Cognitive Revolution that psychology can proceed forward from the state it reached in the early twentieth century.

As the readers of this volume will learn, Rom Harré has been both a creative constructor of the new humankind of psychology and an intelligent critic of the rhetoric ills of the old versions of the discipline—be these behavioural or cognitive in focus. Where would Harré's work lead us for further building up the future of the discipline? An obvious first answer to this question is—to the study of ways and functions of the construction of the norm structures of the phenomena. Of course, that has already been done in social psychology (Dost-Gözkan and Sonmez Keith 2015; Sherif 1936), but it has not been integrated into the regular research practices. What I mean here—our regular practices of '**I study X through methods Y**' needs to be modified into '**I study X *that exists due to the normative structure A-B-C*—through methods Y**'. This would bring the hidden dialogues within the phenomena directly into the focus of ongoing empirical research and illuminates the findings obtained by Y.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

A brief example should make this distinction clear. If a researcher studies aggressive conduct (X) in human beings using behavioural observations (Y) in public settings, the traditional focus of the study would be straightforward—similar to the study of aggressive behaviours in rats, dogs or primates. Aggressive acts of directly visible kind—threats, hitting and screaming of insults—would be recorded. These acts are interpreted as direct evidence of 'inherent aggressivity' in the persons under study.

In contrast, a researcher who approaches the study of aggression in public settings from the perspective of normative mediation would begin from the analysis of the normative expectations for conduct in each of the public settings. Acts of aggression towards fellow human beings can be found in our myth stories and illustrated by artists (Fig. 1). Aggression in public—an exhibition of public punishment by beating, by throwing stones at the culprit (in Islamic Shariah Law), public executions—is the displays of aggression that for centuries are used in human societies to maintain its normative order and promote its internalisation.

Thus, human aggression is normatively specific to different settings. Some of them—public demonstrations that are countered by law enforcement specialists—normatively enhance acts of aggression. Most other settings inhibit it. The research target in this case becomes the transformation of the conduct of an ordinary person—a soccer fan looking at soccer matches on TV without any aggression—into an active member of his favourite club's fan team who travels long distances to engage in fist fighting with members of the opposite team's fan club. The same person moves from normative inhibition of his aggression to its equally normative exhibition. Demonstrating that contrast in conduct would verify the normative basis for human aggression but would not reveal its mechanisms. For the latter, it would be important to study the same person who needs to politely—without aggression—solve conflict resolution tasks. It is precisely the use of non-aggression in normative settings that allows the researcher to study the meaning-making (and meaning-use) of human beings. The microgenesis of withholding aggressive means of conduct in a conflict setting by a person who in other settings is known to act aggressively is the way of discovering the peace production processes at personal levels.

The second normativity—that of the ways of studying the phenomena (normativity of science)—requires careful philosophical investigation (Valsiner 2019). It is open to social inputs at the level of metadigms (Yurevich 2009) that guide the moves from 'normal' to 'revolutionary' science—in the terminology of Thomas Kuhn. In other terms, paradigms (as norm systems for how to do science) are themselves normatively guided (what kind of science and how—to do?). Again, the fact that they are guided does not need more proof—but the ways in which these normative systems can be transformed into new forms would allow for an understanding of how innovation can happen in science. We need to know what kind of normative changes make scientific innovation possible.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Fig. 1 Photographic reproduction of Albrecht Dürer's *Die Geißelung* or *The Large Passion: 3. Flagellation of Christ*. Retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Durer,_la_grande_passione_03.jpg. In the public domain

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

The readers of this volume will find much detailed material on various issues of both kinds of normativity in this volume. The contributions by Rom Harré to the making of new science of the human ways of being receive their much deserved intellectual scrutiny in this book.

June 2019 Jaan Valsiner

References

Dost-Gözkan, A. & Sonmez Keith, D. (Eds.) (2015). *Norms, groups, conflict and social change: Rediscovering Muzafer Sherif's psychology*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Sherif, M. (1936). *Psychology of social norms*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Valsiner, J. (Ed.) (2019). *Social philosophy of science for the social sciences*. New York: Springer.

Valsiner, J., Marsico, G., Chaudhary, N., Sato, T., and Dazzani, V. (Eds.) (2016). *Psychology as the science of human being*. Cham: Springer.

Watson, J. B. (1913). Psychology as the behaviorist views it. *Psychological Review*, *20,* 158–177.

Yurevich, A (2009). Cognitive frames in psychology: Demarcations and ruptures. *IPBS: Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science*, *43*, 89–10.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Contents

1 Harré's Revolutions 1
Bo Allesøe Christensen

Part I Personal Being

2 Personal Reflections on Rom Harré 17
Fathali M. Moghaddam

3 Rom Harré, Positioning Theory and the Social Sciences: A Personal and Sympathetic Portrait 27
Patrick Baert

4 Rom Harré on Personal Agency 35
Jack Martin

5 What Is It to Be a Human Being? Rom Harré on Self and Identity 43
Jens Brockmeier

Part II Social Science and Positioning Theory

6 The Social Philosophy of Harré as a Philosophy of Culture 53
Steen Brock

7 The Discursive Ontology of the Social World 63
Luk Van Langenhove

8 A Constructionist Conversation with Positioning Theory 73
Kenneth J. Gergen

9 Revisiting *Greenspeak* 81
Peter Mühlhäusler

10 Governmental Power and Positioning of Marginalized People 89
Daniel Rothbart

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Part III Psychology as a Normative Science

11 Ethics in Socio-cultural Psychologies 101
Ivana Marková

12 Psychiatry as a Hybrid Discipline 111
G. E. Berrios

13 Rom Harré as a Moral Philosopher 121
Svend Brinkmann

14 The Social Construction of Emotions 131
W. Gerrod Parrott

15 Discursive Cognition and Neural Networks 141
Grant Gillett

Part IV Wittgenstein and Psychology

16 Harré and Hinges—Metaphysics of Ungrounded Foundations 151
Bo Allesøe Christensen

17 Psychology and Non-sense: Schizophrenese as Example 161
Rupert Read and Bo Allesøe Christensen

18 On the Soul, the Death of the Soul, and the Nature of Evil 173
P. M. S. Hacker

Commentary on the Contributions 185
Rom Harré

Index 193

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Editor and Contributors

About the Editor

Bo Allesøe Christensen is an Assistant Professor at Aalborg University, Department of Communication and Psychology, and affiliated with the Research Centre for Cultural Psychology. He has a Ph.D. from Aarhus University, Denmark, where he also taught at the Institute of Philosophy and History of Ideas, and the Danish School of Education. His main work revolves around understanding the notion of experience in its different everyday aspects using an interdisciplinary framework. Related interests include philosophy of human sciences and re-interpreting social philosophical ideas such as recognition within digital media studies. He has published on journals like *Philosophical Investigations, Transformative Works and Cultures* and *Cultural Analysis.*

Contributors

Patrick Baert Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK

G. E. Berrios Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK

Svend Brinkmann Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark

Steen Brock Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark

Jens Brockmeier The American University of Paris, Paris, France

Bo Allesøe Christensen Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark;
Institute of Communication and Psychology, Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark

Kenneth J. Gergen Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, USA

Grant Gillett University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

P. M. S. Hacker University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

Rom Harré University of Oxford, Oxford, UK;
Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., USA

Ivana Marková University of Stirling, Stirling, UK

Jack Martin Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada

Fathali M. Moghaddam Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., USA

Peter Mühlhäusler Supernumerary Fellow, Linacre College, Oxford, UK;
University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia

W. Gerrod Parrott Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., USA

Rupert Read University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK

Daniel Rothbart George Mason University, Fairfax, USA

Luk Van Langenhove Vrije Universteit Brussel, Brussel, Belgium

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 1
Harré's Revolutions

Bo Allesøe Christensen

In December 2017 professor Rom Harré turned 90 years old. What better opportunity exist to reflect on and celebrate an astonishing career spanning more than 60 years of original contributions to philosophy and the development of human and social sciences. The aim of this book is celebrating Rom and his huge influence on psychology through contributions made by colleagues, former students and admirers.

Rom Harré was born in the city Apiti in the region of Manawatu, New Zealand, in 1927. Graduating from the then University of New Zealand (now University of Auckland) in chemical engineering and mathematics (Bsc) in 1948 and with a MA in philosophy (1952), he did his post-grad work in the mid-fifties reading for a B. Phil at University College, Oxford, having J. L. Austin as supervisor (Hall 2015; van Langenhove 2010; Harré 1990). Oxford in the 1940s and 1950s was a powerhouse of philosophy. Besides Austin there were Gilbert Ryle, Friedrich Waismann, P.F. Strawson and indirectly Wittgenstein (who was at Cambridge), all protagonists in emphasising the analysis of ordinary language as a means to knowledge. This 'approach' later served as the philosophical background of Harré's ethogenic perspective and development of discursive psychology and positioning theory (see Parrott this volume). Upon finishing in philosophy Harré became lecturer at the University of Leicester from 1957–1959. In 1960 he succeeded Friedrich Waismann as lecturer in the philosophy of science at Oxford, and was five years later elected fellow of Linacre college, also at Oxford. It was here in the 1960s he became interested in psychology, following Michael Argyle's seminars. This spurred the idea and development of a post-positivist and post-experimental conception of psychology, combining the aforementioned focus on ordinary language with the micro-sociological approaches connected with Ervin Goffman and Harold Garfinkel resulting in the ethogenic approach (Harré 1977, and Harré's comment,

B. A. Christensen (✉)
Institute of Communication and Psychology, Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark
e-mail: boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_1

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

this volume). While at Oxford Harré picked up the habit of teaching at Georgetown University every spring. And when he retired from Oxford in 1995, he joined the psychology department at Georgetown University, Washington D.C. teaching and researching fulltime until his retirement in 2016. Spanning a career of more than 60 years, Harré has been engaged in profound academic activity. He has produced (and still is!) an exceptional number of academic books and articles, having a huge influence on academic disciplines from philosophy of physics to psychology, as well as being a beloved colleague and treasured teacher.

Personally, I first met Rom when I visited Georgetown University in 2012. He struck me as a very warm and friendly old gentleman spirited by an openness and inclusiveness, even inviting me to take part of book discussion club with Jack Copeland and Diana Proudfoot reading Wittgenstein's lectures on the foundations of mathematics. Furthermore, I attended, with 40 or so students, Harré's lectures on Wittgenstein and psychology, and noticed his familiarity with and openness towards the students' everyday world—references to Harry Potter, tv series and sports were presented as contextual examples making Wittgenstein easier to understand. I am not alone in having this overall impression. It is expressed in the recollections of the encounters this book's contributors' have had and still have with professor Harré. Encounters perhaps best captured in a phrase (alluding to a similar phrase used by Harré and Secord (1972) by Jonathan Smith about Harré, namely "meetings with an open soul". In Harré and Secord's book openness referred to the responsibility of the researcher not explaining (away) the accounts people provide for what they do, but to take these accounts seriously, though not uncritically. In Rom's case this applies to his being as a researcher, teacher and colleague.

This openness is present in Harré's writings also; writings best described as products of an overall exploration, and often collaborative, of the human *Umwelt* (Harré 1990). Within psychology this exploration has contributed to establishing what Harré terms a second cognitive revolution; the most recent of three prevailing paradigms of scientific psychology (Harré 1992, 1994; Harré and Gillett 1994). In the first paradigm, "Psychology is the statistical study of relations between 'objectively' and abstractly described in-puts and out-puts to an idealized human individual." (Harré 1994, 25) Dominating the psychology departments in the 1940s and 1950s, the followers of this behaviourist approach considered the 'mind' as something private or subjective. As such 'mind' was not to play any part in a scientific psychology. It was superfluous because it could be treated as reducible to the same principles as overt behavior.

According to Harré the next paradigm revolted against this behaviourism and experimentalism, in what he terms the first cognitive revolution. An example of this was the work done by Jeremy Bruner and others (at the Center for Cognitive Studies at Harvard), claiming the necessity of operating with a notion of mind as an ineliminable part of psychology and the social sciences. Psychology was "… the creation and testing of hypothetico-deductive theories describing unobserved and even unobservable mental processes the nature of which is given for most who adhere to this view by the analogy between the brain and a computer and thinking

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

and the running of programmes." (ibid.) Hence, the mind was understood as operating 'behind' peoples' saying and doing, with the executed processes—influenced by the mesmerising and incipient computer-technology of the time—often compared to a kind of information-processing. The mind was, to put it briefly, a CPU, a Central Programming Unit similar to the computer's. Harré (1992, 5) notes that comparisons like that often led to a (taken as self-evident) justification for applying natural scientific methods to the study of mind. As the tracks in the cloud chamber are caused by ionizing particles, so the statements people make and the emotions displayed, are caused by a shadow world of cognitive information being processed. In contrast to behaviourism and its focus on overt behaviour, we have here a focus on the covert mind, or a 'mind behind the mind'. This cognitive mind was to be made explicit through explanatory (hypothetic-deductive) procedures, often continuing the experimental programme of behaviourism (or other natural scientific experimental models), but now through the testing of cognitive hypotheses (Harré 1994, 26). For both paradigms, however, human beings, "…whether as individuals or groups, are explicitly implicitly taken to be passive, mere spectators of processes over which they have no control." (Harré 1994, 25). For Harré this re-introduces the highly abstract and atomized picture of the human mind we associate with the Cartesian mind of mental states and processes.

The third paradigm, Harré's second cognitive revolution, aims at extricating cognition from a supposed foundation in individual minds. Instead minds are to be understood as emanating through people participating in cultural and material practices using public discourses. Harré also terms this revolution a 'discursive turn' (1994, 27) with a concomitant focus on the discursive mind (Harré and Gillett 1994). This has the following consequences. Firstly, ontologically speaking there is no central processing mechanism, or cognition, located within people's heads. As an often expressed *bon mot* by Harré goes, there is nothing within people's heads but brains. Instead cognitive implies a study of "…the active use of symbolic systems of various kinds by active and skilled human beings in public and private contexts, for the accomplishments of various tasks and projects, jointly with others." (Harré 1994, 27–28). Second, against the Cartesian view of human beings as passive, Harré therefore emphasised the active nature of human beings, engaging in collaborative projects using different tools carrying out different tasks, always according to local rules and norms (Harré 1999, 43–46). Minds, then, are inherently cultural, precipitating from symbolic mediated transactions, discursive practices involving rights and duties, engaging with other people and the world (Christensen 2013, 88). Third, for Harré this implies a focus on *persons* with appertaining beliefs, attitudes, memories, emotions, and ratiocinations having their being as *attributes* of the public and private activities these persons engage in. So, while psychological phenomena are collective, the capabilities to bring them into being are personal. Persons thereby become the central location of social acts (Harré and van Langehove 1999, 15). The private and public activities are, furthermore, normative, in that they consist of rights, duties, responsibilities and commitments whereby people can *position* themselves and others, intentionally and unintentionally, in particular concrete, and thus *ordered*, socio-material contexts. This idea

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

of combining normativity and a sense of location, as ordered positionings, is expressed as a dynamic alternative to the more static idea of a role. A role, as a pre-given characteristic part of a particular social setting, resembles the aforementioned covert mind, only it is now a 'social mind behind the mind'. Against this we should, according to Harré, consider psychological phenomena and the discursive mind as conversational. As different perspectives are mediated and remediated through the exchange of speech-acts in conversational turn-taking, we acquire an understanding of each other and the world (a sense of I, You and It) by becoming aware of what we do and can do as relative to different kinds of discursive positionings. Fourth, the second cognitive revolution thus presents a broad and facetted picture of psychology as *cultural psychology* in the sense that any investigation of the mind must study its mediation and remediation through symbolic or discursive cultural practices.

What emerges from this brief description of the move to a second cognitive revolution, is Harré's unique, personal and original voice investigating the frontiers of social science and psychology. Harré has through his astonishing work in psychology, and often in collaboration with others, helped restore a living conception of psychology, with people engaging each other in real concrete situations and not laboratory spaces. Emphasising the material and cultural-historical parts of people's lives as a significant matter in understanding their minds, he combines an acute sensitivity towards material-sociocultural specificities with a broad theoretical erudition, making him a renaissance man of psychology.

The book has been divided into four sections each covering significant notions and topics within Harré's second cognitive revolution: personal being, social science and positioning theory, psychology as a normative science, and Wittgenstein and psychology. In addition, Harré kindly agreed to comment briefly on the contributions, relating their topics to his long and impressive career. Harré's thinking forms a whole with its different parts intertwined, and thus some of the topics and central concepts discussed in the contributions necessarily overlap across the four separate sections.

Personal Being

The notion of a person occupies a central role in Harré's psychology. Persons, and persons interacting, are the nodes connecting discursive practices, and function, according to Harré, as the basic entities of psychology. Harré's notion of person holds a number of important characteristics. First, for Harré only persons can be said to have the power to act in the human world, and by default to account for what they do. Persons have the power to engage with the world, and through reflection justify this engagement. Second, these acts can only be accounted for, when they are conceived as socially recognised episodes. Harré uses a distinction between act and action to describe how individual acts are picked up and interpreted using social, meaningful orders. In this sense (the act of) waving your hand, is understood

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

as relative to different meaningful (cultural) ordered situations (as actions reaching the bus driver's attention or departing with a loved one, for example). Hence the accountability in question relates not only to the person acting but also to the persons taking part in the situation in which the act occurs. Accountability, thus, takes place on the background of concrete social episodes, involving acts of justification using language. Harré often uses the notion of conversation for this, meaning, in addition to the exchange of speech acts, any flow of interactions brought about by the use of a public symbolic system. (Harré 1983, 65) This flow of interactions, is taken as evolving between embodied persons. People exist, van Langenhove (2010, 153) claims, as embodied persons both to themselves and others. Third, becoming a person, i.e. achieving the personhood distinguishing people from one another, is appropriated individually from the network of symbiotic interactions people take part in, the most important of which is, again, conversation (Harré 1983, 20). Baert in his contribution points towards two interesting examples of 'achieving personhood'. The first relates to his interactions with Harré as a student in Oxford. The second delves into Baert's own research into the sociology of intellectuals, showing how Sartre developed a 'political personhood' by engaging in conversation with the notions of social and political responsibility developed at that time. Baert argues that this shows that Harré's account is in need of adding a more performative approach. Harré's account of the notion of a person, we might say, was therefore critical of cognitive theories devaluing the role of social and physical dimensions within psychology, especially how singular persons emerge from the concrete conversations and discourses they participate in. As Moghaddam expresses it in his contribution, Harré thereby saw a need to give priority to a 'social social-psychology' and especially in its 'narrative-discursive' version. Thus, becoming a person is also related to accounting for one's life, as an *auto-biographical* endeavour. Furthermore, Harré's criticism aimed also at social constructionist theories failing to consider the independence of the social and physical reality people engage with in conversations. Conversations and discourses are, for example, filled with pre-given rules and norms people can break intentionally and non-intentionally, with different kinds of consequences as results. And lastly, since persons emerge from, and are sustained by appropriating the discursive practices they partake in, Harré criticised notions of subjectivity, i.e. of mind, identity and self, related to the disengaged and passive Cartesian version of mental states and processes. Brockmeier, in his contribution, discusses Harré's notion of self and identity as dynamic fictions, in they take form (and change their form) in the ongoing flow of activities that people produce in interaction with one another. However, as Brockmeier notes, this makes it difficult to uphold a stable conception of self and identity (hence of a person) , because how do you conceptually fix what is fluid and fictitious? The answer is that these concepts are not descriptions of our identities, but explorations of what it is, for a person, to be a human being. Brockmeier elaborates this paying attention to how the 'quest' of becoming a person, can be supplied through an exploration of the conceptual affordances provide for us by the historicity of our discursive practices. Martin claims, in his contribution, that Harré has been enormously influential in providing a platform for

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

the psychological theorization of persons. And especially as embodied and socio-culturally constituted actors with self-consciousness, personal identity, and personal agency. Nonetheless he argues for extending Harré's approach by incorporating a neo-Meadian account of personal agency. Fathali Moghaddam's contribution is an example of the *auto-biographical* endeavour alluded to above. Weaving together personal encounters with Rom, his experience of the historical event of the revolution in Iran, as well as the development of social psychology in Europe, Moghaddam tells a fascinating and vivid tale of life. Moghaddam's narrative thereby exemplifies how it is through the active participation in and reflexive experience of different and fragmented 'life-situations', or social episodes, that a sense of continuous but dynamic identity is achieved.

Social Science and Positioning Theory

A brief outline of the development of Harré's thinking about social science involved: in the 1970s, presenting the ethogenic view on humans in social psychology incorporating, as described above, linguistic philosophy and microsociological approaches. During the 1980s Harré developed a differentiated understanding of the human being incorporating personal, corporeal, and social aspects of humans' lives as part of psychology (Harré 1983, 1991, 1979/1993). This informed the development in the 1990s by Harré and colleagues of the discursive approach to psychology and positioning theory (Harré and Langenhove 1991, 1999; Harré and Moghaddam 2003), used within both philosophy, and social scientific approaches studying *inter alia* conflicts, analyses of power relations, even economical contexts (Christensen 2013) and narrative structures of specific discourses like talk of the environment. As van Langenhove explains the ontology behind this discursive approach is three-fold: the first is directly observable and consist of the actual conversations and the enlarged conversational umwelt together with the social artefacts that surround people. People operate here as visible and powerful agents. The second consists of the social artifacts but also of non-observable fields created by speech acts that influence what people *can* do, as a kind of distributed knowledge, and are *allowed* to do, the normative orders providing a dispersion of rights and duties within different social fields. The third consists of social icons that are used by people to refer to certain aspects of the primary and secondary social reality. Icons are not representations, but are ascribed powers in themselves, hence function as active powers. Every 'moment' or 'occasion' of a positioning, a triad of positions, actions and narratives are taken up potentially involving all three parts of the ontology. Mühlhäusler and Rothbart both present studies within the ontology presented by van Langenhove, on the notion of greenspeak and positioning of marginalized people respectively. Mühlhäusler revisits the book he co-authored with Rom Harré and Jens Brockmeier, *Greenspeak*, critically studying the discourses on environment carried out by both by environmentalists, non-environmentalist and anti-environmentalist speakers.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

The book played a significant part in establishing *eco-linguistics* as a discipline, analysing the role of notions like diversity, sustainability and linear versus cyclical time as part of people's discursive engagement with the environment they are part of. Rothbart's contribution exemplifies the increasing use of positioning theory within conflict analysis, analysing the contested nature of how governments exert disciplinary control over the governed. Rothbart analyses the discourse on illegal immigrants and how they are positioned by state agencies and politicians, using systems of positioning that state agencies carefully craft and strategically deploy. Rothbart thereby underscores the critical dimension of positioning analysis, showing how power is used to humiliate certain groups systematically. A much-discussed part of positioning and discursive psychology is its constructionist foundation, i.e. how discourses do not represent a pregiven reality but rather construct it. One significant discussion here has focused on the extension of the idea of construction, how far can we, ontologically, be said to construct the reality we partake in. Gergen presents a year's long discussion he has carried on with Harré concerning realism in science. For Gergen our scientific accounts of the world are not determined or required by 'what there is.' Rather, 'facts' are pragmatically understood as created and agreed to by scientists helping them executing their research practices. In this sense, Gergen argues, his version of constructionism can prove useful for future developments in positioning theory. For positioning theory, at the end of the day, still suffers from a conservative underpinning, not questioning the way rights and duties are distributed, or whether the distribution favours those in power. Dispensing with facts as independent and instead seeing them as construed, opens new spaces for theorizing and provides a concrete way of challenging unjust or exploitative moral orders.

Lately Harré has engaged, again with a number of colleagues, in developing a hybrid conception of psychology, working against a dominant scientific trend of reducing psychological descriptions to natural scientific explanations. Instead cultural psychology and natural sciences discursively reflect the *hybrid* character of psychological phenomena expressed through different kinds of grammars. It thereby combines the intentional agency expressed through discursive psychology and causal agency connected with the material ground for our physical being, by understanding how evolved responses are shaped by cultural practices. In Harré's terms active powers and powerful actors come together (Harré 2001). For Brock this lays the ground for Harré's philosophy of culture involving the intertwining of nature, social and personal being. On this background Brock reconstructs Harré's socio-cultural philosophy through two steps. First, he discusses why one should include features of Harré's natural philosophy herein. Second, he explores a Harréan cultural conception of individuality. As to the first point, Brock underscores that Harré's philosophy of nature shows that material grounds for causal understanding are connected to the emergence of discourses in general. That is, the *reality* of discursively mediated affairs is described as a way in which natural, corporal beings are cultivated, and concrete actions become social acts. Second, Brock claims that culture thereby is an ongoing transformation of the unfolding web of human practices. Thus, the skills needed for upholding such practices are also in

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

a constant process of change. Brock's conclusion is, that people can only become persons because they are already in the process of becoming *people*.

Psychology as a Normative Science

Based on the topics already covered, it comes as no surprise that normativity plays a central role in Harré's conception of psychology. It is a consequence of the move towards the second cognitive revolution and the concomitant focus on the dispersion of rules, rights and responsibilities as providing a dispersed normative 'grid' by which positioning is enacted. Besides making words meaningful by expressing a correct/incorrect dimension of the use of words, normativity is also, through its inherent connection with forms of sanctioning, what makes rules binding. In this sense even identifying psychological phenomena, is understanding it and being able to account for it (correctly/incorrectly) as relative to a certain contextual order. What pain means and how it is identified, for example, varies according to whether it is expressed in the gym, at the dentist or at a funeral. When psychological phenomena are normative, then it follows, that they cannot be explained or understood using natural scientific methods only. At least not if we wish to understand the phenomena on its own level, and not reducing it to another, e.g. trying to understand the pain expressed at a funeral by measuring brainwaves. We might express it in the following way: whereas laws of nature express properties, rules express proprieties. In a number of books from the already mentioned book with Secord (Harré and Secord 1972) through Harré et al. (1985), his monumental work on Realism (Harré 1986) to the recent hybrid psychology (Harré and Moghaddam 2012), Harré has discussed how the understanding of psychology as a normative science can be conjoined with psychological phenomena as natural phenomena as well. Harré is here part of a long tradition within social sciences trying to understand human beings by avoiding naturalistic reductionisms, i.e. reducing phenomena to explanations given by natural sciences, as well as rampant idealisms, disregarding or diminishing the value of human biology, or of any empirical relation between human beings and the world (Risjord 2016; Valsiner et al. 2016). Recent discussions of the 'normative turn' in social science and humanities (Turner 2007, 2013; Rouse 2002, 2007), have emphasised how the effort of creating a scientific frame reconciling normativity and a naturalistic conception of the world, often relies on arguing for a kind of liberal or modest naturalism, allowing for a kind of normativity. However, as is also noted, in many cases this actually leads to establishing yet another untenable dualism between these, only at a different level instead. For example, we might realise that phenomena we associate with both nature and culture has a factual character. So, we might claim our judiciary system is providing examples of normative facts through decisions establishing precedence for future cases. Yet, behind our backs this posits a distinction between natural and normative facts we then will have to deal with (Berrios notes in his contribution the same challenge, only here it is a distinction between mental and physical illness). For Harré the reconciliation of normativity and a

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

naturalistic conception of the world is particularly obvious in establishing the notion of hybrid psychology (Harré and Moghaddam 2012), in his discussions of varieties of realism and perhaps also in the notion of a hinge, the combination of an empirical relation to reality and its articulation in normativity constrained propositions.

For Ivana Markova, Harré's emphasis on normativity serves as the basis for an epistemological redefinition of social psychology as a human discipline. Humans are not passive information processing machines, but agents taking up moral stances distributing rights and duties to one another. This provides the basis for Markova presenting the ethical importance of Harré's positioning theory comparing it with Vygotky's socio-cultural approach and Moscovici's theory of social representations. All three approaches present the moral and ethical dimension of human affairs as involving self-other interdependences. Yet, they are underlain by different traditions: Harré's theory is rooted on speech act theory and Wittgensten's ideas of language, Vygotsky by Spinoza and Moscovici by Pascal, Spinoza and Durkheim. Markova concludes that it is their conjoint presence that makes them exceptional in advancing social knowledge, and relevant in how features of morality and ethics can be understood in professional practices. G. E. Berrios picks up on how Harré's view on natural and social sciences can illuminate problems within the epistemology of psychiatry, and especially concerning its hybrid character. Berrios analyses the notion of 'mental illness' delineating its conceptual history, and considers it a *sui generis* concept, because it has a hybrid structure combining descriptions and prescriptions from natural and social sciences respectively. Historically, however, the concept of mental illness became increasingly naturalised eventually anchoring psychiatric objects in modern day neurobiology. Considering symptoms as caused by biological mechanisms, neglects any focus on psychogenesis. Berrios then considers the Cambridge model of the hybrid structure of psychiatry and its objects. The advantage of this model is its acceptance of the neurobiological basis of mental symptoms, while still emphasising the role of cultural and interactional configurators, occasionally transforming the same biological signal into a different mental symptom and vice versa. Like Berrios, Grant Gillett argues in his contribution against reductive neuroscientific models picturing human exchanges with each other and the world on computational functions. Gillett follows Harré in understanding these kinds of models as abstractions from the concrete social situated interactions people engage in, contributing to their self-formation. The possibility of self-making 'lifts' human nature and psychology out of the natural realm humans have in common with animals, making the attainment of personal being, a second nature, possible. For Gillett, Harré's discursive analysis takes our self-forming work seriously, embedding the view that the human intellect and capacity for social and relational activity creates an order of natural and species-specific modes of epigenetic adaptation, not shared in non-discursive animals. This presents a more inclusive framing for understanding human beings, supplying a narrow and limited neuroscientific analysis with a much-needed analysis of discourses with which we aim to realise ourselves with and within. With a focus on self-formation, or perhaps the more Kantian *autonomy*, we enter a moral territory because this formation takes place in a social context. Svend Brinkmann

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

discusses, in his contribution, Harré's thinking as a moral philosophy and especially how it relates to empirical psychological research. Stressing how already Aristotle saw the need to combine causal and normative theories in the study of mental life, Brinkmann notes how psychological sciences in our times have been dominated by causal approaches. But Harré's thinking remedies this. And though Harré has urged people to move forward to Aristotle, it is more Wittgenstein which is his prime inspiration in working out a more *hybrid* psychology for the third millennium: basically, that neuroscientific descriptions complement the normative descriptions of people's actions. Brinkmann ends his contribution by asking how we are to understand the norms that order social life: as socially constructed, relative to cultures or at least some of them as universal? Answering this question, Brinkmann argues that Harré's normative psychology can take advantage of Michael Holiday's work. Drawing on Wittgenstein, Holiday claims that at the core of our language use is certain universal sources of normativity, and it is this which makes conversation, and thus our discursive activity possible. Harré, then, has laid the ground for re-thinking psychology as a moral science. Jerry Parrott, in his contribution, picks up the question of how cognition in the second cognitive revolution is connected to emotion. In mid-twentieth century psychological studies of emotion were not common, and when it was addressed, it was understood more as a topic of biology, than of cognition, language and culture. Parrot notes, that in the beginning of the 1980s Harré made a significant contribution in changing this, laying the ground for understanding emotions as socially and culturally constructed. This was continued in the 1990s in the joint work of Parrott and Harré, trying to bridge the gap between Harré's ethogenic approach and biology focusing on the way evolved responses are shaped by cultural practices. By necessity this paved the way for the study of emotion as an interdisciplinary research field, with disciplines like history, literature, sociology etc., contributing to elucidating how emotions function socially, culturally and biologically. As Parrott ends, Harré thus also contributed to the *emotion revolution* or 'the affective turn' which took place in the late 20th century, showing yet another side of his enormous academic versatility.

Wittgenstein and Psychology

The last topic concerns one of the most significant interlocutors to Harré's thinking, namely Ludwig Wittgenstein. The influence of Wittgenstein can be discerned in most of Harré's writings on psychology from the early one with Secord and onwards. This influence is less based on the work published in Wittgenstein's own lifetime, the *Tractatus*, and more on the post-humous writings *Philosophical Investigations* and *On Certainty*. Harré draws on a number of Wittgensteinian concepts, like 'language-game', 'everyday', 'language-use', 'grammar' and 'rule', to provide new insights into psychology. For Harré, Wittgenstein is one of the main instigators in moving psychology towards the second cognitive revolution, and

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

especially as a critical voice of the Cartesian hypothesis of an 'immaterial mind' as the seat of thoughts and feelings.

Relating thoughts, feelings and their linguistic and symbolic expressions with an immaterial and disengaged mind, is abstracting from the uses of language and symbols in everyday life, failing to understand how thoughts and feelings are subject to ever-changing clusters of norms, and sensitive to different kinds of contexts. This 'abstraction' often leads to conceptual confusions in need of being dissolved through a process reminding us of how words and concepts are actually used in these contexts. One example of this is abstracting an essential or underlying meaning from the use of the same word in different contexts. 'Rule', for example, is used in certain contexts as a form of instruction, as when a football coach explains how to carry out a certain action claiming 'you should do this', 'try to do this' etc. Here the 'rule' has the character of a 'instructional command' you obey to reach the goal, or aim of the coaching session. In other cases, 'rule' is often used to express the binding force of some convention, or how a custom is obligatory. Saying 'As a rule we do this…' as part of a military drill is not meant as something which can be negotiated, or giving you a choice either obeying the rule or not, it means *do this*! Reminding us of these different kinds of uses becomes a sort of *therapy*; it helps us resist proposing essentialist hidden or implicit 'rule following' procedures explaining the orderliness of how our thinking and feeling takes place in different circumstances. As Harré (2006, 244) claims, the use of a word like 'rule' might involve some family resemblances, for example across different contexts of learning, but it would be a mistake to abstract from these contexts one particular use claiming this as the 'original', 'most essential' or 'hidden' use. 'Obeying' a rule' might in certain cases just consist in carrying out the proper behaviour—doing what the drill sergeant tells you—while thinking of something entirely different. As mentioned above, there is no 'mind behind the mind', only the mind embodied and enacted through different practices across different sociocultural contexts, and expressed through the use of different symbolic orders. So, the notion of a rule, as Harré claims, is a tool we use to "…express the explicit formulation of the implicit standards of correctness that are displayed in the practices of a culture." (Harré 2006, 244) Another implication of this is that we cannot model rule-following on natural causation. For in our appeal to norms and rules as expressions of the orderliness of psychological phenomena, we are not *explaining* people's (psychological) doings as if norms were causes of these doings. Rather, we are describing how 'following a rule' is committing people to perform a certain action, not predicting they will actually do it, nor claiming it causes them to do it. Wittgenstein thus, in Harré's perspective, provides us with powerful method(s) of describing and identifying psychological phenomena, as our brief example of 'rule-following' indicates, as well as reminding us how and why our depictions of psychological phenomena can go wrong.

Harré can therefore be placed in a tradition going back to Winch (1958) with other champions counting, among others, Pleasants (1999), Schulte (1993), Read (2012), and Hutchinson, Read and Sharrock (2008). Common to these is discussing and presenting a general significance of Wittgenstein's thinking for social science and humanities. And if we add a few of Harré's fellow psychologist like Kenneth

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Gergen and John Shotter, also for cultural psychology in particular. Bo A. Christensen in his contribution discusses and analyses what he claims looks like a tension in Harré's adoption of the Wittgensteinian notion of a hinge, i.e. it is presented both as a foundation as well as a means of therapy. Hinge is a concept related to the late Wittgenstein's thinking on psychology associated with the work *On Certainty*. Harré defines a 'hinge' as whatever is able to serve as a source of stable linguistic and social practices, fixing not only the meaning of words but also the propriety of actions. Christensen's analysis shows that instead of being an inconsistency, the assumed tension expresses a subtle Harrean point stressing a relation between foundation and therapy. Namely that therapy provides insights which function in a foundation-like and practical way, continuing a practice but under a different guise. Read and Christensen address how to approach the concept of non-sense from a Wittgensteinian perspective. Analysing one way of approaching the language of schizophrenia, Wolcott's Wittgensteinian inspired sense of schizophrenese, they show how Wolcott's approach resembles a substantial Wittgensteinian interpretation. Criticizing this approach from a New Wittgensteinian perspective, also called a resolute reading, they claim that Wolcott's approach fails to understand the nonsensical character of schizophrenese. Whereas a Harrean approach helps to develop our sensitivities towards the diversity and uniqueness of cultural practices, their analysis shows that certain psychological phenomena cannot be assimilated to concepts of culture and language. Peter Hacker presents in his contribution a subtle reflection adding to his recent development of a philosophical anthropology. Hacker's reflection revolves around contributing to the formation and development of a secular conception of the soul. He bases this reflection on elucidating how the relation between the mind and the soul, as well as the relations between mind and body, and soul and the flesh has been understood throughout history. Drawing on a Platonic conception of the soul, but stripped of its metaphysical and ontological trappings, Hacker argues that this conception fills a lacuna in the Aristotelean concept of the rational psyche, through its insight into human beings and their capability of evil. This, then, is answering to a need of forming a practical and secularised conception of the soul as part of human nature.

Lastly and on a personal note I want to thank all the contributors for their willingness to celebrate Rom and contribute to this book. Furthermore, I want especially to thank Jaan Valsiner, for the encouragement, and Brady Wagoner and Steen Brock for help and support in editing this book.

References

Christensen, B. A. (2013). Connecting experience and economy—aspects of disguised positioning. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science, 47*(1), 77–94.

Hall, D. (2015). The observance and the breach: Rom Harré on life and its rules. Retrieved May 24, 2019, from https://www.pantograph-punch.com/post/rom-harre-philosophy-interview. Accessed, 25/5-2019

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Harré, R., & Secord, P. F. (1972). *The explanation of social behaviour*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
Harré, R. (1977). The ethogenic approach: Theory and practice. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 10,* 283–314.
Harré, R. (1983). *Personal being*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
Harré, R., Clarke, D., & De Carlo, N. (1985). *Motives and mechanisms: An introduction to the psychology of action*. Methuen
Harré, R. (1986). *Varieties of realism*. Blackwell.
Harré, R. (1990). Exploring the human umwelt. In R. Bhaskar (Ed.), *Harré and his critics* (pp. 297–364). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
Harré, R., & van Langehove, L. (1991). Varieties of positioning. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 21*(4), 393–407.
Harré, R. (1991). *Physical being*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
Harré, R. (1992). Introduction: The second cognitive revolution. *American Behavioral Scientist, 36*(1), 5–7.
Harré, R. (1979/1993). *Social being*, 2edn. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
Harré, R., & Gillett, G. (1994). *The discursive mind*. London: Sage Publications.
Harré, R. (1994). Emotion and memory: The second cognitive revolution. *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement, 37,* 25–40.
Harré, R., & van Langehove, L. (1999). *Positioning theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
Harré, R. (1999). The rediscovery of the human mind: The discursive approach. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology, 2,* 43–62.
Harré, R. (2001). Active powers and powerful actors. *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement, 48,* 91–109.
Harré, R., & Moghaddam, F. (2003). *The self and others*. Praeger Publishers.
Harré, R. (2006). *Key thinkers in psychology*. Thousand oaks, California: Sage Publications.
Harré, R., & Moghaddam, F. (2012). *Psychology for the third millenium. Integrating cultural and neuroscience perspectives.*
Hutchinson, P., Read, R., & Sharrock, W. (2008). *There is no such thing as a social science.* London & New York: Routledge
van Langenhove, L. (2010). *People and societies. Rom Harré and designing the social sciences*. London and New York: Routledge
Pleasants, N. (1999). *Wittgenstein and the idea of a critical social theory*. London & New York: Routledge
Read, R. (2012). *Wittgenstein among the sciences*. England: Ashgate.
Risjord, M. (2016). *Normativity and naturalism in the philosophy of the social sciences*. New York: Routledge.
Rouse, J. (2002). *How scientific practices matter: Reclaiming philosophical naturalism*. University of Chicago Press.
Rouse, J. (2007). Social practices and normativity. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 37*(1), 46–56.
Schulte, J. (1993). *Experience and expression. Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Turner, S. P. (2007). Explaining normativity. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 37*(1), 57–73.
Turner, S. P. (2013). *Explaining the normative*. Polity Press.
Valsiner, J., Marsico, G., Chaudhary, N., Sato, T., & Dazzani, V. (2016). *Psychology as the science of human being. The Yokohama manifesto*. Cham: Springer
Winch, P. (1958). *The idea of a social science*. London: Routledge.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Part I
Personal Being

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 2
Personal Reflections on Rom Harré

Fathali M. Moghaddam

And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.

Rom Harré is the original model for Geoffrey Chaucer's Clerk of Oxford. He not only gives himself completely to learning and teaching, but he also magically, joyously and sometimes mischievously integrates scholarship into everyday life. If only Chaucer had become better acquainted with Rom (most observers agree that Geoffrey and Rom did meet, but briefly during a riotous night of drinking at *The Bear Inn*), he would surely have given us a warmer, more humorous and far more luxurious portrait of the Clerk of Oxford.

Rom does position himself as having the threadbare look Chaucer describes, particularly through the judicious use of ancient neckties. However, he also thinks nothing of speeding up to New York to catch an opera, dine at an exquisite Manhattan restaurant and enjoy a night at one of the finer New York hotels before arriving back early the next morning to deliver a perfectly nuanced lecture on Schrödinger's lost cat in Washington D.C. Of course, he weaves in and out of these extravagant experiences wearing a threadbare necktie. Rom is a Clerk of Oxford who makes scholarship sumptuous and fun. The seven books and 45 papers Rom and I co-authored together sprang out of our friendship effortlessly because of his wild enthusiasm and fantastical tales. He tells some of the tallest tales ever heard by intelligent beings, at least on planet earth.

F. M. Moghaddam (✉)
Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., USA
e-mail: moghaddf@georgetown.edu

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_2

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Fragments from a Background

> …my thoughts were soon crippled if I tried to force them in any single direction against their natural inclination. - And this was, of course, connected with the very nature of the investigation. For this compels us to travel over a wide field of thought criss-cross in every direction. (Wittgenstein 1958, p. v)

A kaleidoscope of colorful ideas comes to mind when I think back to my rich education through Rom. The first images are from the mid 1970s, when I was a student exploring fresh new ideas in social psychology and I met Rom, first in print and then in person. He was already a leading European thinker. At that time there were two thrilling and fast-developing movements in European social psychology. Both movements positioned themselves against mainstream social psychology, which was considered by European critics to be dominated by the 'American way of thinking.' However, as I explain in greater detail below, the two different movements in European social psychology had (and continue to have) very different interpretations of what is wrong with mainstream social psychology.

The first European movement that endeavored to 'correct' mainstream social psychology was spearheaded by that larger-then-life personality Henri Tajfel (known as Henry on the continent and Henri in England) in collaboration with Serge Moscovici and others (most of these early pioneers are represented in the edited volume, Israel and Tajfel 1972). This movement led to the establishment of the *European Association of Social Psychology* (1966), the *European Journal of Social Psychology* (1971), a European social psychology book series, conferences and other activities (see Moghaddam 1987). Supporters of this movement attacked mainstream psychology as reductionist and individualistic; they gave priority to the need to develop a more 'social social psychology'.

The most influential research to emerge from this first European social psychology movement has been social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1979), which is part of a wider European effort to shift social psychology toward group and intergroup processes. Indeed, social identity theory is the only part of European social psychology that has deeply penetrated mainstream American social psychology, perhaps in part because the social identity tradition in important ways expands the theoretical coverage of mainstream social psychology *without* challenging mainstream research methodology (Serge Moscovici's social representation theory has also received some attention in North America, but on a far smaller scale than social identity theory).

It is essential to keep in mind that although Tajfel and others in this first European social psychology movement were critical of the conceptual foundations of mainstream social psychology, they accepted and adopted mainstream research methodology. These European researchers tended themselves to use traditional laboratory experimental methods. For example, the empirical springboard for social identity theory was the minimal group paradigm, which is a traditional social psychology laboratory experiment (Tajfel et al. 1971).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

But Rom was spearheading a second European social psychology movement, which rejected both the conceptual foundations and the research methodology of mainstream social psychology, taking particular critical aim at the laboratory method—including the minimal groups paradigm and other traditional methods used by researchers such as Tajfel. Rom was highly active mobilizing researchers in this second movement; his scores of books, particularly *The Explanation of Social Behavior* (1972, co-authored with Paul Secord), were extremely influential and part of the heated discussions during the 'crisis of social psychology' (which some critics contend has never passed). In a wider context, we can interpret this second European social psychology movement as part of the 'narrative-discursive turn' that took place in the social and political sciences from the late 1960s. As a result of this movement, discourse analysis and narratology more broadly were seen by some social psychologists as far more valid than laboratory experiments as a methodology for studying social behavior.

As a student I was excited by both of the new European social psychology movements gaining momentum in the 1970s. I visited Henri Tajfel's group and got to know Michael Billig, John Turner and some other researchers involved in the development of social identity theory. Mick Billig was a pioneer in developing the minimal group paradigm laboratory study, but from the 1980s Mick dedicated his considerable talents to narrative studies. John Turner moved to Australia and continued to develop social identity theory (I visited him at the Australian National University before his untimely death). But at the same time that I did research in the social identity tradition in the 1970s, I took part in regular meetings with Peter Stringer, Jonathan Potter, Margaret Wetherell, and others who were developing discourse analysis in social psychology, as part of the larger 'narrative turn.' This group, who embraced and contributed to the narrative-cultural turn, diligently studied Rom's extensive publications.

Of course, as often happens when groups of academics have 'differences of opinion' about research, there arose sharp divisions, intense competition and heated passions. Researchers in each camp attempted to 'correct' mainstream social psychology according to their particular ideals, as reflected in the well-known differences of opinion between Henri and Rom.

By the time I defended my PhD thesis in 1979, it was clear that social psychology as envisaged by Henri Tajfel and his camp was gaining more influence in psychology departments in Europe, but social psychology as envisaged by Rom was gaining more ground in the new communications and narrative studies centers springing up, as well as in linguistics departments. This was the state of affairs in European social psychology when 'real life' intruded and took me away to a very different world, as I briefly describe below.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Goodbye to All That

…we launch on the great sea

a well-found ship…

Homer *The Iliad* (1975, p. 16)

The 1979 revolution in Iran seemed to represent the launch of a miraculous democratic adventure. The American backed puppet dictator was finally ousted; the Shah was gone. Moved by the excitement of historic changes taking place in Iran, my country of birth, in the spring of 1979 I packed my possessions into a car and drove overland from England to Iran, with lofty goals and great expectations. Iranians now enjoyed considerable freedom and I was one of hundreds of thousands of young professionals hoping to move Iranian society toward democracy. Almost as soon as I arrived in Tehran in the 'spring of revolution' (1979), I began teaching at universities and actively trying to build up civil society. I helped to launch literacy campaigns, disseminate progressive ideas through the mass media, and educate a wider public in human rights issues. But the opposition against a more open, democratic Iranian society was fierce—and willing to do whatever it took to grab power.

Ayatollah Khomeini had also returned to Iran, determined to transform Iranian society according to his image of an 'Islamic Republic,' which meant dictatorship with an Islamic face. For the next five years, I gained another form of education in psychology, as the invasion of the American Embassy and the hostage crisis, the Iran-Iraq war, mass arrests, incarcerations and state-sponsored killings transformed Iranian society into a dark, corrupt 'Islamic' dictatorship. These developments led to my intense examination of the psychological foundations of dictatorship and democracy, as well as *political plasticity*, the ability (or not) to change social relations when structures change, and vice versa (I continue to struggle with these ideas, Moghaddam 2018). When it became clear that I would not be able to continue working in Iran, through a tortuous route I managed to reach Canada where I found an academic home at McGill University from 1984 until 1990.

My arrival at McGill gave me an opportunity to work with Donald Taylor, who had been a regular invited visitor to Tajfel's research group. Don's focus on intergroup relations was very much in the new European tradition. In addition to fitting all the stereotypes of the 'wild man of the Great White North', Don was inspiring to work with and welcoming in every way. Our families have remained very close. While Don Taylor brought me full circle back to Tajfel's intergroup tradition, my move to Georgetown University in 1990 brought me back to the 'narrative turn' in social psychology—and once again within the wide orbit of Rom's influence.

With Rom at Georgetown

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream,
It is not now as it hath been of yore;-
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day.
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

In his *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood,* William Wordsworth celebrates the special sensibilities and experiences of youth, but also expresses an acceptance of how in later years we can come to perhaps equally valuable but different experiences. In academic life as well, we can lament that with passing youth "…there hath passed away a glory from the earth." The passionate excitement of those early years is very special, when we are feverishly moved by new ideas and become giddily swept along by fresh intellectual movements. But for some exceptional individuals, the giddy thrill of new ideas continues all through life, and in this way they are forever young. Rom is one of these rare beings. For Rom, every new research project continues to be "Apparelled in celestial light." Fortunately for those surrounding Rom, the celestial light tends to spill across to illuminate their lives as well. After a decade of adventures in Iran and Canada, miraculously I had new opportunities to learn from Rom, in a completely new setting.

In 1989 I was invited to give a job talk at Georgetown University. At the time, I had no idea that Rom had any connection with Georgetown. A senior Canadian colleague who had participated in the Georgetown Linguistics Round Table commented to me that the psychology department I was about to visit at Georgetown seemed very similar to 'old fashioned' small European psychology departments. At the start of my Georgetown job talk, I nervously looked up and to my utter amazement I saw Rom Harré sitting in the audience. "What does this mean?" I asked myself, "Is he visiting Georgetown?" I had not seen Rom since the late 1970s and I am not sure he even remembered me after my years in Iran and Canada. Later that day, I met with Rom privately and learned that he had fairly recently settled into a rhythm of teaching at Georgetown every spring semester. I was thrilled, not only because of his academic stature but also because I thought, "If this department is a welcoming home for Rom with his style of critical thinking, then surely this is the correct place for me." I immediately accepted the offer to move to Georgetown.

Rom has had an enormous impact on my intellectual development, but we also became good friends, perhaps because we have had similar experiences. We were both educated from an early age at traditional English boarding schools and had

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

similar tales to tell about school traditions, punishments, bizarre masters, and of course rugby and cricket (Rom attended boarding school in New Zealand, but at an institution modeled on England public schools; I was at school in London). We both closely followed rugby and would go together to an Irish pub in Chinatown in Washington D.C. to watch international matches. We both had strange tales to tell about our experiences in non-Western countries; Rom had taught in Pakistan and travelled extensively outside the West. These similarities would not have mattered so much if we had met again in England, but at Georgetown they brought us together.

Another characteristic of Rom that drew me to him is his extraordinary dedication and talent for book writing, which is unusual in the context of modern academia. The 'publish or perish' environment of modern universities has resulted in an almost exclusive focus on manuscripts with a rapid-turnover. Journal papers are given highest priority, because it is assumed only 'peer reviewed journals' provide the guarantee of quality research. The fact that established book publishers also insist on extensive peer review is often forgotten. In addition, the depth and quality of arguments that can be developed in 14 chapters of a book is much greater than that developed in journal papers.

Rom also gave me greater confidence to think outside the mainstream psychology box and undertake unusual projects that traditional psychologists would warn me against. Again and again, when I have had an idea to research the psychology of dictatorship, or specialization, or social change, or radicalization, or Jane Austen, a chat with Rom would clear away hesitations and propel me full speed ahead. This influenced my teaching as well, inspiring me to teach courses such as 'Psychology and Shakespeare'.

Rom had a wide and deep influence on the Georgetown Psychology Department. Most importantly, he encouraged faculty and students to take more risks, to ask harder questions, to critically re-assess received wisdom and find our own paths. He did this in very unexpected ways. For example, he has the infuriating habit of reading a published paper or book and pointing out how it could be improved. This can be maddening for authors who have been socialized to publish and move on to the next work, rather than think back to what has already been published and already added to the list of their 'credits' on the annual faculty merit review. But of course Rom was not concerned with merit reviews; he refused to take part in them.

Varieties of Radicalism

… for there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so. *Hamlet* (II.2.268-269)

During the spring semesters when Rom was at Georgetown, I would typically meet him early in the morning (we are both early risers), and sometimes I would swing round to his flat and give him a ride to the university. During our early morning

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

conversation, on a typical day I would learn that he had already been working on a new paper on some aspect of the philosophy of chemistry, that after his lecture at Georgetown he would be walking to American University to teach there, and in the evening he was finishing another section of his new book and then attending a concert at the Kennedy Center for the Arts. He was always in the midst of a torrent of varied and productive activities. In addition to his regular appointment at Georgetown, he often taught courses at several other universities in the same semester. In a cultural context where professors complain about the 'huge teaching load' when they teach two classes, Rom sometimes taught four or five courses at three different universities. Most importantly, he worked joyfully. Our collaboration has always involved some mischief.

It did not take me long to discover ways of getting Rom worked up and mad at me. For instance, Rom and Henri Tajfel had engaged in a long and sometimes heated decades-long debate (in academia we say 'debate', whereas in everyday life we would say 'argument' or even 'fight') about research methods, social psychology, and science. Rom has been extremely critical of not only traditional methodology, but more fundamentally the causal interpretations adopted by mainstream psychologists. Because of Tajfel's prominence and influence, through the minimal group laboratory paradigm and social identity theory, he became a particular target of Rom's criticisms. I learned that I could liven things up by mentioning to Rom that, on reflection, when I carefully reconsider all the different arguments, weigh up the facts on both sides, it seemed to me that Tajfel (who, after all, had served as my PhD examiner and seemed to be such a great researcher…) really did make some very good points, excellent points in fact. Indeed, Tajfel seemed to be a highly rational scientist and very convincing. This kind of utterance would immediately lead Rom to excitedly tell a cascade of stories about how he had known Henri and his family for a very long time, how Henri had repented leaving Oxford, how Henri was wrong in his methodology, and so on.

But Rom also helped me recognize that in one way, at least, I am radical—although it must be added that he probably would not support this particular form of radicalism, which concerns research methodology. I have never been persuaded that there is a correct method for studying social behavior, or that narrative-qualitative methods are better than quantitative methods, or that field methods are better than laboratory methods. I have regarded laboratory studies as very useful, as a form of drama (Rom and I wrote on just this topic, Moghaddam and Harré 1992). I also regard qualitative methods as very useful, but just another way of constructing the world. In the larger debate between those who advocate traditional quantitative social psychological research methods and those who insist on narrative-qualitative methods, I have been active in both camps—to the confusion of some critics. In this sense, I adopt the view (reflected in the quote from Hamlet, above) that at a high level of abstraction the various research methods are merely leading to different constructions of the world. Each different construction is valuable and adds to the larger picture. A multi-method approach is best, because it simultaneously provides different pictures of the phenomena under investigation.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

I suppose in the realm of methodology I am a radical constructionist. I collaborated with Rom on numerous qualitative studies, particularly using positioning theory. However, I believe it is just as worthwhile to conduct traditional quantitative research, inside or outside the laboratory. For me, the most important issue is not the method but the identification and interpretation of 'data.' Most of our behavior is normatively regulated, not causally determined. The great mistake of mainstream social psychology is to interpret the results of laboratory research causally, whereas the correct interpretation is normative—as suggested by the idea of treating the laboratory experiment as a piece of drama (Moghaddam and Harré 1992).

From this perspective, I see Tajfel's minimal group paradigm laboratory experiment as legitimate, as long as the results are interpreted in a normative framework. That is, the intergroup biases shown by participants on the basis of being divided into groups 'X' and 'Y' on a (seemingly) trivial criterion reflect a cultural norm. Just this is shown by research, for example when Polynesian children were compared with European children on the minimal group paradigm (Wetherell 1982).

Moreover, the interpretation of the meaning of the criterion for categorization is also context dependent and cultural in a larger sense. When there is only one criterion for social categorization, then that sole criterion can be interpreted as highly important because it is the only guide to behavior. When I repeated the minimal group paradigm in identical conditions, but once with the usual 'trivial' criterion (used in studies by Tajfel's group) and a second time with a criterion that was highly important for the participants, the results were identical (Moghaddam and Stringer 1986). This is because in both conditions, the participants only had one guide for behavior, the criterion for social categorization. This sole criterion became highly important for the participants in the context of the laboratory, irrespective of whether it was important or trivial in the 'real' world outside.

A Life Regulated by Duties

> The social psychology of individual lives involves a complementarity between a person's changing and multiple views of their own life course, their autobiographies, and the various and often contradictory views that others hold of them. Rom Harré (1993, p. 204)

There will be many different images of how Rom has lived his life. My view is that Rom's life has been primarily regulated by his sense of duties. The image that stands most clearly in my mind is the last day of Hettie Harré's life, when I was visiting Rom and Hettie's home in Iffley Village, Oxford. Hettie had been seriously ill for some time. The ground floor of the house had been converted to provide the best medical care for Hettie, and Rom was continually at hand to provide whatever service Hettie needed. A large hospital bed and all kinds of medical devices were

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

being used to provide Hettie maximum comfort. In the midst of all the activities, medical staff, family, and friends coming and going, Rom remained calm and focused on Hettie's needs. His entire being was shaped by what he saw to be his duties. We are fortunate in that he included us in his duties to learn and teach.

On reflection, it is noteworthy that Rom, who has been so strongly driven by a sense of duty, should give so little weight to personal motivation in his vast writings. Mainstream psychology gives central place to 'dispositional factors' and motivation in particular, but this is not the case in Rom's exposition of psychological science. Instead, there is an emphasis on social relations and the narrative construction, of both the personal and the social. This became particularly evident to me when I collaborated with Rom on positioning theory research: personal motivation in the way it is conceived in mainstream psychology is absent from positioning theory. Instead, there is the Vygotskyan priority to psychological process between people. In this sense, Rom is the supremely social social psychologist.

References

Harré, R. (1993). *Social being*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R., & Secord, P. F. (1972). *The explanation of social behavior*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Homer (1975). *The Iliad*. (Trans. R. Fitzgerald). New York: Anchor Books.

Israel, J., & Tajfel, H. (Eds.). (1972). *The context of social psychology*. London: Academic Press.

Moghaddam, F. M. (2018). *Mutual radicalization: How groups and nations drive each other to extremes*. Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association Press.

Moghaddam, F. M. (1987). Psychology in the three worlds: As reflected by the crisis in social psychology and the move toward indigenous third-world psychology. *American Psychologist, 42,* 912–920.

Moghaddam, F. M., & Harré, R. (1992). Rethinking the laboratory experiment. *American Behavioral Scientist, 36*, 22–38.

Moghaddam, F. M., & Stringer, P. (1986). "Trivial" and "important" criteria for social categorization in the minimal group paradigm. *Journal of Social Psychology, 126,* 345–354.

Tajfel, H., Flament, C., Billig, M. G., & Bundy, R. F. (1971). Social categorization and intergroup behavior. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *1*, 149–177.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worshel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–47). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Wetherell, M. (1982). Cross-cultural studies of minimal groups: Implications for the social identity theory of intergroup relations. In H. Tajfel (Ed.), *Social identity and intergroup relations* (pp. 207–240). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wittgenstein, L. (1958). *Philosophical investigations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (First published 1953).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 3
Rom Harré, Positioning Theory and the Social Sciences: A Personal and Sympathetic Portrait

Patrick Baert

I remember vividly my first couple of terms as a doctoral student under Rom's supervision. In Michaelmas Term of 1987, we would meet weekly for 1 hour—for eight weeks, that is. The same pattern was followed in Hilary term of 1988, only this time our meetings were fortnightly. For each session, I was expected to write an essay based on some reading mainly set by Rom and related to my dissertation topic, similar to how Oxford undergraduates were taught. It was pretty intense: the reading was mainly in analytical philosophy (especially philosophy of mind), whereas my own training up till then had been primarily in sociology, philosophy of social science and social theory. This supervision system was meant to give doctoral students the tools to develop their own agenda. And it worked. By the beginning of 1988 I had started to formulate my own ideas, which eventually led to the dissertation. Like Rom's other doctoral students who had gone through this form of apprenticeship, I gradually needed less supervision, and it is not an overstatement to say that Rom helped his students to become independent thinkers. "Don't worry about references and bibliography", Rom would insist. "Focus on your own arguments and I will give you the references where and when needed."

Rom gave his PhD students a lot of freedom, which for me was particularly liberating as it contrasted with the intellectual climate at the University of Brussels, dominated as it then was by local mandarins who acted rather despotically and on the whole expected young researchers to toe their party line. This is not to say that Rom did not have strong views about the topics that I was covering and those views might have been different to mine, but he never tried to impose them on me and certainly never expected me to follow his broader philosophical agenda. I am sure that his other students had the same experience.

During the supervisions, it became abundantly clear that Rom appreciated above all analytical rigour. In keeping with the analytical tradition, no opportunity should

P. Baert (✉)
Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK
e-mail: pjnb100@cam.ac.uk

© Crown 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_3

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

be missed to make a conceptual distinction where previously none had existed. This was very different to the type of German critical theory in which I had dabbled, which was very popular at the time and prided itself on pursuing the very opposite intellectual endeavour: namely, that the more a concept manages to encapsulate, the more powerful it is considered to be. I remember Rom being congratulatory about a piece that I had written about the concept of unintended consequences (see Baert 1991). I personally did not think much about my own essay, believing it to be passable, but not significantly better than the other essays that I had handed in. I was therefore pleasantly surprised when Rom seemed to like it so much more than my previous efforts. With hindsight, it should have been clear to me why this was the case. The paper was full of conceptual distinctions—between unanticipated and unintended effects, and so on—and that was music to Rom's analytical ears. In this context, I remember an academic visitor at the time complaining about the Oxford obsession with analytical rigour, arguing that "… they keep on sharpening their pencil and forget that is meant for writing". That was (and is) the danger, of course: forgetting to say something meaningful about the world. Yet, Rom's own writings have never fallen into this trap; they always have a clear direction and sense of purpose.

This brings me to Rom's work. In an era of increasing academic specialisation, Rom Harré's multidisciplinary corpus stands out for its remarkable impact on a variety of fields. It is difficult to find anyone whose influence can be felt in so many subjects, ranging from philosophy of science and philosophy of mind to social theory and social psychology. At Rom's social gatherings and seminars, I would meet his other PhD students, whose work would cover a plethora of fields, including the philosophy of art, management studies, theoretical physics, international relations and social psychology. There seem to be few academic disciplines that were out of Rom's reach. Indeed, one day I found out that Margaret Yee, the energetic Chaplain at my college, was very well versed in the intricacies of realist epistemology—it turns out she had completed the DPhil in Theology under Rom's supervision.

Rom has managed to achieve this wide range without ever coming across as a dilettante. If Rom has adopted a broad canvas throughout and has always been open to collaborations and new avenues, the intellectual underpinning of his work has remained remarkably consistent and is broadly in line with his intellectual formation at Oxford. In the 1950s Rom studied under J.L. Austin for the BPhil in Philosophy, and his subsequent work—with its fascination with Wittgenstein, a commitment to ordinary language philosophy, a rejection of positivist epistemology, limited interest in the history of philosophy, and as I alluded to earlier a strict adherence to analytical reasoning and a *penchant* for conceptual distinctions—remained more or less loyal to the Oxford philosophy of those days. Rom, of course, spent most of his career at Oxford. After short spells at the Universities of Birmingham and Leicester, he returned to Oxford in 1960 to take up the post of University Lecturer in the Philosophy of Science, and he stayed there until retirement, combining his university post with a Fellowship at Linacre College.

Yet, Rom has also spent substantial amounts of time in other universities, including Georgetown and the LSE. Outside term time, Rom seemed always to be

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

jetting around the world and I remember as his graduate student not always finding it easy to track him down once the Oxford term was completed (email did exist, but had yet to take off, and I for one was slow in adopting it). One day I would be meeting him in a coffee shop outside the EHESS in Paris; on another occasion I would be receiving a letter (with feedback about a chapter of the dissertation) all the way from New Zealand; and yet another time I would phone him in Washington to discuss the latest version of the dissertation. Rom's intellectual background was also different to that of fellow philosophy colleagues: before embarking upon the BPhil in philosophy at Oxford he had studied mathematics and … chemical engineering! It is not surprising, therefore, that some aspects of Rom's writings have been different from those of the other Oxford philosophers. In the latter parts of the twentieth century, philosophy at Oxford had, as in many other Anglo-Saxon institutions, become heavily compartmentalised with members of the Sub-Faculty of Philosophy involved in increasingly specialised activities. Bucking this trend, Rom's interests in philosophy have always been remarkably broad, straddling a variety of sub-fields ranging from the philosophy of science to the philosophy of mind. What is more, his keen interest in the social sciences—especially social psychology and to a lesser extent sociology—distinguished him from the other philosophers, and this interest culminated in an active involvement in various empirical research projects, ranging from a study of football hooliganism (Marsh et al. 1978) to an analysis of environmental discourse (Harré et al. 1998).

If within Oxford philosophy Rom stood out for his broad intellectual range, the theoretical nature of his writings in sociology and social psychology distinguished them from the university's mainstream social sciences. When I arrived as a graduate student at Nuffield College in 1987, I was struck by how narrowly empirical the outlook of the social sciences at Oxford were. Under Michael Argyle's leadership, social psychology was remarkably descriptive and Argyle himself showed little interest in broader theoretical considerations, let alone philosophy. When as a graduate student Jonathan Smith invited me to present at Argyle's seminar, I naively decided to talk about G.H. Mead's concept of time. During question time, Argyle, who was renowned for his dry wit and cutting quips, complained that I had made a straightforward concept "awfully complicated", whereas he "… knew what the time was by looking at (his) watch." Shades of Saint Augustine—unintended, no doubt.

Oxford sociology was hardly different. Under the steely direction of A.H. Halsey and John Goldthorpe and assisted by the wealth of Nuffield College, sociology had become a thriving enterprise but it had a distinctive flavour. It had become an intellectual spin-off of the workings (or non-workings) of the welfare state, preoccupied as it was with questions regarding social mobility and the role of education therein. The methods employed were predominantly quantitative and theory was regarded with suspicion—"we are hard-core empiricists but treat theorists kindly", John Goldthorpe assured me jokingly during my entrance interview at Nuffield College. A half-truth, I quickly found out, as theory was often the object of derision at Nuffield, especially if it was not obviously related to and useful for empirical research. If Oxford sociologists happened to show any interest in theory,

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

it was of the rational choice variety, which was in its heyday at the time. Interestingly, sociologists at Oxford tended to ignore other analytical theory that was or had been produced at their university, for instance, by G.A. Cohen and Philippe Van Parijs. Indeed, at Oxford in the 1970s and 1980s, proper engagement with social theory came mainly from political theorists, including Jerry Cohen, Steven Lukes, Alan Ryan, Charles Taylor and John Torrance, which is, in some respects, not surprising given that the second half of the twentieth century witnessed a considerable interchange and overlap between social and political theory. All this meant that, at the time, Oxford sociologists were somewhat oblivious to Rom's exciting theoretical work in their own field.

Yet, outside Oxford, Rom's influence in sociology and social theory has been and remains significant. Two examples suffice—two books that also had a profound effect on me. *The Explanation of Social Behaviour* (co-authored with Paul Secord) has rightly been described as a major contribution to the development of a non-positivist social psychology, but we should not forget that this book was also influential in sociological circles, accompanying and assisting the rise in hermeneutic and Wittgensteinian approaches in the course of the 1970s (see Harré 1972). *Social Being*, the second of Rom's famous trilogy, has been particularly relevant to sociologists, not in the least for its attempt to explore the analogies between social and biological evolution in a unique fashion (Harré 1993). For me, this chapter on evolution shows Rom at his best, latching onto the latest developments in one field (Richard Dawkins in biology, in this case) to provide new insights into a completely different field (the social).

It is, above all, Rom's realist philosophy that has had a tremendous impact on the social sciences and social theory. The significance of both Mary Hesse and Rom's contributions towards a realist account of science are well-documented, but of the two Rom seemed more interested in exploring the implications of realism for the social sciences. During the late 1970s and 1980s, Rom's earlier writings on a realist philosophy of science inspired a new generation of sociologists, including Russell Keat and John Urry, who developed a renewed interest in the philosophical foundations of the social sciences, proposing a novel approach to non-positivist theory. Earlier critics of positivist epistemology, such as Peter Winch, had asserted that a massive methodological gulf separates the social and natural sciences. In contrast, Keat and Urry pointed out that, once we accept Rom's proposition that scientific methodology operates according to realist principles, a non-positivist epistemology becomes perfectly compatible with a naturalist position (Keat and Urry 1982). In this respect, their approach showed strong affinities with Roy Bhaskar's realist take on the social sciences, which again was inspired by Rom's earlier philosophical work (Bhaskar 1975, 1988). Realism in its various forms is still a thriving philosophical position in sociology, one which I do not necessarily regard as fruitful or coherent, but it is undeniably popular and enduring.

After I completed my doctoral work in 1990, Rom and I remained in touch sporadically. My own work drove me in a different direction: the history of social theory, neo-pragmatist philosophy of social science and, more recently, the sociology of intellectuals and intellectual history (e.g. Baert 2005; Baert et al. 2010;

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Baert 2015). In particular, neo-pragmatism took me further away from the realist philosophy with which I had never felt entirely comfortable. Rather than conceiving of science as an attempt to explain what is unfamiliar by drawing on analogies with the familiar (the realist view), I preferred to conceive of social science as primarily an interpretative endeavour whereby one uses the encounter with the unfamiliar to throw a new light onto the familiar (Baert 2005; see also Baert and Morgan 2015, pp. 5ff.; Morgan 2016).

It is ironic that my later socio-historical work on intellectuals, which in terms of subject matter is very far removed from Rom's concerns, brought me back to some of his writings. This was particularly the case for my research into Jean-Paul Sartre's rise as a public intellectual which led to my book *The Existentialist Moment* (Baert 2015), When I was carrying out this research, I was struck by how Sartre's positioning in the mid-1940s fitted nicely with the intellectual shifts that had taken in place in France. In other words, Sartre was by no means the *enfant terrible* that he has so often been depicted as; he was not at all out of step with the French context of the time. On the contrary, his intellectual and political interventions built further on the French preoccupation with notions of social and political responsibility as they recently developed at that time. Between 1944 and 1946, the concept of responsibility had become central in the case of the prosecution against collaborationists, including collaborationist intellectuals. Their core argument against well-known collaborationist intellectuals such as Charles Maurras was remarkably simple: given that highly talented writers are able to reach and influence a large number of individuals, it is only normal that society should judge them according to particularly stringent moral criteria that held them to account more than others for the potential or real effects of their pernicious writings. During these trials, the use of the notion of responsibility did not remain confined to the courtroom; this idea was also widely debated in media circles. Sartre's genius (if that's the right word) was to reformulate his philosophy, centre it around this concept of responsibility and give it a positive twist: it is no longer about one's responsibility for pernicious acts or writings, but it is about one's vocation, one's duty as an intellectual—and as an individual per se—to intervene politically in the here and now. Most of Sartre's writings during this period did precisely that: they positioned him as an engaged intellectual. Or re-positioned, I should say, because Sartre had shown little interest in politics beforehand.

Those readers familiar with positioning theory will recognise some of its central tenets in this brief summary of my work on Sartre. Whereas Rom and his collaborators initially used positioning primarily in the context of face-to-face interactions (e.g. Harré and van Langenhove 1999), I tried to show its significance within the intellectual realm, centring my attention on the mechanisms by which ideas and theories resonate and disseminate (or not, as the case may be). I became interested in how intellectual interventions invariably position the authors within a given cultural context, and how effective positioning is often achieved collectively (i.e. through coordination with others who are committed to a similar project), through juxtapositions (i.e. by positioning others in oppositional terms) and strong performative devices (ranging from stage-setting to rhetorical techniques). I also became

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

fascinated with how the specific nature of this positioning can play an important role in whether or not the authors involved receive institutional or symbolic recognition (and if so, by whom) and whether or not the arguments or theories presented resonate and are taken up by others (again, if so, by whom) (see also Baert 2015, pp. 158–189).

For me, positioning theory was also a means of avoiding what I called the intentionalist fallacy (Baert 2015, pp. 179ff.). By this, I am referring to the way in which sociologists of intellectuals and intellectual historians often attribute intentions or motives to the scholars or intellectuals about whom they are writing without necessarily having access to empirical material that may help to back up these claims. It might well make for a more entertaining narrative, but it is methodologically flawed. In my view, positioning theory enables us to avoid mistakes of this kind: positioning *can* be intentional, but it doesn't have to be. Our positioning is the product of a myriad of interpretations which are tied up with the positioning of and by others. One of the upshots of this approach is that we come to realise that, however carefully crafted, how we position ourselves is, in the long run, always outside our control. Indeed, subsequent generations may read the same interventions very differently, leading for instance to their discovery, revival, vilification or simply a different use (see also, Baert 2017).

Questions remain. If, as I argued, one's positioning is always necessarily tied up with interpretations by others and with their own positioning, then the same argument necessarily applies to the researchers who use positioning theory to make sense of what others have done or are doing. For instance, my account of Sartre's rise as a public intellectual—the way in which I described Sartre's interventions in the post-war period in the way that I did—was in itself inevitably tied up with my self-positioning, in particular with the way in which I distanced myself from other explanations for Sartre's rise. The fact that one's explanation in terms of positioning ties in with one's own positioning does not in itself invalidate the analysis, but it does add a level of complexity to it, and it certainly opens the door for the existence and viability of alternative accounts of the same social phenomena even when those accounts fall within the contours of positioning theory themselves. To recognise this circularity is *not* to pave the path towards either epistemological or conceptual relativism. It would be preposterous to hold that *any* reading (or indeed any interpretation) will do: certain interpretations are simply erroneous or misguided on sociological or historical grounds. However, to acknowledge the said circularity is to recognise that different researchers can highlight different aspects of the same interventions, depending on their own intellectual agenda and on what they deem sufficiently significant or worth discussing.

Whilst carrying out research on various politico-intellectual phenomena, ranging from the Black Consciousness Movement in 1970s South Africa to contemporary progressive populism in Spain, I gradually became conscious of the fact that positioning theory needs to be complemented with a performative approach (Baert and Morgan 2018; Morgan and Baert 2017; Booth and Baert 2018). With this in mind, Marcus Morgan and I developed a theoretical framework that shows how intellectuals draw on a variety of dramaturgical devices to assist their self-positioning.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Marcus and I made use of notions like stage-setting, props and framing to point out the subtle ways in which intellectuals consciously or unconsciously impose a particular definition of themselves onto their audiences (Morgan and Baert 2018). Whether through writing or speeches, positioning and performativity are very much intertwined.

This brings me back to Rom, not just because he, too, has paid a great deal of attention to the performative aspects of social life, but also because he himself is such a great performer. Indeed, Rom is an outstanding public speaker who loves to entertain his audience, and his writing also has a strong dramatic component. He shows that analytical philosophy does not necessarily have to be dry and that the art of intellectual life is ultimately not just about *what* you have to say but also about *how* you say it and with what *effect*. I remember seeing Rom in action for the first time in the mid-80s in Brussels where he gave a talk in relation to a forthcoming book, *Physical Being* (Harré 1991). I was surprised that, someone with his spare frame and donnish demeanour, would talk with such candour about bodybuilding and related activities. I was even more struck by how he managed to captivate his audience with his powerful intellect whilst at the same time gesticulating energetically. Several years later, in a brasserie in the 7th arrondissement, Rom confessed to me that he was convinced that his French (Huguenot) ancestry had something to do with his expressive style of performing.

References

Baert, P. (1991). Unintended consequences: A typology and examples. *International Sociology, 6*(2), 201–210.

Baert, P. (2005). *The philosophy of the social sciences: Towards pragmatism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Baert, P. (2015). *The existentialist moment; The rise of Sartre as a public intellectual*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Baert, P., & da Silva, F. C. (2010). *Social theory in the twentieth century and beyond*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Baert, P., & Morgan, M. (2015). *Conflict in the academy; A study in the sociology of intellectuals*. London: Palgrave.

Baert, P., & Morgan, M. (2018). A performative framework for the study of intellectuals. *European Journal of Social Theory, 21*(3), 322–329.

Bhaskar, R. (1975). *A realist theory of science*. London: Verso.

Bhaskar, R. (1988). *The possibility of naturalism* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.

Booth, J., & Baert, P. (2018). *The dark side of podemos? Carl Schmitt and contemporary progressive populism*. London: Routledge.

Harré, R. (1991). *Physical being; A theory for corporeal psychology*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1972). *The explanation of social behaviour*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1993). *Social being* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Wiley.

Harré, R., & van Langenhove, L. (1999). *Positioning theory: Moral contexts of intentional action*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R., Brockmeier, J., & Mühlhäusler, P. (1998). *Greenspeak: A study of environmental discourse*. London: Sage.

Keat, R., & Urry, J. (1982). *Social theory as science* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Marsh, P., Rosser, E., & Harré, R. (1978). *The rules of disorder*. London: Rouledge and Kegan Paul.

Morgan, M. (2016). *Pragmatic humanism*. London: Routledge.

Morgan, M., & Baert, P. (2018). Acting out ideas: Performative citizenship within the black consciousness movement. *American Journal of Cultural Sociology, 6*(3), 455–498.

Susen, S., & Baert, P. (2017). The existentialist moment defended: A reply to Simon Susen. *The sociology of intellectuals; After 'The Existentialist Moment'* (pp. 123–146). London: Palgrave.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 4
Rom Harré on Personal Agency

Jack Martin

In *Personal Being* (1984), Rom Harré produced an account of human agency exercised by persons, understood as powerful particulars acting within discursive, sociocultural contexts. Harré's account of personal agency was influenced by the earlier work of Mead (1934), Lev Vygotsky (1962), and Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953). In its turn, Harré's work was enormously influential on many of my generation of theoretical psychologists, enabling us to theorize persons as embodied and socio-culturally constituted actors with self-consciousness, personal identity, and personal agency—agents who could not be reduced to either biophysical or sociocultural determinants or to some combination of inter- and extra-personal causes, forces, and mechanisms. In this essay, I briefly revisit Harré's conception of personal agency as presented in *Personal Being* and elaborated in subsequent works such as *The Discursive Mind* (Harré and Gillet 1994) and *The Singular Self* (Harré 1998).

In the summer of 1985, I read Rom Harré's *Personal Being* for the first time. This, and subsequent readings, changed my life. Prior to reading Harré, I had pursued rather standard research in applied psychology, especially in educational psychology and psychotherapy. By 1985, I had come to believe the work I had been doing for the preceding 15 years suffered one obvious error and one obvious problem. The error was to assume there was some general answer to questions such as "What is effective teaching" and "How does psychotherapy work," an answer that applied across all, or at least most, instructional and therapeutic contexts and individual learners and clients. The problem was that most psychological theory and practice assumed the decisions and actions of individual people were both determined (especially when participating as subjects in psychological research) and free (especially when selecting and applying psychological coping strategies in their everyday lives). How could this be possible?

J. Martin (✉)
Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, Canada
e-mail: Jack_Martin@sfu.ca

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_4

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

The more I thought about such matters, I came to the conclusion that psychology lacked an adequate theory of human agency—a theory that might explain why different individuals reacted differently to similar contexts, why the same individuals acted differently at different times, and how human beings could be both determined and free in their experiences, choices, and actions. It was in the midst of such ruminations that I first read *Personal Being,* the book that moved me away from traditional empirical research in applied psychology to a future career in the theory and history of psychology. In Rom Harré's *Personal Being,* I found much of the theory of human agency I thought psychology was missing. Although my subsequent work on selfhood, agency, and personhood has moved away from certain aspects of Harré's treatment of these topics, I have continued to find fruitful his central ideas concerning persons and selves, the social structure of cognition and emotion, personal development, identity projects, and personal being as consciousness, agency, and identity or autobiography.

In this brief tribute, I interpret Harré's theory of personal agency, as articulated in *Personal Being* and selected subsequent works, before considering some ways in which Harré's account of personal agency might be developed further to interpret and explain the acquisition of agency as a core capacity of persons. In doing so, I draw on more recent work in theoretical, social, and developmental psychology that makes extensive use of the ideas of George Herbert Mead.

Harré's Theory of Personal Agency

In Harré's view, "to be an agent is to conceive of oneself as (hold a theory that one is) a being in possession of an ultimate power of decision and action" (Harré 1984, p. 29). To be an ultimate source of one's decisions and actions invokes a conception of agency as "*above* subpersonal powerful particulars, such as desires and intentions" (p. 29). This is an agent capable of choosing between equally enticing and powerful options, overcoming attractions and distractions, and creating novel principles and ways to control desires and impediments. Importantly,

> … what is transcendental to experience is none other than the social conditions under which persons are created from mere organic beings by their acquiring a theory appropriate to their society. To be self-conscious and to act freely are not, I believe, mysterious capacities, but particular ways of thinking about what one is experiencing, planning, executing and so on. (p. 29)

In the final chapter of *Personal Being,* Harré remarks:

> In a way the first nine chapters draw out in detail the original insight of G. H. Mead, that the self owes its form and perhaps its very existence to the circumambient social order. (p. 256)

In Chap. 7 of *Personal Being*, "Personal Being as Practical Unity: Agency," Harré states the theme of this chapter as follows:

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

> The self as agent is not a mysterious thing but a belief which endows the believer with certain powers of action in accordance with the interpersonal models available in the society. (p. 180)

In this chapter, Harré contrasts "agents" with "patients." A patient remains quiescent and unchanging in the absence of an external stimulus. In contrast, an agent can act without external stimulation. Persons are agents whose action tendencies and their release are within their own power. However, Harré, like Mead, insists that persons are the kinds of agents who

> at some stages of their careers … are patients; then by acquiring tendencies and powers whose realization requires the removal of a restraint, such as a countervailing and inhibiting force, they become agents. (p. 189)

The personal tendencies and powers to which Harré refers include self-consciousness, identity, reasoning, and self-command, none of which can be reduced to complex forms of internal determination alone because the ultimate source of such capabilities are features of interpersonal interactions and discourses out of which they emerge. Our conception of ourselves as agents is a kind of theory that we have extracted from our history of such interactivities.

> By being forced to listen to the exhortations of others, I learnt to exhort myself, and by watching others push each other into action, I learn to bestir myself. It is my grasp of the theory that I am a unified being that enables me to understand that I am the recipient both of exhortations and kicks and shoves, and that I can exhort and shove others and, finally, putting all this together, that I can so treat myself. (p. 193)

> In the light of all I have argued, we need seek no further for an explanation of the transcendental unity of ourselves as perceivers and agents. It is a model of ourselves created by drawing on our public role as a source. (p. 194)

In *The Discursive Mind* (1994), Harré and Grant Gillett emphasize that personal agency, which is enabled by participating in and drawing from interpersonal interactions within sociocultural and moral contexts, cannot be reduced to "extrapersonal explanations of a social rather than internal type" (p. 142). This is so because "Social causation disposes the person to certain reactions and ways of acting but does not determine that they will act thus and so" (p. 142). More generally,

> People operate with the meanings available to them in discourse and fashion a psychological life by organizing their behavior in the light of these meanings and integrating them over time. The result of the integrative project is a personality or character that is, to the extent permitted by the discursive skills of the subject/agent, coherent and creative. The ideal is a psychological life with the character of an artistic project and not merely a stream of experiences and responses to stimulation. (p. 143)

In sum, the person agent emerges over the life course. By participating in the discursive practices that define an individual's life world, the developing person comes to experience and act according to the meanings, rules, and reasons available within that life world. Her publicly displayed and collectively realized social being is gradually transformed in ways that allow her to be privately displayed to herself

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

and individually realized. Thus equipped, the emerging person agent is able to publicly express her uniquely personal transformation of conventional meanings and rules, and to act them out or publish them in the public, social arena for the scrutiny and reception of others. The creative contribution of the person agent may be considered as the extent to which what began as an immersion in public, collective practices and then was transformed into private, personal understandings and projects, now might be picked up by others and perhaps accepted into the constantly changing, shared discourses of particular societies and cultures (see Harré's "quadripartite space" in Harré 1984, pp. 45 & 113).

Extending Harré's Theory of Personal Agency

The kind of strongly influential, yet not strongly deterministic, social constructionism that Harré adopts reflects Mead's (1934), Vygotsky's (1962) and their followers' (e.g., Rogoff 1991) use of words like "internalization" and "appropriation" to describe how developing persons somehow interiorize publicly available social conversations and actions on the basis of which they gradually are able to develop uniquely personal capabilities such as moral and rational agency. Influenced by Wittgenstein (1953), Harré's interpretation of Vygotsky and Mead tends to emphasize discourse, rule following, meaning, and reasons.

Motivated in large part by the writings of George Herbert Mead, Alex Gillespie and I (Gillespie 2012; Martin and Gillespie 2010) have attempted to theorize more precisely the processes by which such interiorization might occur. With a greater emphasis on Mead's conceptions of *perspectives* (understood as orientations to act in particular situations) and *sociality*, our work extends Harré's developmental theory of personal agency by emphasizing interpersonal interactivity that involves moving between social positions contained within conventional routines and practices. Initially aided by the actions and directions of caregivers, young children are helped to position themselves within simple interactive routines such as giving and receiving objects. As Mead (1934) notes, these repetitive position exchanges constitute many childhood games, such as hide-and-seek, tag, follow the leader, and dodge ball. What Mead recognized in such exchanges is that taking the social position of the other by moving between and actually experiencing the different sides of such exchanges enables the developing child to remember what it is like to be in one position when in the other. This occupation of interactive, oscillating positions allows her to experience herself in the role and perspective of the other, and to integrate and experience both perspectives simultaneously—what Mead referred to as sociality. Mead understands perspectives as orientations to act within particular situations. It is the experience of sociality that eventually allows developing persons to differentiate and integrate perspectives associated with various social, interpersonal positionings, and to experience the emergence of self-consciousness and deliberative personal agency.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

The child's repeated experiences of different social positions by moving physically and psychologically between them allows her to react to herself not only as others react to her, but as she herself comes to react to herself through her participation in interpersonal exchanges of social positions (Martin 2006). In this way, both our perspectives and our selves are differentiated and emerge within our ongoing interactivity with others. There is no need to assume a preexisting reflective "internalizer" because what occurs is not initially a matter of internalization. Instead, it is a process of participation in sociocultural practices through interactivity with others. Not only our ability to take perspectives, but our self-consciousness and deliberative agency follow upon our interactive social positioning. We do indeed develop theories of ourselves that unify our experiences, just as Harré has claimed. However, these theories are much more embodied in social interaction than the typical treatment of "theory" in analytic philosophy recognizes. They arise within our interactivity with others in the sociocultural and biophysical world through processes of position exchange, perspective taking, and integration, processes that are simultaneously social and psychological.

At more advanced levels of development, the self-reactivity and self-understanding that emerge within Mead's developmental, social interactional account may be seen as both determined and uniquely determining. As a developmental consequence of their sociality and interpersonal reactivity, self-conscious individuals are able to occupy simultaneously both a first-person perspective on their immediate activities and a third-person perspective on the sequence of events and experiences that led up to this activity (Mead's "I" and "me" respectively). The simultaneous occupation of both these spatial, temporal perspectives can enable self-conscious agents, who have become adept at reconstructing and reenacting the conditions and interactions that have determined their past actions and experiences, to exhibit some significant degree of self-regulated, deliberative coordination of their actions in the emerging present. Due to its emergent aspects, this self-determination is not reducible to its prior determinants, and acts as an indispensable contributor to future actions and events.

Positioning Theory and Position Exchange Theory

Alongside the development of his theory of personal agency, Harré has advanced a method for conducting psychological inquiry into "the processes by which encounters between social beings can be understood" (Harré 2015, p. 265), a method built around "the root idea" that "the way people, institutions, and even nations act is to some extent determined by shared and sometimes contested beliefs about how rights and duties to perform certain sorts of acts are distributed among the interested parties" (Harré 2015, p. 265). Harré defines positions as "beliefs about rights and duties which are ascribed in any [social] episode to the actors" (p. 271). Throughout his descriptions and illustrations of the application of his *Positioning Theory* (e.g., Davies and Harré 1990; Harré et al. 2009; Moghaddam

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

et al. 2008), Harré maintains that "human action cannot be studied without attention to the meanings of what people do, the norms they live by, and the culture they inhabit" (Harré 2015, p. 275) because,

> Above all, personal agency must be retained in any psychological account of human beings —because persons are embedded in moral systems or orders, so we have to take account of the rights and duties that are set for us in the beliefs and practices of our local culture which we take up or resist and maybe reject in our daily activities. (Harré 2015, p. 265).

Building on Gillespie and my *Position Exchange Theory* (Gillespie 2012; Martin and Gillespie 2012), in recent years I have developed and employed a method for conducting social, psychological biographical research that seeks to uncover the kinds of positions and position exchanges that have been particularly influential and important in the lives of persons. This method, *Life Positioning Analysis (LPA)* (Martin 2013, 2015), also relies on Meadian conceptions of *perspectives* and *sociality*. LPA recognizes that agency is not only a theory; it is a kind of understanding and capability forged through social interactivity involving position and perspective exchange and integration. Whereas Harré's *Positioning Theory* defines positions in terms of collective, shared "beliefs about rights and duties" (Harré 2015, p. 275), *LPA,* like *Position Exchange Theory*, considers positions to be person-occupied sociocultural and interpersonal sites, postures, and orientations that comprise routine episodes of interactivity between two or more persons.

For example, in a life positioning analysis of the life situations of Native American athlete Jim Thorpe (Martin 2013), it becomes clear how Thorpe's positioning outside the mainstream of American society restricted and limited his development of personal agency. Although highly respected for his athletic abilities and achievements, Jim was given few opportunities to participate in formal leadership roles. His coaches and employers tended to reserve and dispense such positions to socially privileged insiders who were not Indians. As a consequence, "Lacking the interactive, experiential bases for full participation in the vocational, economic, and sociocultural practices of the dominant American culture, Jim … was unable to insert himself interpersonally and intersubjectively into his own life and the lives of others" (Martin 2015, p. 253). Or, consider examples drawn from the lives of psychologists like Carl Rogers and B. F. Skinner, both of whom pursued work and life projects that can be traced in part to their social, relational positioning and interacting as children and adolescents. Whereas Rogers' creative agency was directed toward improving interpersonal relations with others, especially concerning the self-expression he himself struggled with in social interaction and exchange, Skinner's creative agency was targeted at devising inventive, often mechanical means for alleviating life problems and challenges. Key position exchanges for Rogers involved movements between positions of listener and speaker; key position exchanges for Skinner oscillated between controllee and controller (Martin 2017). Of course, Meadian sociality, position exchange, and perspective integration do not explain all of our personal agency and its development. But, they do help to anchor the beliefs, meanings, and theories of personal agents in specifically detailed processes of social psychological interactivity and exchange.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

On the Shoulders of Giants

Just as Rom Harré stood on the shoulders of George Herbert Mead, Lev Vygotsky, and Ludwig Wittgenstein, many of us currently active in theoretical, philosophical, social, and developmental psychology have been extremely fortunate to benefit from interactions and exchanges with Rom Harré and his many books, chapters, articles, and presentations. Clearly Rom must be considered one of the most influential theoretical and philosophical psychologists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. He stands among the most prolific social scientists of his generation, despite turning to social science and social psychology in the middle of his illustrious career. His impact on psychology more generally continues to grow, as many of those he has influenced directly and indirectly continue to work with, develop further, and disseminate his brand of social psychological theory and inquiry—an integrated approach to understanding us human beings as unique agents in the creation of the meanings, traditions, practices, and rational, moral orders within which we exist and live as persons.

References

Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning and personhood. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 20,* 43–63.

Gillespie, A. (2012). Position exchange: The social development of agency. *New Ideas in Psychology, 30,* 32–46.

Harré, R. (1984). *Personal being: A theory of individual psychology*. Harvard, MA: Harvard University Press.

Harré, R. (1998). *The singular self: An introduction to the psychology of personhood*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Harré, R. (2015). Positioning theory. In J. Martin, J. Sugarman, & K. L. Slaney (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of theoretical and philosophical psychology: Methods, approaches, and new directions for social sciences* (pp. 263–276). Chichester, UK: Wiley.

Harré, R., & Gillet, G. (1994). *The discursive mind*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Harré, R., Moghaddam, F. M., Cairnie, T. P., Rothbart, D., & Shabat, S. R. (2009). Recent advances in positioning theory. *Theory & Psychology, 19,* 5–31.

Martin, J. (2006). Reinterpreting internalization and agency through G.H. Mead's perspectival realism. *Human Development, 49,* 65–86.

Martin, J. (2013). Life positioning analysis: An analytic framework for the study of lives and life narratives. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, 33,* 1–17.

Martin, J. (2015). Life positioning analysis. In J. Martin, J. Sugarman, & K. L. Slaney (Eds.), *The Wiley handbook of theoretical and philosophical psychology: Methods, approaches, and new directions for social sciences* (pp. 248–262). Chichester, UK: Wiley.

Martin, J. (2017). Carl Rogers' and B. F. Skinner's approaches to personal and societal improvement: A study in the psychological humanities. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology, 37,* 214–229.

Martin, J., & Gillespie, A. (2010). A neo-Meadian approach to human agency: Relating the social and the psychological in the ontogenesis of perspective-coordinating persons. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science, 44,* 252–272.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society from the standpoint of a social behaviorist* (C. W. Morris, Ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Moghaddam, F. M., Harré, R., & Lee, N. (Eds.). (2008). *Global conflict resolution through positioning analysis*. New York: Springer.

Rogoff, B. (1991). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Vygotsky, L. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wittgenstein, L. (1953). *Philosophical investigations.* (G. E. M. Anscombe, Trans.). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 5
What Is It to Be a Human Being? Rom Harré on Self and Identity

Jens Brockmeier

Rom Harré has held different views at different times on what it is to be a human being. He has always preferred expressions like "what it is to be a human being" or the "human form of life" over more common ones such as "human nature," "existence," or the "human condition." This became obvious in the 1990s when one of his main interests was the linguistic and discursive texture of what in the social sciences and Anglo-Saxon philosophy is called "self" and "identity." This was also the time when I was lucky enough to work with him for a few years at Oxford, enjoying his generous intellectual hospitality, his dialogical style and conversational attitude, his openness to unusual and eccentric opinions, his sense of humor, his love for music and the musicality of certain ideas and stories—all of which helped me view the old riddle of what it is to be a human being in a new light.

In those days, Oxford was one of the heartlands of analytic philosophy. Although surrounded by a great many analytic philosophers famous for their penchant for conceptual analysis and categorical definitions, Rom Harré has privileged an open and adaptable vocabulary in speaking about the human being. At the same time, he has been at pains to avoid the normative or moral coloring that often underlies ideas of self and identity, especially if conceived of as coherent units and entities associated with psychological qualities like character and psychiatric labels like mental health and normality. The reasons he kept these terms light and flexible echo his opinion that, for the most part, selves are fictions.

However, at stake are fictions of a special kind.[1] They take shape and change their shape in the ongoing flow of activities that people produce in interaction with one another. On this view, a person's selfhood is a shifting pattern of changing relations and dispositions coupled moment by moment to ephemeral manifestations

[1]Rom Harré has dealt with these issues in numerous books, articles, and chapters. In what follows, I draw on the *The Singular Self* (1998); *The Discursive Mind* (1994, with Grant Gillet); *Social Being* (revised edition, 1993); *Pronouns and People* (1990, with Peter Mühlhäusler); *Greenspeak: A Study of Environmental Discourse* (with Jens Brockmeier and Peter Mühlhäusler).

J. Brockmeier (✉)
The American University of Paris, Paris, France
e-mail: jbrockmeier@aup.edu

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_5

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

of various "selves" in public and private activities. Some of these activities are discourses, and some discourses revolve around issues of individual personhood, for instance, when an individual presents himself to others and others perceive this individual from their point of view. It is especially such discourses that evoke the fictions of self and identity, whether they are articulated, performed, envisioned, or all of it together. Such fictions can also be considered as narrative or grammatical forms, in Wittgenstein's sense of grammar. Chameleon-like, they are identity stories: in part prefabricated and offered by the cultural worlds in which people live, in part variegated and customized according to individual experiences and exigencies. Oscillating between individual personhood, society, and history, they weave the individual mind into a cultural world—more precisely, into various cultural worlds—while, at the same time, they bind the cultural universe into the individual mind.

Because this picture of human life is a highly dynamic one, it is problematic to use stable and well-defined categories to capture these fictions and their continuous transformation. At this point of what might become a dialogue with Rom Harré, a time-honored dilemma arises. Concepts tend to coagulate and fix the phenomena they try to capture. They are meant to bring order to chaos, but what if it is the very nature of the phenomena being envisioned that they are in constant motion and change? This is the danger of concepts that domesticate rather than help imagine the chaos and the mess, the vagueness, ambiguity, and contingency that are part of human life, not to mention human imagination. On the other hand, understanding needs concepts, at any rate language. Even the language of the poet and the novelist can help us understand the world and ourselves—sometimes even better, or at least differently, than the language of philosophers and scientists. Still, assume a certain understanding of the human condition needs a "conceptual grammar," to use a typical Rom Harré idiom. So what are the concepts to be applied here?

If we look around there are countless suggestions, as there is a steadily increasing literature in philosophy, psychiatry, and the social sciences (including psychology) dealing with issues of "selves" and "identities." But Harré is skeptical about these conceptual offerings, as abundant as they might be. For him, this field seems to be dominated by obscurity and marked by "muddled thinking." Often, it even appears to be directly influenced by marketing concerns and political agendas. One of the problems he identifies in contemporary research is a general tendency to substantialize and ontologize notions of self, identity, and mind. This is interlaced with the tendency to individualize, subjectivize, and mentalize them. Both tendencies ignore the complexity of the human form of life, another notion he uses in the wake of Wittgenstein. To tackle this complexity one must radically challenge the idea of any given ontological entity, whether called self, identity, individuality, subject, ego, personality, or the like. The only notion Harré accepts is "person"—and only for, as it were, technical reasons. "Person," he suggests, seems to be the most robust concept in a sea of uncertainty and change.

However, the notion of the person comes with its own internal complexity. Like other notions in this semantic field it picks out certain aspects of human life, one being that it is materially embodied, another that it is enmeshed in networks of symbolic interaction. In other words, persons are embodied and, at the same time,

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

symbolic agents; in both respects they are physically (including biologically) and socioculturally anchored. Of course, how these two aspects or dimensions of human life work together and how they are constitutive of a person, that is one of the big questions here. I emphasize *one* because there are many questions. This, in fact, strikes me as a characteristic of Rom Harré's way of dealing with the issue of what it is to be a human being: to identify questions that raise even more questions. As if by trying to understand the human being in the world we are entering a domain of questions that mutate into further questions, without ever promising a final and definitive answer.

Take the problem posed by the second robust assumption underlying this approach, beside the notion of the person: the fluidity and malleability of the many gestalts of the person. There is a Heraclitian insistence on the ever-changing nature of the human form of life, including attempts to understand it—and this is also true for first and second (reflexive, conceptual, narrative) order attempts. The Heraclitus axiom guarantees an open entrance gate to ever-new questions: as if they were a constitutive part of the "stream of actions" that characterize the human condition, a continuous stream of which William James' "stream of consciousness" is only one subcategory. What do we know, as one of Harre's question goes, if we attribute the structure of a *unity* to one of the countless human selves or identities? Surely, he concedes, there is a unity in the context of so much moment by moment, situation by situation diversity. Yet there are also unceasingly created new units in the flow of human life, constituted in passing by a person and other persons, situations, and moments in time. What, if anything, does the word "unit" pick out from the ever-present change in human life? And why should the figure of a unit be more salient than, say, the figure of the breakup, the dissolving of a unit, and its transformation into something else?

Another of these questions is how does the idea of unity—often presented as the distinguishing mark of a person—relate to the psychology of personal uniqueness and to what Harré calls the "singularity of the self"? This question is all the more awkward if one accepts that the self, understood as the unique singularity people in western cultures feel themselves to be, is not an ontologically defined entity but—well, a perspective, a point of view from which people perceive the world around them, a position among countless other positions in space and time picked out of the flux of phenomena that might gain a certain temporary gestalt. How does it gain this gestalt? Harré's answer is: mainly by ways of speaking, the use of concepts, and the evocation of identity fictions.

In this endeavor, narrative practices play a major role. Performed according to local cultural models, they comprise extended life stories as well as small, situational, and conversational narratives. However, while the narrative fabric of (many) identity constructions has been taken by numerous authors as a solution to the riddle of human identity, for Harré, it is only the starting point for new questions. He draws on both Wittgenstein's and Vygotsky's arguments against an understanding of language as representation or even translation of prelinguistic meanings into words and sentences, an understanding that is widespread in discussions on narrative identity and narrative self. In these discussions, narratives are often

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

conceived as giving an external form to mental or psychological entities such as "one's self" or "senses of oneself" which are imagined as floating in a kind of presemiotic state within one's "inner self." However, to summarize a quintessential Harréan objection,

> [T]o present something as a narrative does not mean to "externalize" some sort of "internal" reality and to give a linguistic shape to it. Rather, narratives are forms inherent in our ways of getting knowledge that structure experience about the world and ourselves. To put it another way, the discursive order in which we weave the world of our experience emerges only as *modus operandi* of the narrative process itself. That is, we are primarily dealing not with a mode of representing but with a specific mode of constructing and constituting reality. (Brockmeier & Harré 2001, p. 50).

A well-researched form of constructing and constituting extended self-fictions is autobiographical narrative. Typically, autobiographical stories aim at expressing the sense one has of one's life as a unit in time according to culturally dominant models of unit and time. This type of narrative creates an astonishing "reality effect." We could also call it "authenticity effect." This effect gets even stronger if there is plausible correspondence with "external" and verifiable events and facts. However, this should not mislead us into believing that autobiographical narratives are meant or able to express the "inner truth" of a self or the ultimate trajectory of a life. This is not their primary function, as Harré wrote about a quarter of a century ago, anticipating much of today's discussion about the putative borderline between fact and fiction in autobiographical narratives and life stories:

> [T]here are many stories that could be told by each person about his or her life, each expressing the then current perspective from which that life was being viewed by the one and only person living it. These are contributions to or "parts" of the beliefs people have about themselves. So while each human being has a robust sense of living a singular life in time, the incidents that are offered to oneself and to others as constitutive of that life are usually multiple. (Harré 1998, p. 9)

What it means to live multiple lives, have multiple selves, and tell multiple autobiographical stories—a view that, as this argument goes, is well compatible with the sense of living a singular life—is not only a matter of philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and cultural narrative studies. It also implies taking into account the historical trajectory along which the question of what it is to be a human being is posed. Harré is well aware of what cultural anthropologists like Clifford Geertz (1983) have described as the western cultural semantic of our conceptions of person, self, and individual. He also is conscious of what historians like Reinhart Koselleck (1979) have called *Begriffsgeschicht*e, highlighting the historical semantics of our concepts, that is, their shape and meaning that changes over time and space. This includes the understanding of certain *phenomena cum concepts* as normal or abnormal, which is an issue that has been passionately discussed in psychiatric and psychological debates of self and identity (e.g., Hacking 1995). Reading Harré's writing one learns that all possible boundaries between multiplicities and pathologies of self are fuzzy. They are drawn and redrawn, fixed and unfixed, at different times and historical epochs. This brings us

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

back to the Heraclitus axiom and to the continuous mutability and variability of life and the ongoing questions it raises about what it is to be a human being.

My point is that the multitude of questions Rom Harré puts forward in his exploration of the human condition—I have only hinted at a very few—does not reflect the absence of a reflected position. Though it is true, if one embarks on a treasure hunt with Harré one cannot but be disappointed. Only questions and more questions? Don't we want at least some answers? After all, these are existential concerns. Still, searching for things like self and identity, one does not find here a take-home message, an over-arching formula. There is no glittering insight at the end of the rainbow. Instead, one is left with a philosophical anthropology of question marks. What is more, given the Heraclitian flavor of this enterprise we cannot even expect to discover a final answer in any foreseeable future—like the one neuroscientists keep promising us, provided they get enough funding.

Harré is not the first and the only philosopher who shares this attitude. Originating in the Renaissance, there has been a tradition in western thinking addressing issues of human existence and, more specifically, of self and identity as ever-changing and principally open. Against the cultural backdrop of modernity and modernism, many philosophers and writers have lost the self-certainty and self-certitude characteristic of earlier times. For a growing number of people the Christian equation of soul and self has forfeited its former self-evident plausibility. In a long historical development ideas and practices of self and soul-searching, of self-examination and self-exploration have become pivotal. Western societies have become autobiographical cultures.

In his seminal study on the historical emergence of modern self-understanding, *Sources of the self: The origin of the modern identity*, Charles Taylor has argued that intellectually this process already started with Augustine. But the decisive turning point took place in the early modern period and its representative figure was Michel de Montaigne. Montaigne was the first philosophical writer who decided to turn the exploration of the self, especially, his own empirical and autobiographical self, into the main field of the investigation of what it is to be a human being. There is some evidence that when Montaigne embarked on his project he was driven by the classical motive to recover contact with the permanent and stable core of being in each of us, as Taylor (1989, p. 178) points out. Taylor goes on to explain that this was the virtually unanimous direction of ancient thought: beneath the changing and shifting desires in the unwise soul, and over against the fluctuating fortunes of the external world, there is our true nature that provides an unwavering and constant foundation for our true self. But vis-à-vis unsurmountable difficulties in discovering a lasting personal balance, Montaigne came to engage in a new type of reflection, an individual search for the reasons of one's troubles, desires, and ways to lead "the good life." In contrast with religion, traditional philosophy, and mathematics, favored by Descartes and most philosophers and scientists of the time, he saw the self as both made and explored with ordinary language. Thus, most of his writings were first-person *essais*, attempts. First published in 1580, many *Essais* were short self-reflections, narrative tryouts and subjective commentaries on life and how it

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

might be lived best, including countless autobiographical observations and reflections (Montaigne 2009).

An important stylistic form of Montaigne's essays are questions. They guide and result from his self-inspection. They aim at what later in modern discourse would be called "personal identity." Taylor's interpretation of Montaigne suggests that it is exactly the linguistic and intellectual figure of the question that makes Montaigne the first modern theorist of self and identity. There seem to be questions that individuals in the west ask about themselves which cannot be sufficiently answered with any general doctrine of human nature—whether religious, philosophical, or scientific; whether referring to reason, soul, or biology. Despite all these answers, as solid and convincing as they might appear, there still remains a question of the self, of the meaning of my being in the world, of my existence. We may call this my understanding of myself as a self. But, as Taylor claims, "this word now circumscribes an area of questioning. It designates the kind of being of which this question of identity can be asked" (1989, p. 184).

A second aspect of Taylor's reading of Montaigne and the question of the self is relevant in this context. In the Montaigne tradition of self-understanding, the process of self-exploration is part and parcel of establishing one's identity. Put differently, the search for one's self takes place in order to come to terms with oneself. This underlines a further important implication. The question of identity as it is raised in the modern tradition aims at "exploring what we are in order to establish this identity, because the assumption behind modern self-exploration is that we don't already know who we are" (Taylor 1989, p. 178).

Needless to say that there is a world of difference between Rom Harré and the French Renaissance philosopher and writer. Yet there is at least one communality—I, for one, could think of many more, but this is not the issue here—namely, that they both remind us of a critical tradition of Heraclitian thinking. When it comes to the question of what it is to be a human being, this tradition insists on keeping the question open because it emerges again and again as an inseparable part of a fundamentally unstable reality, a reality to which we have to give meaning and significance according to ever-changing options and exigencies.

References

Brockmeier, J., & Harré, R. (2001). Narrative: Problems and promises of an alternative paradigm. In J. Brockmeier & D. Carbaugh (Eds.), *Narrative and identity: Studies in autobiography, self and culture* (pp. 39–58). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Geertz, C. (1983). From the native's point of view: On the nature of anthropological understanding. In C. Geertz (Ed.), *Local knowledge: Further essays in interpretive anthropology* (pp. 55–70). New York: Basic Books.

Hacking, I. (1995). *Rewriting the soul: Multiple personality and the sciences of memory*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Harré, R. (1998). *The singular self: An introduction to the psychology of personhood*. London et al.: Sage.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Koselleck, R. (1979). *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten.* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp [Engl. translation: *Futures past: On the semantics of historical time*]. New York: Columbia University Press (2004).

Montaigne, M. de (2009). *Les Essais*. Ed. A. Lanly. Paris: Gallimard.

Taylor, C. (1989). *Sources of the self: The making of the modern identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Part II
Social Science and Positioning Theory

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 6
The Social Philosophy of Harré as a Philosophy of Culture

Steen Brock

Introduction: The Extensive Landscape of Harré's Philosophy

There should be no doubt that Rom Harré is one of the most significant philosophers in modern times. There are many reasons for making this verdict, but one of them is the broad scope of the themes covered in his writings. Although it would make sense to discuss some of the themes that Harré has elaborated in abstraction from other themes that he developed, I personally find such an approach difficult. In my reading of Harré, whatever theme is in question, I always relate the issue to the "whole" of his philosophy. In the following, I will try to reconstruct what I take to be the main features of what I will call Harré's "social philosophy". It will be a reconstruction with a purpose, in that I will discuss the sense in which this "social philosophy" comes with a philosophy of *culture*. Then, what is a "philosophy of culture"? For me such philosophy has a metaphysical part expressing the intertwining of *nature* and the realm of social and personal being. In addition, a philosophy of culture involves a philosophy of "being historical", not a philosophy of history, but a philosophy concerning what in German philosophy is called *Geschichtlichkeit*. To me, the social philosophy of Harré is a bigger endeavour than most of his followers and readers realize, for as I will argue, it does in fact include a philosophy of culture.

I have had the good luck of becoming one of Harré's co-writers in relation to his philosophy of physics (Brock and Harré 2016). I know therefore firsthand how this part of his philosophy already has many features. It is of course a philosophy of science, but it also includes a metaphysical part, for instance in relation to both the distinction between different "Realms" (Harré 1986, 237ff; Van Langenhove 2010, 14) and the notion of "human *Umwelt*" (Harré 1990). It also has a methodological

S. Brock (✉)
Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark
e-mail: filsb@cas.au.dk

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_6

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

part both in relation to matters of cognition and to practical norm-regulated moments in the art of experimentation (Harré 1998). Finally, it has an epistemic, perhaps Lockean part, called "Policy Realism" relating to a view of knowledge as convergent (Harré 1990, 304). Given this multitude of perspectives, one might call Harré's philosophy of physics a sophisticated "mixture" of insights taken mainly from Boyle, Locke, Kant, Bohr, Wittgenstein, and Strawson.

What I call Harré's "social philosophy" also has many parts: It includes a philosophy of a variety of social—and human sciences as well as a philosophy of action, and finally a kind of philosophical anthropology. This leads to the construction of a new kind of *foundation* of all social—and human sciences, present and past. Of course, this philosophy also deals *as such* with societies, groups, social phenomena, social dynamics, social relations etc. However, as we shall see, the main feature of Harré's social philosophy is an elaboration of *individuality*. For me, this term has a specific meaning: Individuality is not merely the character of a single human being nor merely a contrast to common or collective issues. A work of art is for instance an expression of individuality. It expresses how nature, society, and a human perspective comes together in a unified "moment". For instance, a certain painting may portray real events and still refer to certain social circumstance, such as war, and count as "a Picasso". I am going to argue that "people" as that notion figures in Harré's writings are examples of such individuality.[1] Consequently, in my reconstruction of Harré's social philosophy, I have set myself two tasks. First, I will explore how and why one should include features of Harré's natural philosophy. Secondly, I will explore how some key notions of Harré relate to my perspective on individuality. In this way, I want to underscore how Harré's social philosophy expresses a *realism* despite its constructivist elements and expresses a *monism* despite some seeming dualities such as nature/convention, material/personal, and corporal/social. Finally I will explain how Harré's social philosophy expresses a critique of culture.

Harré's Philosophy as Portraying an Enriched Wittgensteinian City

Harré has a special way of writing in which he invites his readers to follow certain unusual lines of thoughts. He invokes quite many "technical terms", often neologisms, which then become elements of a special Harréan vocabulary. Consequently, when teaching parts of his philosophy, one has to cut through and present certain matters in a schematic fashion that does not really pay respect to the sophistication of Harré's own texts. Nevertheless, I will begin my assessment of Harré's social philosophy by being schematic: It all begins with Kant and Strawson (Harré 2001, 105, 108; Harré 1983, 26): Besides the natural world, there is a practical and social

[1]In passing I should mention that Harré explicitly discuss the issue and introduces *his* notion of "individuality" (Van Langenhove 2010, 160).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

world, a world of persons. Persons have the ability to act, and to do so reflectively. Thus, there being persons and there being rule-governed action are two sides of the same coin. Which yet says nothing about how individual persons bring forth particular actions. Enter three philosophical voices. First Garfinkel's voice telling that there are "social settings" the reality of which is given by means of certain kinds of "accountability" (Harré and Van Langenhove 1999, 5; Van Langenhove 2010, 155; SB, 1344ff). Point being that we have found a way of avoiding a meta-conception of normativity. The empirical, the social, and the normative appears together. Second voice is Vigotsky's telling us that the mindedness of individual human beings is a kind of offspring from certain conceptions and regulations within a public civil order. Point being that we have found a way in which to assess how *people become persons* (Harré 1993, 6; Harré and Van Langenhove, 131). Third voice is Wittgenstein's telling us how mindedness comes with the learning of human languages (Harré 1993, 5; Harré and Tissaw 2005). The becoming of persons then relates to social practices of teaching and relates to the *natural character* of those we can teach (Harré and Moghaddam 2012, 97). Point being that the social arena appears in the form of practical skills associated with normative constraints, including the mastery of languages.

Thus, we have so far portrayed what might be called "a rich Wittgensteinian city" in that Wittgenstein used the term "city" for the web of language games. This is a city where the prospects for a variety of endeavors in relation to "the search for knowledge" are conditioned by already established cognitive tools and tasks as well as an already given repertoire of emotional expressions. In Wittgenstein, this leads to a discussion of how what counts as "expressions of rules", or "signposts", play paradigmatic roles in the development of new language games (Wittgenstein 1953, § 198ff). This is how "personal" matters have to be associated with public forms of display, with public signposts. Pretense is Wittgenstein's main example of how a feature of personal being has to involve public behavior (Wittgenstein 1953, II xi). In a sense all of human behavior involves pretense, for one cannot do or say "it all", so in doing or saying *something*, you have to leave out something else. The *content* of human thought and action must have a *Stellung* in a public civil order, Wittgenstein says (Wittgenstein 1953, § 125). This is for me the ultimate ground for claiming, as does Harré, that human effective "action" also express "acts" that both have social force and symbolic meaning. Indeed, I here deliberately mention Wittgenstein's crucial contribution to philosophy instead of that of J. L. Austin. The latter's philosophy of speech acts stand in my view on the shoulders of a body of Wittgensteinian insights. Thus, Harré's extensive use of Austin owes a debt to Wittgenstein.[2]

[2]Steven Toulmin, perhaps the most significant of Wittgenstein's students in Cambridge, told me in personal conversation the following: Toulmin was at the time he followed Wittgenstein's lectures of 1946–1947 engaged with the sister of J. L. Austin. Consequently, Austin ordered Toulmin immediately after each of Wittgenstein's lectures to travel from Cambridge to Oxford and show his notes from the lecture. In addition, Austin first delivered the substantial part of his influential *How to do Things with Words* in his Harvard Lectures of 1955, almost two years after the publication of (Wittgenstein 1953).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

From Social Philosophy to Natural Philosophy and Back Again

For Harré, the social force of accounting and performing speech acts relates to a Kantian spontaneous ability to act reflectively. Human agents are "powerful particulars" that freely exercise practical doings (Harré 2001, 105). However, they are also agents in a "substance-causal" manner. We can entertain physical force and interact with other organisms (Harré 2001, 108). Our corporal being belongs to a Reality characterized in general by "powers". The *ground* of these powers, "the glub" (Harré 1986, 304), answers to "Realm 3", a reality of un-observables, which nevertheless *affords* ways in which features of Realm 3 become manifest (Harré 1988, 67). In line with Bohr's account of quantum physical measurement, there are phenomenal *displays* that we can regard as the outcome of a material human practice. Grounding powers of a natural order are at work within a human arrangement of material stuff. The manifestation of a track in a cloud chamber becomes the display of an emission of an electron from an atomic order.

Here we break with both "the principle of actuality" and "the principle of transparency" (Harré 1998, 355): The "display" in question is not an occurring event but the report of a phenomenon, and the manifestation of the track is not a causal product of a specific physical change in the atom but a kind of evidence for the emergence of the reported phenomenon. Point being that a causal understanding of, say, atoms involve a kind of modelling or constructing whereby one link the manifestation of evidence to the shaping of phenomena reported. Causal understanding then becomes a way in which to explore and enlarge a realm of human practice and attention, the "human *Umwelt*" (Harré 1990). Literary speaking, causal understanding is involved in any manner in which one is able to maneuver corporally within the reality of things. Moreover, I think that what combines Bohr with Wittgenstein exactly is the idea that human experience not is something that "happens". Experiences are performative. They are achievements of activity. The powers of Nature thus shows within human practices relating to certain forms of attention.

Enter the historical dimension: Our analysis of research into Realm 3 was a story about learning to supplement a more ordinary linguistic practice with a refinement. Similarly, Harré's claim to the effect that the idea of given social structures is a myth (Van Langenhove 2010, Chap. 19) hinges on an idea of "social" as something *in becoming*. The effort to provide human interaction with certain styles of interaction mediates the becoming of social being. That is for me the core sense of Harré's talk about "discourses" and his claim to the effect that persons are "discursive realizations". (Van Langenhove 2010, 153) These are always ways of modelling reality and come in various styles or modes. As such, they are expressions of human projects and prospects and not disoriented chat. Point being that we have now underscored the *reality* of discursively mediated affairs in that we have described it as a way in which natural, corporal beings become cultivated, and concrete action become social acts. Nature works within culture and a key element in this process is linguistic creativity.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Locations of the Self and the Major Grammars in the Conversation of Mankind

Instead of social structures, classes, institutions, States, or authorities, we now have "the conversation of Mankind" as Stanley Cavell sometimes calls it, which unfolds within the enriched Wittgensteinian city. We have a web of co-existence and cooperation mediated by creative use of symbols. As I understand Harré, his social philosophy is an attempt to provide a map of this city. First part of this map is the suggestion that any human being is "located" within the city in different ways. There is a spatio-temporal location, a moral position, a social standing and temporal life-trajectory (Harré 1999, 58). Introducing these "referential grids" (Harré 1986, 223) Harré suggests how one can tackle two fundamental issues of social philosophy, the *way in which we exist* and *how we are able to exist as we do* (Harré 1993, 2) As to the former issue, there are salient features in the way in which human beings "have" a human *Umwelt.* There are "orders" of things that are established around our activities. Any individual human being acquires a *sense of self* by becoming aware of how future endeavors are relative to such orders (Van Langenhove 2010, 164). Each of us has a certain "awareness" of the background for the possibility of physical mobility, moral recognition, social respect, and an autobiography. As to the latter issue, there are internal relations between linguistic competences on the one hand and the skills and experiences that makes such mobility, recognition, respect, and biography possible on the other.[3]

According to Harré, our Wittgensteinian city moreover has some main roads along which the conversation of Mankind proceeds. Four "grammars" dominate modern Western thought (Harré and Moghaddam 2012, 11). A chemical approach dealing with constellations of material items (M-grammar), An organic approach (O-grammar), a moral approach (P-grammar) and a spiritual approach (S-grammar). Where the sense-of-self was a microstructure within personal being, these four grammars are macrostructures of social being. Let us invoke a certain scheme (Van Langenhove 2010, 241), which Harré takes from Vigotsky concerning the principal location of psychological phenomena (reprinted from Harré and Van Langenhove, 131) (Fig. 6.1).

We hereby invoke a coordinate system where the x-axis marks a graduation of individual/collective, and the y-axis marks a graduation of private/public. The point made by invoking the Vigotsky scheme is noting that the four dominant grammars belong to "quadrant 1" the public-collective arena. They are grammars of expertise. Harré argues that such expertise ultimately must make use of all 4 grammars (Harré 2002, 99).

[3]Importantly, and in line with my discussion below, Harré views the locations within these referential grids as *people* spaces, and locations in relation to "arrays of people" (Van Langenhove 2010, 127ff). People, not persons, are the constituting individuals within social dynamics and cultural development.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

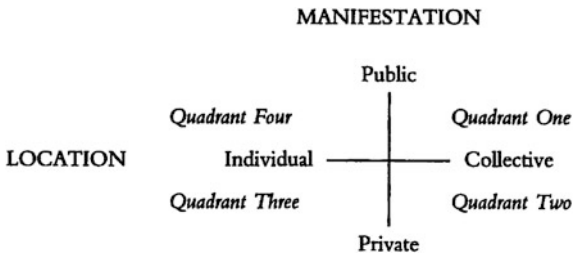

Fig. 6.1 The Vigotsky scheme

The Vigotsky scheme shows how "people become persons" (the move from quadrant 1 to 2 and then 3). It is the genesis of personal being. The move from quadrant 3 to 4 and finally to 1 show the cultural production of stereotypes, roles, institutions etc. It is the genesis of social being. Point being that *these* possible locations of people, persons, and citizens are different in kind from the locations at issue within the sense-of-self. The latter express possibilities of *orientation* and are associated with a set of *operational* skills. A sense-of-self is the outcome of some of the ways in which one has been functional in the conduct of one's life. The former express possibilities of *being* and are associated with capacities that "enable" people to take up a particular social location.

However, we saw in relation to the expertise involved in physical causal understanding that there was a connection between the possibility of taking up the location of an experimenter in modern physics and the operational skill of designing a cultural arrangement, the experimental set-up, which led to a display of natural realities in a new way. Point being that part of quadrant 1 in the Vigotsky scheme are new frameworks for the development of senses-of self. This is where and why we underscore social psychology and social philosophy as being "cultural". Marx said that human work not only creates a new object for the subject but also a new subject for the object (Marx 1857, 92). Andy Pickering says the same about science (Pickering 1995). Cassirer's philosophy centers on this issue (see especially Cassirer 1930). In a sense, the same goes for Harré and he can in fact underscore the matter more strongly.

This is because Harré deals with a problem that come from Wittgenstein. Linguistic creativity is constrained by linguistic practices that are already at work, and any creativity must conform to *the* human form of life. The problem is that it seems as if there is a proto-culture, a kind of transcendental condition for the possibility of social being. However, the idea of such transcendental condition is an illusion that spring from a universalistic question concerning general features of *cross*-cultural comparison (see Brock 2016, 182–3). Consequently, the problem is overcoming kinds of essentialism in the understanding of both human beings and culture. Instead, culture, should be regarded as an ongoing transformation of the unfolding web of human practices. The skills needed for upholding given practices are thus also in a constant process of change and development. Consequently, my point is the following: People can only become persons and citizens because they are already in the process of becoming *people*. This is the point of underscoring my

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

sense of "individuality". Accordingly, the Wittgensteinian idea of "the human form of life" does not point to a static "way of life", but to an ongoing *formation* of human being. Or as Merleau-Ponty put it "Everything is both manufactured and natural in man" (Merleau-Ponty 1946, 189).

Tools and Tasks: The Material Grounding of Cognitive Tools

In order to show how Harré does indeed think along the lines I have suggested, one can do no better than assess his metaphors of "tools and tasks" (Van Langenhove, Chap. 7). The human being always already possesses a repertoire of cognitive tools enabling it to pursue a variety of practical and cognitive tasks. Harré explicitly mentions a cultural development of humankind highlighting three achievements. Conscious awareness develops into self-consciousness, agentive powers develop into moral responsibilities, and recollection develops into indexical reference to oneself and others. (Harré 1993, 6). The motor in this development is the acquisition and use of *symbolic* tools. Here, again, Harré invokes Wittgenstein's claim that not just words, but a wide variety of items might count as symbols ("One must plough through the whole of language" (Wittgenstein 1931, 36); plough through the whole of the toolbox of linguistic means.) Importantly, the use of cognitive tools has for Harré a material grounding. This allows him to draw the parallel I have already underscored between the material grounds for causal understanding and the emergence of discourses in general (Van Langenhove, 72). It also links the development of human understanding to an ongoing development within the use of the human body and its parts and organs. We literally have "discursive transformations of the body" (Van Langenhove, Chap. 14).

The material link between nature, social being, and personal being is the development of tools. This also means that there are three aspects of this development. We get new tools in both a physical, a social and a personal sense. Consequently, we cannot ignore the physical and social features of the development of *cognitive* tools. Again, we underscore reminders of Bohr, Vigotsky, and Wittgenstein. One particularly interesting thing in this connection is Harré's account of how different material practices, in certain social settings, involve a contextually configured repertoire of emotions. Emotional responses and attitudes unfold within this "cultural" mix of physical being, social being, and personal being (Harré and Tissaw 2005). There is no better display of human "individuality" in my sense than the interplay in given situations between emotional responses, cognitive functions, and human action.

Culture is both tradition, routine, ritual, institutions, and a variety of formative and innovative efforts. Culture is both background and a "search" for innovation along with a progressive understanding and self-understanding. In this perspective,

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

the metaphor of tools and task is strong and simple. In its terms, we can make deep sense of both the fact that there is no boundary for the development of new tools and tasks, and that there can be no such development from scratch.

From Wittgensteinian to Strawsonian Individuality: Gender and Hybrid Psychology

Hoping I have succeeded in portraying Harré as a philosopher of culture, I will finally ask if he is a special such philosopher. Obviously, he has developed an original and sophisticated philosophy. No doubt, he has done more than most in providing a foundation for a large variety of significant forms of science within both the natural, the social, and the human sciences. However, what about cultural anthropology in general? The primary characteristic of a Harréan conception of reality is dynamics, relativity, and individuality (in his Strawsonian sense). Such individuals are like charges in an electromagnetic field. They are individual agents in the power play among all other individuals. Why is it that such individuals, now regarded as persons, do not appear as confused and in despair as a matter of course? For sure, Harréan persons do not become Hegelian clergymen answering to determine social functions; still they enact a kind of conservatism and both social and personal "stability". I want to mention a clear-cut example of this.

In his bold paper "Discursive transformations of the body" (Van Langenhove, Chap. 14) Harré discuss the prospects for the development of genders. He analyses the relation between natural sexual differences defined by chromosome structure, and a variety of gender-constructions. Before we look at the heart of the paper, let us note that Harré acknowledges the fact that biological sex is a manifold and does not have only two categories, man and woman. He further acknowledges sex-changing operations. Finally, he is fully open to the idea of gender, a social sex. He treats the "construction" of such genders as the construction of a minority (which might become a new majority) in the sense of a living, discursively mediated social group having a distinct social individuality. Now, the plot of the paper is that social being, gender, can never dissociate itself from physical being, biological sex. Importantly this is not an ontological claim. It is a sociological claim to the effect that corporal human beings have developed *body-culture*. "Having" a biological sex comes with practices of clothing, body painting, hairdressing, gesture language etc. In addition, here the historical fact is that human discourse involves making use of the adjectives "masculine" and "feminine". Consequently, the main argument of the paper is to the effect that the construction of a "gender" presupposes the development of particular linguistic practices in relation not only to the features of biological sex but to a given body culture. Thus, I think Harré's discussion in effect is about the possibility of the emergence of a sub-culture relative to a given cultural background. Interestingly a crucial part of that background is *corporeal* culture.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

At its core, the development of a hybrid psychology hinges on the same conservative view on the prospects for cultural development. The binding together of the four dominant grammars spring from a weave characterized by culturally grown practices of the use of pronouns and other indexical. The individuality of things form part of a cultural weave of physical items, biological organisms, social agents, and responsible persons. Hybrid psychology is the name of the method. Cultural psychology might be the name of the game. Like all parts of Harré's philosophy, it contains a cultural critique warning against ways in which human understanding can become bewitched by intellectual movements that move faster than the cultural soil permits. Recall that what I present as a weave and cultural background for Harré also answers to sophisticated forms of recollection. By contrast to Wittgenstein he is not only giving us "reminders" about the cultural background, Harré is constructively engaged in showing how that background already includes the tools for a kind of revitalization of our recollections.

The cultural critique of Harré can never be a critique of chimeras such as "social forces" or "new mentalities". For me, we have to do with a critical view on human endeavors and on how individual people want to position themselves. I have not touched in this chapter on positioning theory. However, one might employ that line of analysis in an assessment of Harré's social philosophy as such. This philosophy urges the experts of the day to re-position themselves in the light of more materially and discursively grounded discourses.

References

Brock, S. (2016). A conception of modern life as "the awakening of the human spirit, revisited". In L. Albinus, J. G. F. Rothhaupt, & A. Seery (Eds.), *Wittgenstein's remarks on Frazer. The text and the matter*, On Wittgenstein Series, (Vol. 3, pp. 175–204). Berlin: De Gruyter.

Brock, S., & Harré, R. (2016). Nature's affordances and formation length. The ontology of quantum physical experiments. *SATS. Northern European Journal of Philosophy, 17,* 1–20.

Cassirer, E. (1930) [2012]. Form and technology. In A. S. Hoel & I. Folkvord (Eds.), *Ernst Cassirer on form and technology. Contemporary readings* (pp. 15–53). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Harré, R. (1983). *Personal being. A theory for individual psychology*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1986). *Varieties of realism: A rationale for the natural sciences*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1988). Parsing the amplitudes. In H. J. Brown, & R. Harré (Eds.), *Philosophical foundations of quantum field theory* (pp. 580–583). Clarendon: Oxford University Press.

Harré, R. (1990). Exploring the human Umwelt. In R. Bhaskar (Ed.), *Harré and his critics. Essays in honour of Rom Harré* (pp. 297–364). Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1993). *Social being*, 2nd Edn. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1998). Recovering the experiment. *Philosophy, 73,* 353–377.

Harré, R., & Van Langenhove, L. (Eds.). (1999). *Positioning theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (2001). Active powers and powerful actors. *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement, 48,* 91–109.

Harré, R. (2002). *Cognitive science a philosophical introduction*. London: Sage.

Harré, R., & Moghaddam, F. M. (Eds.). (2012). *Psychology for the third millenium. Integrating cultural and Neuroscience perspectives*. London: Sage.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Harré, R., & Tissaw, M. (2005). *Wittgenstein and psychology. A practical guide*. London: Ashgate.

Marx, K. (1857) [1974]. *Grundrisse*. Hammondsworth, Penguin.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1946) [1989]. *Phenomenology of perception.* London: Routledge.

Pickering, A. (1995). Science as Alchemy. In J. W. Scott, & D. Keates (Eds.), *Schools of thought. Twenty five years of interpretive social science* (pp. 194–206). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Van Langenhove, L. (Ed.) (2010). *People and societies. Rom Harré and designing the social sciences*. London: Routledge.

Wittgenstein, L. (1953). *Philosophical investigations.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Wittgenstein, L. (1931) [1995.] Bemerkungen über Frazers *Golden Bough*. In J. Schulte (Hrsg.) *Vortrag über Ethik* (pp. 29–46). Frankfurt A.m.: Suhrkamp.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 7
The Discursive Ontology of the Social World

Luk Van Langenhove

Harré's Ontological Perspective on the Natural and Social World

Ontology is a theory of what exists and how it exists. It can be contrasted with epistemology, a related theory of how people can come to know things. Ontology deals with every aspect of reality, both the natural realm as the social. But, as Wendt (2016, pp. 1–2) noted, the problem is that while there is a broad agreement on the nature of reality in the natural sciences (albeit a changing one), there is no such consensus in the social sciences. And on top of the lack of consensus, there is also the conceptual poverty of the ontological claims: at best either people or institutions, or agency versus structure, are advanced as the building blocks of the social realm. It has led to an endless debate between adherents of the agency that generates structure, versus those who believe structure generates agency. Mostly, these considerations are presented with little conceptual sophistication and without much relevance for empirical study of the social world (for an overview, see: Lawson et al. 2007). As these authors assert: "social scientists tended to treat ontology with a great deal of suspicion" (p. 1).

In sharp contrast with this stands the work of Harré in which indeed, very detailed ontological considerations about the both the natural and social realm have been presented. In Harré (1986), he has defended a realist position that links the ontology of the natural world to the epistemological capacities of human beings that form the 'umwelt' of people. He argues that the increasing empirical adequacy of science as a whole implies the convergence towards better and more accurate theories of the world. But the every-day knowledge about this, applies in first instance only to the human Umwelt, that is to the world made available to people by their perceptual, cognitive and manipulative capacities. For instance, people can

L. Van Langenhove (✉)
Vrije Universteit Brussel, Brussel, Belgium
e-mail: Luk.van.langenhove@vub.be

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_7

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

hear the sound of music on a radio, but they cannot directly experience the radio-waves that surround them. As such, the radio is a technical device that allows people to capture a part of the world that is otherwise not directly experienceable.

Towards an Ontology of the Social Realm

For Harré "the fundamental human reality is a conversation, effectively without beginning or end, to which, from time to time, individuals may take contributions" (Harré 1984, p. 20). Such a species-wide and history-long conversational web is regarded by Harré as the "primary" social reality. Within this reality he gives a special place to speech-acts which he sees as the 'substance' of the social world. The metaphor is clear: a speech-act is for the social realm what an atom, or matter, is for the (Newtonian) natural realm. But while what happens with atoms needs to be situated in a time/space referential grid, Harré argues that speech-acts need to understood within a different referential grid: that of the persons who utter the speech-act versus the conversational storylines of which they are part. This focus upon conversations is leading Harré to see everything else that counts as part of the social realm, as to be regarded as a "secondary" reality: products of the conversational reality that is constituted out of speech-acts (Van Langenhove 2011). And finally, one can also identify a tertiary social reality that consists out of the iconical representations of the primary and secondary social reality. The main claim of this article is that together these three manifestations of the social realm are to be considered as the ontological fabric of the social world. In the next sections, this speech-acts based ontology of the social world and its epistemological consequences, will be presented. In some more detail.

The Primary Social Reality: Discourse and Speech-Acts

The **primary social reality** consists out of the endless stream of conversations between people, both the ones in which they directly participate and those in which they don't participate but of which they are aware. The term 'conversation' needs to be understood here in a broad sense as it applies not only to face-to-face encounters between people but also to situations where for instance a person reads a sign that expresses a prohibition to smoke (which can be regarded as a one-way 'conversation' between that person and whoever had the authority to declare an area as smoke-free). Together, the direct and indirect conversations that people participate in, constitute the essence of the social world as the primary social reality that can be conceived as a species-wide and history-long network of people speaking to each other in an environment that is socially meaningful. Everything else that qualifies to be social phenomena, are products or representations of this primary social reality.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

From an analytical point of view, the primary social reality can also be divided into two different specific epistemological realms: The *Social Realm of the actual experience* and the *Social Realm of the possible experience*. The first can best be thought of as the directly experienced everyday conversations of people, together with the material substances involved in the conversations (other people, books, traffic signs, and so on). It is the daily flow of conversations in which people engage. But next to that direct experience, people can also experience conversations in which they did not take part but which are told to them or are recorded. This can be pictured as part of Social Realm of the possible or latent experience that consists out of what people tell to other people about conversations they had with others. Finally, there are also the millions of conversations that take place without a person being involved or ever aware of. These conversations can however still influence that person as for instance in the above-mentioned case of the non-smoking sign: somewhere at some time, some people talked about that and decided to create that smoking ban.

Within the primary social reality speech-acts occupy a special position. A speech-act is a linguistic concept that refers to an utterance that has a performative function in language and communication (Austin 1952). Speech acts are commonly taken to include such acts as promising, ordering, greeting, warning, inviting and congratulating. As such speech-acts form a kind of 'glue' that connects people to each other and that make it possible for persons to influence others (Van Langenhove 2019b). According to Searle (2009) there is even one specific formal linguistic mechanism that acts as a single unifying principle that constitutes any institutional structure. That principle underlying the ontology of the social realm is the capacity of persons to "impose functions on objects and people where the objects and the people cannot perform the function solely in virtue of their physical structure" (Searle 2009, p.7). Searle calls this "status functions" as they imply a collectively recognized status. A piece of paper will count as a 20 EUR bill only if people give that status to that piece of paper. Status functions also carry what Searle calls 'deontic power'. This is where the moral perspective comes in as deontic powers are all about 'rights, duties, obligations, requirements, permissions, authorizations, entitlements, and so on' (Searle 2009, p. 9). Deontic powers are according to Searle created by a specific sort of illocutionary speech-acts, namely 'declarations'. Exactly there lays a big difference between the natural and social world: the primary social reality does not exist independent of people and therefore what socially happens and what can happen, is subject to rules, conventions, rights and duties.

The Secondary Social Reality: Artefacts, Persons, Institutions and Fields

Out of that primary social reality is constructed a **secondary social reality** trough speech-acts that have the power to create social artefacts, persons and institutions as

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

well as social fields that influence the behavior of people. The former have a material substrate, and are therefore directly observable, the latter are not directly visible and 'surround' people. In both cases, none of them would exist without a series of speech-acts and acts that are necessary conditions for their creation. This is the socially constructed part of social reality.

Social Things with a Material Substrate

The social world consists out of three distinct types of materialized physical objects that all have their origin in speech-acts: artefacts, persons and institutions.

Social artefacts are *things* that would not exist without humans and are therefore of a social nature. To illustrate this: A mountain is a purely natural phenomenon, while a 'Terrill' is the result of human mining and thus a social phenomenon. Terrill's only exist since the invention of mining. The realm of social artefacts includes cities, roads, landscaped gardens, Korean food, wine, books, sheets and so on… The list is sheer endless. At the end of the day, all social artefacts are created through a chain of speech-acts. Ultimately, that can be an inner conversation of one person who deicides him/herself to produce something.

Next to the artefacts, people are surrounded by **persons**, other *people*, that are material beings (all persons have bodies) that have the power to engage in conversations and utter speech-acts. Some persons can be ignored by others as often happens when someone encounters a stranger in an elevator. But, many other people are definitely part of the social environment of a person as he or she constantly interacts with them. This happens not only in direct conversations, but also in complex chains of collaboration. For instance, somewhere in China, people have been working on assembling the computer that the author of this paper is using now. And much of the software on this device has been developed by other people in California. All of these people are total strangers to the author, but still, there is a social connection. That connection can be seen as a chain of speech-acts.

On top of all this, persons are also products of speech-acts! They are human beings that from the moment that they are born (and even before) are treated as if they are persons by ascribing intentions to them. It is through this process of personification that babies can develop into persons (cf. De Waele and Harré 1976; Van Langenhove 1986). In that sense, one can say that persons are created by speech-acts.

And finally, there are some **institutions** that have material correlates as well. Think of the 'Ministry of Finance' for instance: there are buildings that can be said to house the Ministry and there are people who work there. The special thing here is that while one can actually see the buildings of the Ministry and talk to the people who work there, one cannot as such experience the Ministry as such. The Ministry is also a collection of laws and rules as well as habits that are in constant flux. Institutions have also an 'invisible' component.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Social Fields that Surround People

If one excepts that persons, artefacts and conversations are the three direct observable elements of the social reality, the question is if this is an exhaustive description of what the social realm is? Let's again look at the material world: with our senses, we can observe a good chunk of it, but we know there is more.[1] Radio waves, as mentioned before, are a particular part of the physical reality and they are surrounding us at all times, but we cannot perceive them unless we have a radio that transforms the radio signals in sound. The same holds for the social reality: there are social 'fields' that are as such not visible, but they are there and they have a profound impact on what people do and on how a society functions. As Searle (1995, p. 4) noted: "the complex structure of social reality is, so to speak, weightless and invisible". It can only be talked about, and it is in talk that the social is constituted. Of course, the material substance associated with social phenomena can be seen: we can see the buildings of a university, but we never can 'see' the university as a functioning social entity without being involved in some sort of conversation with it.

Fields surround us at all times and influences what people do. As Mussser puts it when he talks about natural world fields (such as magnetism): "We are swimming in it and it is always tugging upon us. We never see it directly, but it makes its presence felt by communicating forces from one place to another" (Musser 2015, p. 72). The same holds for social fields. But there is a difference: within the material realm, the flow of time is going in one direction and objects can only take only one single place in the time/space. The Newtonian and Humean laws apply and causal effects of fields can only take place in the present and influence the direct future. For the social realm, the situation is different: speech-acts can have delayed or even backward effects and as such they play a crucial role in shaping the social realm. People can indeed influence the future: the speech-acts in a will for instance can have effects even after a person's death. And what we call history, is always a reconstruction of the past, based upon selections of speech-acts.

The actual conversations and the enlarged conversational umwelt together with the social artefacts that surround people make up the primary social reality that is directly observable. It is the visible social world that people can see and hear and in which they operate as powerful agents.

The secondary social reality consists next of the social artifacts also out of invisible **fields** created by speech acts that influence what people *can* do and are *allowed* to do. The former refers to the distributed knowledge that exists (and most of it is now available on the www) and that is used in daily life. The latter to the moral orders that give rights and duties to people.

The **knowledge** used to fabricate the social world in which we live envelops us as fields that influences our capabilities of doing things and act as an agent. When things work well, we hardly need to know how and why it functions. But when

[1]In Harré (1986) this is treated in detail when he presents the three realms of the natural world.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

something does not function, we need to tap into the available knowledge. A fundamental characteristic of people therefore is that we all possess knowledge on how to get access to knowledge. Part of that knowledge deals with understanding how the social realm functions. The field of knowledge that so to speak surrounds us and influences what we can do, also has another dimension: that field only exists because of a huge network of collaborations between people.

It was Harré (1984) who has developed the first systematic theory of **moral order** in his attempt to describe how the rights and duties of people differ from situation to situation and from context to context. For Harré, a moral order is an organized "*system of rights, obligations and duties obtaining in society, together with the criteria by which people and their activities are valued*". In Harré's view, a moral order has two dimensions: the first represents the rights people have in a given situation, the second, the locations in space and time that a person can (legitimately) occupy. If a person occupies the moral and physical places he or she is allowed to occupy, then that person acts in a socially conformist way. Any act that puts one in an 'improper" place is a socially deviant act. He pictures a society as comprising different moral orders, some of them rather stable, others more modest in size and only occasional convened (Harré 1984, p. 246).[2] In other words, while some moral norms can be very universal in a given society, others are the result of locally constructed understandings of rights and responsibilities. As a result, any given society contains a multiplicity of interacting and complementary moral orders. Some of those moral orders are of a very general nature and hardly linked to space and time. Other moral orders can be very specific and active only in specific spaces and/or for limited time-slots only. In both cases (general or specific) moral orders can be latent or active. Latent moral orders are not "in use" in a certain episode. Van Langenhove (2017) has identified different types of moral orders: general cultural orders, legal moral orders, institutional moral orders, conversational moral orders and personal moral orders. Together, the above five varieties of moral orders constitute the invisible moral space.

The Tertiary Social Reality

Finally, there is a **tertiary social reality** that consists of social icons that are used by people to refer to certain aspects of the primary and secondary social reality. During the everyday behaviour and talk of the primary structure, people develop and make use of iconical representations of that primary structure, the secondary structure and of the natural world.[3] These icons serve to make social life intelligible

[2]A society can be regarded as is a concrete manifestation in time and space of the social world.

[3]This can be regarded as Vygotskyian publications in the collective and public space. See Brock, this volume p.xx.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

and allow to account for persons own and others behaviour and talk. It is part of the ever-ongoing re-construction of the social world that people constantly summarize past experiences and conversations. Take for instance a person who attends a party and is asked about how it has been. The answer will for sure not be an exhaustive overview, but could be something as 'it was an awesome party'. So, one should bear in mind that the actors engaged in the social world being studied, already have developed rhetorical reconstructions themselves. This also applies to the institutions mentioned earlier, but there is a difference. As argued in Harré (1977), institutions are not to be seen as independent existents of which images ('icons') are conceived. Rather, they are icons which are used in explanations of certain problematic situations. So, social icons can be thought of as non-verbal images that act as vehicle for thought or as a bearer of concepts. The rhetorical redescriptions mentioned above can be understood as discursive constructions of stories about events and institutions that make them intelligible as societal icons. Icons can be ascribed powers to act, they can also be used as explanatory devices. It is important to stress that these social icons are not to be seen as representations of a secondary social reality, a reality that should have its own independent existence. The people, practices, institutions, organizations, societies *are* icons. It has also to be stressed that asserting that these icons are beyond possible experience does not mean that the secondary structure does not exist as a reality.

Conclusions

This paper has explored why and how discourse is the essence of the social world. This theory advances the idea that the social realm consists out of three analytical levels: the **primary social reality** of world-wide and species long conversations and speech acts, the **secondary social reality** of constructions that includes artefacts, persons and institutions and fields of influence that emerge out of speech acts, and a **tertiary social reality** in which the primary and secondary social reality are constantly re-constructed trough social icons and stories. These realities are not 'levels', there is only one level of social reality: that of conversations. The secondary reality are the products of that level, the third level are the representations used by persons to make sense of the social world they live in.

As such, any social sciences endeavor to understand the social phenomena should therefore involve discourse analysis. The complex interplay between speech acts, conversations and rights and duties of participants to the conversation can be studied in the socio-psychological positioning theory as developed by Rom Harré and others (see: Harré and Van Langenhove 1991; Harré and Van Langenhove 1999; Harré et al. 2009). Positioning theory allows to link empirical research to the ontology presented above. In this theory, the term position is used to refer to the momentary clusters of rights and duties to speak in a certain way. A position implicitly limits what a person in a given situation should do or say. In conversations the act of speaking, the story-lines of the conversations and the positions

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

that people adopt can be seen as a mutually determined triad. 'Position' in that context refers to the adopting of several rhetorical devices by which oneself and other speakers are presented as standing in various kinds of relations to each other. Positions and the accompanying permissible repertoires of acts are linked to the story-line. In positioning-theory this triad is used as a grammar to investigate how conversations develop in different kind of practices (cf. Davies and Harré 1990). Through positioning, specific moral orders are constituted that give form and meaning to the general persons/conversations grid. Moral orders determine the locations within that grid. In the triangle metaphor, the elements mutually determine one another. The position—the presumptions of rights and duties—influences the meaning given to certain speech-acts, while the position and the speech-acts influence and are influenced by the developing storyline. Societal icons and rhetorical redescriptions of social events are always used in the context of a positioning. As such, a social scientist is only creating a new positioning context.

Positioning theory should be regarded as a good starting point for reflecting upon the many different aspects of the social realm. One of the enduring legacies of Rom Harré is indeed his work on positioning that has generated a fast-expanding literature in which Positioning Theory is linked to empirical research based upon conversational analysis (for an overview see Kayi-Aydar 2019; James 2014 and Depperman 2015). Combining the insights from Positioning Theory with the here presented views on the ontology of the social words, allows to make an analytical distinction between three basic processes that occur simultaneously in conversations:

1. the positioning of people in moral orders (both the speakers and others);
2. the re-construction of past events; and
3. creation and usage of social icons.

In conversations, the natural and social world is constantly *reconstructed* by means of rhetorical descriptions of the reality and by iconical representations and *constructed* by means of the positioning of the participants. At the same time, the social world is also constantly constructed trough the speech-acts uttered in those conversations. If the species-wide and history-long ongoing conversation between people can be regarded as a labyrinth network, positioning theory offers a possibility to shift from the perspective of *maze traders*, those who are within the labyrinth, to a perspective of *maze viewers*, those who can see the labyrinth from above (Harré and Van Langenhove 1999, p. 13). Developing an ontology of the social world can contribute to a further refinement of the explicative power of people to understand and change the situations in which they live their lives. As Harré once noted: "the task of the reconstruction of society can be begun by anyone at any time in any face to face encounter" (Harré 1993, p. 274).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

References

Austin, J. L. (1952). *How to do things with Words*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior, 20*(1), 43–63.

Depperman, A. (2015). Positioning. In A. De Fina & A. Georgakopolou (Eds.), *The handbook of narrative analysis* (pp. 369–387). Chichester, UK: Wiley.

De Waele, J. P., & Harré, R. (1976). The personality of individuals. In R. Harré (ed.), *Personality*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1977). The Ethogenic approach: Theory and practice. In: L. Berkowitz (ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 10, pp. 49–115).

Harré, R. (1984). *Personal being*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1986). *Varieties of realism*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1993). *Social being* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R., & Secord, P. (1972). *The explanation of social behaviour*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R., Moghaddam, F., Pilkerton Cairnie, T., Rothbart, D., & Sabat, S. R. (2009). Recent advances in positioning theory. *Theory & Psychology*, *19*, 5–31. https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354308101417.

Harré, R., & Van Langenhove, L. (1991). Varieties of positioning. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 21*(4), 393–407.

Harré, R., & Van Langenhove, L. (1999). *Positioning theory*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

James, M. (2014). *Positioning theory and strategic communication*. London: Routledge.

Kayi-Aydar, H. (2019). *Positioning theory in applied linguistics. Research & applications*. London: Palgrave McMillan.

Lawson, C., Latsis, J., & Martins, N. (2007). *Contributions to social ontology*. London: Routledge.

Musser, G. (2015). *Spooky action at a distance*. New York: Scientific American

Searle, J. R. (2009). *Making the social world. The structure of human civilization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Van Langenhove, L. (1986). De Waele's ethogenic personality theory. In L. Van Langenhove, J. M. De Waele, & R. Harré (Eds.), *Inividual persons and their actions*. Brussels: VUB Press.

Van Langenhove, L. (2006). *Innovating the social sciences*. Vienna: Passagen Verlag.

Van Langenhove, L. (2011). *People and societies. Rom Harré and the designing of the social sciences*. London: Routledge.

Van Langenhove, L. (2017). *Varieties of moral orders*. Frontiers in Sociology.

Van Langenhove, L. (2019a) Extending Smedslund's psycho-logic system into a social theory. In: T.G. Lindstad, E.Ständlicke & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *Respect for Reasoning: Jan Smedslund's legacy for Psychology*. Springer Verlag. (In Press).

Van Langenhove L. (2019b). The entanglement of the social realm: Towards a quantum theory inspired ontology for the social sciences, Foundations of Science. (In Press).

Wendt, A. (2016). *Quantum mind and social science. Unifying physical and social ontology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 8
A Constructionist Conversation with Positioning Theory

Kenneth J. Gergen

Catalyst for Conversation: Realism and Constructionism

There are so many ways in which I have drawn sustenance from Harré's writings over the years. His critiques of the mechanistic orientation in psychology, his explorations of the social basis for mental life, his appreciation of the cultural and historical context of human action, and his concern with the significance of discourse in human affairs, have been valued intellectual companions. Fortunately for the intellectual health of the scholarly tradition, there are also conflicts. One of the major tensions emerging between us concerns the nature of scientific knowledge. A significant number of Harré's copious writings have been devoted to the conception of science. Two of the most significant characteristics of these writings are his commitment to realism (Harré 1987; Derksen 1993), and the closely related view of science as representational. On his view the sciences are engaged in the study of phenomena that exist independent of the researcher, thus challenging the researcher to provide an accurate representation of these phenomena. Putting it simply, in reply to the question of what is the relationship between the social sciences and the natural sciences, Harré (2016) replies, "Both are in the same kind of enterprise: that is, they are trying to give us a picture of how things are in some domain of the universe." Harré's realism is also represented in his account (Harré and Madden 1975) of causal powers, in it is proposed that the causal powers of people constitute "real essences" (p. 101) of an intrinsic nature (p. 86)." It is instantiated as well in Harré and Gillett (1994), in which the attempt is made to demonstrate how "discourse shapes the brain" (p. 80).

In contrast to Harré 's realism stand my own writings (Gergen 1994, 2015a) in social construction. Contemporary dialogues on the social construction of scientific knowledge represent a confluence of several streams of thought. Intellectual

K. J. Gergen (✉)
Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, USA
e-mail: kgergen1@swarthmore.edu

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_8

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

developments in the sociology of knowledge, the history of science, the social studies of science, socio-linguistics, post-structural literary theory, and critical theory among them, now move across the disciplines and the culture at large. There is no singular or unified "constructionist" account of science, and it must be thus understood that in the same way Harré does not speak for all who might view themselves as realists, my view of constructionism is not universally shared. In brief, my view is strongly influenced by Wittgenstein's later writings (Wittgenstein 1953, 1958), and particularly the view that the meaning of words originates in relationships. Our scientific accounts of the world are not determined or required by "what there is." They are created and employed by various subcultures of scientists to carry out what they see as intelligible pursuits. What are variously called "scientific facts" represent local agreements that prove to be useful for a particular sub-culture. Here we shift from understanding science as a "reflection of the real," to a pragmatically based construction of what we call reality.

At the same time, because cultures of science are held together by shared values, such values will be reflected in their accounts of the world. And, because these accounts enter into society as "received truth," they can affect patterns of social life for good or ill (according to various standards). For example, there may be good scientific support for diagnosing people with various forms of mental illness, but the evidence is a creation of a sub-culture that shares certain assumptions. And, constructing people as "mentally ill" has enormous consequences for society, including what many see as injustice, oppression, exploitation, the production of misery, and the increased "drugging" of the population. Thus favored by constructionism is an approach that addresses scientific endeavors in terms of a *reflective pragmatism*: For whom are these endeavors useful (or not) and with what implications for human welfare?

Two caveats are required: First, in my view there are no foundational grounds for this constructionist account, for example in facts, logic, or fundamental values. The account is itself a construction, one way among others of approaching knowledge—and indeed life itself. The question is not whether constructionism is True, but whether it is useful. And this question, in turn, will also be a question of values. At the same time, this very lack of a foundation can be viewed as a signal strength: an invitation to sustain the process of co-creation from which meaning derives. Second, there is much in Harré's writings over the years that resonates with this account. His emphasis on the importance of discourse in social life, on the social origins of the self, and the pragmatics of language usage are all congenial to a constructionist orientation. Indeed, his edited work (Harré 1989) on the social construction of emotion is replete with constructionist ideas. However, Harré approaches these issues largely as a realist. He treats the social construction of emotion as an actual phenomenon in the world. From the standpoint of constructionist metatheory, however, a constructionist understanding of social life is simply one way of constructing social life among many. As should be evident, a constructionist orientation to knowledge in general does not in itself favor a constructionist account of social life any more than a mechanistic one. Questions of pragmatic utility and social values would be prominent.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

The tension between Harré's orientation to scientific knowledge and my own, is scarcely an isolated event. Indeed, the debates between various forms of realism and constructionism have a long history. In recent decades they are represented in what have been called "the science wars," and the post-modern critiques of modernism. I don't wish to recapitulate these debates in the present offering. Rather, my attempt is to move beyond these continuing debates to ask "what difference does it make?" There are no ultimate means for resolving the metatheoretical conflict between realism and constructionism (in all their varieties), because whatever was used to rationalize their intelligibility would itself require rationalization. There are no ultimate grounds for a metatheory of knowledge, because the grounds themselves would require grounding. At the same time, while it is difficult for realists to find means of integrating constructionist ideas into their vision of science, constructionists can incorporate realist life forms into their vision (Gergen 1994). As proposed, we can inquire into the cultural utility of these competing orientations in various circumstances.

Thus, in the present offering I wish to place in focus a significant line of inquiry in which Harré has played a major role, namely the analysis of social positioning. We may then explore the potentials of approaching this work from a constructionist as opposed to a realist standpoint.

Positioning Theory: Constructionist Reflections

In what follows I wish to address positioning theory and its accompanying analyses with three inquiries. In each case, I wish to explore the potentials and pitfalls of positioning work from constructionist and realist standpoints. My special concern is with how a constructionist view of scientific knowledge might indeed prove useful for future developments in positioning theory and research.

Is There Empirical Justification?

The realist tradition in the science has been an attractive one for many reasons. Among the most prominent of these is that a realist science promises to provide descriptions and explanations of the world that are justified through careful observation and analysis. Such accounts of the world are said to be free of conceptual, cultural, or ideological biases. In effect, science can yield justified truth about the world, regardless of others' beliefs or values. On the face of it, the explorations into positioning would seem to fall heir to this tradition. For example, in reviewing the research in positioning, Harré et al. (2009) write, "Methods of research in positioning theory…are specifically designed to conform to the nature of the phenomena…" (p. 6) Ironically, however, one finds it difficult to locate within the substantial literature on positioning *any* attempts to test its assumptions

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

against nature. One searches in vain to locate any empirical methods, measures, statistics, or attempts to grapple with alternative explanations. This literature is replete with analyses of positioning processes in social life, but given an enormous number of possible accounts, there is little in the way of the kind of research that would champion positioning accounts over any others.

This irony is all the more striking, however, as Harré's realism is coupled in this case with a strong concern with the function of people's subjective understandings in shaping their behavior. As Harré et al. (2009) propose, "Positioning theory…is concerned with revealing the implicit and explicit patterns of reasoning that are realized in the way people act toward others." (p. 5). Yet, in the case of positioning research there is little or no attention to the subjective life of the actors involved. For example, positioning theory makes a strong case for the importance of people's conceptions of their "rights" and "duties" in shaping their behavior. And yet, there is no empirical support for claiming that people actually consider rights and duties in the way they address each other. Perhaps they are insouciantly following conventions of what people ordinarily say in the circumstances under consideration; perhaps their utterances are driven by their emotions; possibly they are tactically attempting to gain dominance over the other; perhaps they are acting out of needs for self-protection; possibly they are simply muddled. And over the course of a conversation, perhaps all these factors are in play—or none of them. Claims to the reality of subjective rights and duties in shaping discourse lie on fallow ground.

Yet, it is precisely here that a constructionist orientation can serve as an invaluable ally. For constructionists, theoretical formulations are not derived from observation; and without extensive social negotiation they cannot be proven true or false through observation. In effect, the relationship between theory and observation is socially contingent. Thus, for constructionists the demand for an empirical warrant for positioning theory is removed from the table. At the same time, as positioning inquiry reliably demonstrates, analysis does effectively make social life intelligible. It enables us to "see" how the significance of a given utterance is not exhausted by an analysis of its content, but should include the way in which it implicitly defines the speaker and the recipient. Our "lens of viewing" shifts from the syntactic to the pragmatic aspects of language.

It is neither true nor false that positioning is an actual occurrence in social life. However, this is beside the point. The mechanical conception of case and effect is likewise a social construction; however, for certain restricted purposes (predicting plant growth, the weather, physical illness), it has been useful. The question we must now address, however, is in what respects is this particular lens useful to society—or not. This is not a question that can be answered with the common reply that it gives us "insight," as this would presume some form representational accuracy. In taking up this question, let us focus on the purposes of research more generally.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

What Is the Purpose of Inquiry?

A second attractive feature of realist science is its promise of prediction and control. On this view, research may properly be aimed at testing theories about the workings of the world, winnowing out those that fault predicts, and refining those that are confirmed. Empirically grounded theories, in turn, invite broad scale application, from curing diseases, creating atomic energy plants, to sending spacecraft to the moon. This line of thinking has formed the foundation in psychology for the mainstream commitment to experimentally-based hypothesis testing. Interestingly, positioning theorists have been unable to draw sustenance from this realist rationale. This is so, in part, out of their distaste for experimentation and its mechanistic assumptions of cause and effect. There is a further conceptual barrier: The promise of prediction and control is based on a vision of a lawful universe with systematic recurrence of the phenomena in question. In contrast, positioning theory is based on the assumption of cultural and historically lodged rules of conduct. There may be multiple understandings of these rules, with ambiguity, fluctuation and continuous hybridization. In effect, they posit an ephemeral world of social life in which the goal of prediction has little promise.

It should not be surprising, then, that inquiry into positioning has largely taken the form of post hoc analysis. For realist psychologists, even those centrally concerned with the qualities of human meaning, such analyses do not generally count as *research*. They may be little more than demonstrations of interpretive skills. So, let us return here to the earlier question: what is the contribution of such analyses to the society more generally? If their justification on realist grounds is shaky, is there more to be said from a constructionist standpoint?

From a constructionist standpoint, we may look at theories as forms of human intelligibility. As these forms of intelligibility enter the society they have the potential to transform the society for good or ill. The preceding example of mental illness diagnostics is apt. In earlier writing Gergen (1978), I made a case for *generative theory*, that is, theory that challenges taken for granted assumptions in the culture, and inspires new explorations and innovations. In my view, positioning theory has significant generative properties.

The first significant challenge to traditional assumptions has been well accounted for by positioning scholars themselves, namely its standing as an alternative to role theory. While role theory has assumed more or less fixed or structured social roles, positioning theory paints a far more fluid picture of relationships. Rights and duties may shift subtly and rapidly during the course of a conversation. Such a view may be especially relevant in the contemporary world of rapid flux, in which the definition of social roles are under continuous transformation. Contrary to role theory, positioning theory sharpens the sensitivity to detail and nuance in relationships.

Positioning theory also makes a significant contribution to what many call the "sociocultural turn" in psychological theory more generally (Kirschner and Martin 2010). Psychologists from around the world now challenge the dominant Western paradigm in psychology, premised on the idea of universal, biologically determined

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

mental processes. The presumption of a "self-contained individual" is abandoned in favor of a vision of persons as inherently intertwined in their actions. And, as we now propose, the patterns of these intertwinings may vary with culture and across time. Positioning theory adds sophisticated and nuanced weight to such views. From a constructionist standpoint, then, positioning analyses are not so much reflections of reality, but creations of what we take to be social life. This is not a shortcoming of such analyses, but the chief reason for their significance.

Yet, herein lies an invitation to further development of positioning theory. As I have argued elsewhere (Gergen 2015b), when we understand our theoretical work in terms of generating potentially potent intelligibilities, we open the door to reexamine our scholarly and scientific practices. If we as social scientists are engaged in future forming, how can we do it well? Such a question calls attention, for one, to the practices of communication. To whom are we communicating, and with what kinds of outcomes? In this context, positioning analyses are by and large locked within a professional language, weighted by a multiplicity of distinctions that speaks to almost no one outside academic circles. For the culture at large, such analyses might be regarded as unintelligible and elitist. This is also a tradition that invites us as scholars to "defend and expand our territory." In our competition for space, visibility, and resources, we write for "insiders," in a competition for erudition. Our traditions of competition, and the associated deployment of rhetoric thus blunt the generative potential of our work.

Beyond the intelligibility of positioning theory, lies the further question of practical utility. A future forming sensitivity shifts the direction of inquiry from reflecting or representing the social world, to actively transforming it. In terms of research practices, for example, this shifts the emphasis from laboratory experimentation to action research. In this context, there has been an interest among positioning scholars (Moghaddam et al. 2008; Moghaddam and Harré 2010) to extend their analysis to intergroup and international conflicts. Such analyses do illustrate how theory may be applied to such problems. However, this scholarly exercise falls short of entering into the conflict situations themselves, or using the resources to actually defuse antagonisms. Invited, then, are further developments in positioning work, possibly developing usable practices of conflict reduction, educational workshops, and professional training.

What Are the Ideological Implications?

From a realist perspective, scientific descriptions and explanations of the world should ideally be free of political, moral, or personal biases. As commonly said, science is concerned with what is and not what ought to be the case. To be sure, scientists may be guided by epistemic values (e.g. seeking truth, eschewing falsehood, rationality, accuracy), but other forms of human desire act as unwanted biases. As earlier proposed, constructionists point out, in contrast, that the sub-cultures of science carry with them assumptions about desirable ways of life,

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

and these are inescapably woven into their practices. For example, the valuing of logic over emotion itself carries normative weight. And too, as illustrated, scientific intelligibilities can themselves transform cultural life.

In their sustaining the realist orientation, positioning scholars have generally avoided taking stands on political or moral issues. Nor are they prone to undertake critical reflection on the ideological implications of their particular constructions of the social world. This is not to say that positioning scholars lack concern with issues of political or moral significance. We have just touched on the attempt to apply positioning theory to world conflict. And, a concern with the "moral order" and its effects on positioning processes prevails throughout the positioning literature. However, these are the concerns of the "objective observer." The analyses are *about* conflict and the moral order, but without taking sides in such conflicts or recommending any particular kind of morality.

Let us then subject positioning theory to the kind of critical reflection invited by the constructionist dialogues. There are indeed a range of issues that critical psychologists might wish to explore. There is a conservative undertone to much positioning work. There is little questioning, for example, of the way rights and duties are distributed in society, and little attention to why this distribution so often favors those in power. There is no challenging the imagination or igniting the passion of those who would wish to undermine moral orders they see as unjust or exploitative. Feminists might fault much positioning analysis in its pervasive concern with a world of masculine conversation. Where is the place of caring in this world of conversation, of desire, passion, or anger? Environmentalists, as well, might see positioning analysis as yet another case of anthropocentrism, in which social scientists suppress or are blind to the environmental conditions essential to human well-being. None of these critiques are lethal; all issue from sundry cultures of value. However, they do invite reflexive attention to one's activities as social scientists. How, for example, might such critiques open new spaces of theorizing about positioning discourse or new avenues of inquiry or practice.

At the same time, critical reflection will also yield much to be praised in positioning analysis. For example, there is widespread concern today with identity politics, and the way in which minorities are suppressed and denigrated, both systemically and in the common conventions of the culture. Structures of power and injustice are sustained, as it is argued, not so much by force of arms as by the taken for granted conventions in a society. In this context, positioning analyses could provide valuable resources for social critics, as they could point out subtle forms of micro-aggression in common play, and propose ways they might be thwarted. Earlier I also pointed to the contribution of positioning theory to the socio-cultural turn in psychology. Harré's tracing of mental life to social origins is particularly noteworthy. If we put aside Harré's allusions to voluntary agency, one may thus view positioning theory as a bulwark against individualism. For my own part, the profound damage resulting from individualist ideology was a central motive for my efforts (Gergen 2009) toward a relational account of human activity. So here we come full circle, and once again I find in Harré's work a stellar companion in arms.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

References

Derksen, A. A. (Ed.). (1993). *The scientific realism of Rom Harré*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.

Gergen, K. J. (1978). Toward generative theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 36,* 1344–1360.

Gergen, K. J. (1994). *Realities and relationships: Soundings in social construction*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Gergen, K. J. (2009). *Relational being: Beyond the individual and community*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gergen, K. J. (2015a). *An invitation to social construction (*3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Gergen, K. J. (2015b). From mirroring to world-making: Research as future forming. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, *45*, 287–310.

Harré, R. (1987). *Varieties of realism: A rational for the natural sciences*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (Ed.). (1989). *The social construction of emotions*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R. (2009). Saving critical realism. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour., 39,* 129–143.

Harré, R. (2016). *What is social science? An interview with Rom Harré*. Tomorrow's Professor Postings: Stanford University.

Harré, R., & Gillett, G. (1994). *The discursive mind*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Harré, R., & Madden, E. H. (1975). *Causal powers: A theory of natural necessity*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R., Moghaddam, F. M., Cairnie, T. P., Rothbart, D., & Sabat, S. R. (2009). Recent advances in positioning theory. *Theory and Psychology., 19,* 5–31.

Kirschner, S., & Martin, J. (Eds.). (2010). *The sociocultural turning psychology: The contextual emergence of mind and self*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Moghaddam, F., & Harré, R. (Eds.). (2010). *Words of conflict, words of war: How the languages we use in political processes sparks fighting*. New York: Praeger.

Moghaddam, F. M., Harré, R., & Lee, N. (Eds.). (2008). *Global conflict resolution through positioning analysis*. New York: Springer.

Wittgenstein, L. (1953) *Philosophical investigations.* Translated by G.E.M. Anscombe. New York, NY: Macmillan.

Wittgenstein, L. (1958). *The blue and brown books: Preliminary studies for the philosophical investigations*. Oxford: Blackwell.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 9
Revisiting *Greenspeak*

Peter Mühlhäusler

Some Personal Memories

My time at Linacre College (1979–1992) was a mind-blowing and happy period of my life. That I got my fellowship is in part due to Rom Harré who was on my appointments committee. Being seen fit to fill such a position involves not only long interviews but also one-to-one meetings with members of the committee and communal meals. The fact that I filled my pipe with 'Cambridge mixture' (I have since switched to Oxford Mix and College Flake) and ordered a port before dinner took some of the committee members by surprise. One of the highlights of the process was a long discussion with Rom Harré about Konrad Lorenz's work in ethology, the study of human behaviour from a biological perspective. We ended up discussing Lorenz's project on wild boar communication and my own observations on these animals. I was impressed with Rom's erudition and the manner in which he shared his vast knowledge with others. Following my appointment I sought out Rom as a mentor to help me get familiar with college life and we soon began to collaborate on a number of projects, first the big Blackwell *Encyclopaedia of Psychology* (1983). On numerous conversations over college meals we discussed many other topics of joint interest, some of them ephemeral such as the use of worms for human consumption, others of a more substantial nature. Rom's work on the social construction of emotions continues to influence my research on emotion words in Norf'k, the language spoken by the descendants of the Mutineers of the Bounty on Norfolk Island and his views in *Varieties of Realism* (1986) and my discussions with Rom on ontology have been very influential for my thinking about the nature of languages

P. Mühlhäusler (✉)
Supernumerary Fellow, Linacre College, Oxford, UK
e-mail: peter.muhlhausler@adelaide.edu.au

University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_9

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

whose ontology has all too often been misunderstood by linguists, as have concepts such as wilderness, landscape or nature in environmental studies.

The majority of our many discussions were in the spirit of the epigraph we chose for *Greenspeak*:

> Language is our only key to the correct and complete understanding of the life and thought of a people' (W. Pitt Rivers report to the British Association for the Advancement of Science 1912:186).

Unsurprisingly, the role of language in understanding personal and social being was one of the topics of our many conversations. and we developed our thoughts into a lecture series on the relationship between pronominal systems and concepts of selfhood for colleagues and students of linguistics and other disciplines held on college premises. It was exciting to lecture with Rom. There was a lot of participation, and there were questions, discussions and disagreements. Out of these lectures emerged our book Pronouns and People, which appeared in 1996. It received a fair bit of praise from scholars of many disciplines other than linguistics. Talking about the relationship of language to the world was not encouraged by transformationalists and other formal linguists at the time. Ironically, many years later our chapter on first person non-singular pronouns was the topic of a two sessions at the International Pragmatics Conference in Manchester in 2011. The contributions were published as Pavlidou (2014) with a foreword by Rom.

Neither Rom nor I believe in disciplinary boundaries or the virtue of conforming to disciplinary paradigms. Our next joint enterprise was to explore how language shapes human perceptions of and attitudes and actions to the natural environment. We were particularly interested in the question whether the growing body of writings concerned with environmental matters did any work or whether we were dealing with a case of what Rom called 'greenspeaking'. We gave two series of lectures at Linacre joined by Jens Brockmeier and again had numerous discussions with the participants. As befitted the occasion, most of the texts analysed came from the collection of papers on environmental issues compiled by the college Principal (Cartledge 1992). We argued that (p. vii of our introduction to *Greenspeak*) the papers in the Cartledge collection offered us a credible way out of the predicament of having to choose from an ever-growing body of Greenspeaking and Greenwriting.

Greenspeak—The Book

Greenspeak (Harré et al. 1998) is the outcome of our collaboration and, keeping in mind that in my native Alemannic we say that every fox praises its own tail, it was received very well across many disciplines and I am still amazed at the annual check from Sage. Our ideas underpin the exercise that has become the subdiscipline of ecolinguistics and, as I will argue, ignoring what we argued in our book is one of the reasons why ecolinguistics appears to have gone off the rails. The dustcover of *Greenspeak* summarises its message as follows:

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

> In this remarkably interdisciplinary examination of the discourse of environmentalism, the authors explore the linguistic, philosophical, psychological and cultural-historical aspects of environmental discourse; rather than environmental phenomena themselves. This volume is not advocacy on environmentalism, rather, it is an analysis of the means of persuasion and the techniques of advocacy used by both sides of the environmental debate between 'conservationists' and 'conservatives'. Based on studies conducted between 1992 and 1996, the book includes an analysis of the concepts of time and space in their linguistic manifestations. Another theme is the interdependencies of the natural world with political and economic institutions. Ultimately, it is a call to action as the authors see an increase in the 'greening' of English and Western languages, a kind of linguistic way of replacing or postponing action with talk alone.

One of the central messages of our book is to 'make explicit the problem of the interconnectivity between environmental discourse and the environment' (p. ix) and our aim was to devise a critical meta-discourse rather than a simplistic 'critique of language' or indulge in unreflected environmental advocacy. What we advocated is that environmental studies take a linguistic turn and that linguistics should take an environmental turn. As regards the former, such a turn has yet to happen. In *Greenspeak* we distinguished between scientific, economic, moral and aesthetic discourses about the environment and advocated a discursive checking of scientific discoveries, models and inventions, something that continues to be routinely excluded from much of standard science, including much of ecolinguistics. Such checking seeks to identify the validity of scholarly claims by examining the discursive and narrative strategies of claimants and stakeholders, identifying hidden biases and faulty argumentation. In an age when models and representations are often discursely equated with reality and when maps are confused with territory this is crucial in achieving a closer approximation to truth. Truth in classical Greek philosophy was a-letheia, that which is not hidden. The task of enquiry was to remove whatever hides it: ideology, lies, misconception etc. I sometimes irreverently tell my students that there are a number of bullshit removal devices that help us uncover the truth: Theories, methods and techniques. Discursive checking serves the function of testing the quality of theories, methods and techniques.

For a brief period, until funding ran out, I promoted the linguistic turn of environmental studies by offering a course on 'Language and Environment' to students of Environmental Science at Adelaide. In my discussions with scientists, in particular those concerned with water issues, I noted that metalinguistic awareness is typically absent in the work of most environmental scientists and that like legal studies, economics or much of anthropology the hard sciences remain language-free disciplines.

Ironically, the environmental turn of linguistics has been much more vigorous. The number of ecolinguistic courses around the world has grown enormously in recent years and ecolinguistic research and teaching has spread from western Europe to Southern and Eastern Europe, Brazil and China. And a few years ago the *International Ecolinguistics Association*, (ecolinguistics-association.org.) was set up. It characterizes ecolinguistics as follows:

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

> Ecolinguistics explores the role of language in the life-sustaining interactions of humans, other species and the physical environment. The first aim is to develop linguistic theories which see humans not only as part of society, but also as part of the larger ecosystems that life depends on. The second aim is to show how linguistics can be used to address key ecological issues, from climate change and biodiversity loss to environmental justice.

The introduction to the Ecolinguistics Reader (Fill and Mühlhäusler 2001) distinguishes three emerging directions within ecolinguistics, all of them discussed in *Greenspeak*:

1. The ecology of language approach, which examines the structured diversity of human languages and asks, as I did in my 1993 inaugural lecture at the University of Adelaide: What is the use of linguistic diversity? Language ecologies feature prominently in the moral discourses of those concerned with preserving, maintaining or reviving linguistic diversity. Those moral discourses are rarely underpinned by scholarly research into the complex interdependencies between different ways of speaking and the majority of language maintenance programmes is concerned with strengthening single 'authentic' languages rather than structured language ecologies, which may contain language forms such as pidgins and slang, i.e. forms of speech often not taken seriously by speakers and linguists. This, of course, is not different from nature preservation where charismatic species such as koalas, pandas or rhinoceroses are singled out and others such as weevils, fungi and grasses that sustain them are ignored. In spite of its potential, the ecology of language approach has done disappointingly little work to date. To compound the problem is the uncritical acceptance of the traditional metalinguistic understanding of languages as bounded entities or species rather than complex communicational activities.
2. The language and environment approach, which examines the interrelationship between linguistic practices and the natural and social ecologies languages. Sapir's observation (Sapir 1912) that terms such as 'nature' and 'landscape' are discursively constructed rather than given objects precludes the identification of simplistic correlations and calls for detailed empirical studies. Unfortunately, the empirical approach to ecolinguistics, advocated by myself in an number of papers, remains underdeveloped and overshadowed by a prolificity of greenspeaking.
3. Finally, there is critical ecolinguistics which critiques language from an environmentalist perspective. As in the case of language and environment studies critical ecolinguistics is dominated by ideological and moral discourses rather than detailed empirical work. One is reminded of the history of Whorfian linguistics, which Rom and I discussed in Pronouns and People (1990). Our interest in Whorf was also shared by our friend and colleague Roy Harris who made a valuable contribution to the study of environmental metaphor. It was Whorf who got Roy and me interested in linguistics and it is of interest to note that two other well-known linguists had the same experience. Michael Halliday once mentioned to me that Language, Thought and Reality, (Whorf 1956) was his first encounter with linguistics and Alwin Fill, in a recent interview remembers that when he read this book at the age of 28 he 'began to relalize the

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

> power of language'. Whorf and his teacher Sapir are at times characterized as the fathers of ecolinguistics. (Mühlhäusler 2000) Whorf took linguistic relativity and linguistic determinism as a fact and restricted himself to illustrating it with selected examples rather than as hypotheses in need of empirical verification. In *Greenspeak* we critically examined a number of linguistic devices employed in constructing environmental discourses including narratives, metaphor and a range of rhetorical devices. Importantly, the discursive work that such devices can do depends on their accreditation. 'Human are naked apes' is a literal statement in scientific discourse but a blasphemous metaphor in that of creationists. In analysing the various rhetorical devices of environmental discourse, we emphasized, one must take into account the findings of hard science. Thus, we note that there is a widespread confusion between heuristic climate metaphors and models and climate reality. With regard to climate discourse and the notion of greenhouse effect observable in a closed car on a hot day we observed: 'The 'greenhouse' metaphor makes the picture intelligible, but does the picture make the state of the Earth intelligible?' We shall have to wait on atmospheric science to tell us. To add a touch of irony to the greenhouse story, here is a newly marketed gadget that uses solar energy to cool the interiors of the very same cars that sunlight has warmed up (p. 62).

Greenspeak features a whole chapter on temporal dimensions which, in our view, are a central issue. There is tension between different time orders which is discursively reconciled in environmentalist discourse. 'The natural time order is embedded in natural science as the accrediting medium, whereas individual time is accredited within some or other framework of moral (and aesthetic) considerations and imperatives' (p. 136). The importance of understanding the human individual and cultural perceptions of time and how they differ from temporal parameters in nature cannot be overstated. In *Greenspeak* (pp. 128–130) we document how the extinction discourse is rendered problematic by a confusion of different time perspectives. Where no such confusion exists genuine insights can be gained, an example being Peter Wohlleben's fascinating chapter on the language of trees in 'The hidden life of trees' (Wohlleben 2016) 'The leaf tissue sends out electrical signals, just as human tissue does when it is hurt. However, the signal is not transmitted in milliseconds, as human signals are; instead, the plant signal travels at the slow speed of a third of an inch per minute' (2016:8).

Like most 'modern' approaches to linguistics from Saussure onwards, ecolinguistics has remained time-poor in spite of the fact that diversity of any kind is the outcome of development over time. I have tried to show the importance of mapping the changes and fluctuations over time when trying to capture the discrepancies between the contours of language and the contours of nature (Mühlhäusler 1996, 2003). Awareness of cyclical time is receding and the dominance of linear and directional time in global society is firmly established. The lack of attention to natural cyclical processes combined with the attenuated understanding humans have of deep time and very short time spans distorts many contemporary discourses including the climate, extinction and diversity discourses.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

In *Greenspeak* discourses of both biological and linguistic-cultural diversity play a central role. In my subsequent readings I have become aware of a growing confusion between diversity and what one could refer to as multiplicity. Both diversity and multiplicity are the outcome of developments over time, with a significant difference. Diversity results from uniformitarian and adaptive changes over long periods of time; multiplicity results from catastrophic processes during a brief period of time. Pitcairn is a volcanic island that came into being about 700,000 years ago. When it was settled by the mutineers of the Bounty and their Polynesian entourage in 1790 it had 18 endemic and 98 indigenous vascular plant species. Today there are 264 additional vascular plant species. Overall, endemic species make up 5%, indigenous species 26% with the remaining species being exotic species introduced in the last 200+ years, (Göthesson 1997: 40–41). The diversity of endemic and indigenous plants is severely threatened by the multiplicity of exotic ones. This rapid increase in lifeform multiplicity is encountered on most small islands in the Pacific. Norfolk Island, where I have been carrying out fieldwork over more than two decades, today features a much larger number of plant and vertebrate species than at the time of Cook's discovery in 1774. However, whilst then one was dealing with a highly structured diversity characterised by interdependence rather than competition; today a vast number of introduced life forms outcompete the endemic ones and create an ecology characterised by imbalances and extinction of endemic species and potential disaster. The fact that there is a greater number of lifeforms than in the past is not a sign of health, though the various discourses about introduced species in Norfolk reveal a variety of perspectives. In the age of colonial acclimatization societies introducing new species was seen as a solution to the needs of the diverse groups of settlers. Today some introduced species, though not the ones that have utilitarian value, are increasingly perceived as a problem, as a significant part of the endemic and native flora and fauna has become endangered or extinct, with less than 5% of the island's original vegetation cover still intact. Meanwhile discourses of unspoilt natural beauty continue to be employed in the developing ecotourism industry of the island.

A similar argument about can be made for languages. Linguists, for reasons best known to them, provide a figure of 11 languages and 37 dialects of English traditionally spoken in the U.K. In 1915 there were more than 300 first languages spoken by British school children. (https://www.telegraph.co.uk/…/More-than-300-different-languages-spoken-in-British-sc).

As new waves of migrants and refugees bring further languages with them there are very few functional links between the various recently introduced languages and their links to the endangered minority languages and dialects of Britain is all but non-existent. Similarly, the growing number of migrant languages in Australia has done nothing to arrest the decline of the indigenous languages. There would seem to be little reason for celebrating 'diversity'.

When examining environmental discourses in our lectures we noted the prevailing tendency towards greenspeaking. The discourses become a substitute for action. A large-scale survey of environmental discourses I wrote with an anthropologist colleague (Mühlhäusler and Peace 2006), confirms this finding. In the

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

circumstances we question the work that such discourses have done to solve environmental problems. It also reveals the loss of illocutionary force of the many 'eco-friendly' expressions that have become part of the English language in the last 50 years. I characterized this as 'semantic bleaching' where words stand for colourless green ideas.

Many years after *Greenspeak* appeared in print I had a discussion with Rom about causativity, I noted my observations about the different ways in which causation is talked about in Western and Australian Aboriginal languages. Standard Average European discourse emphasizes effective cause, Aboriginal discourse emphasises inherent cause. Western discourses about the environment is framed in terms of agency and effect. In *Greenspeak*, we note the narrative patterns underlying environmental discourses and the dominant role of two agents, hero and villain, in them. When environmental problems are discussed, the identification of heroes and villains remains a central concern. Responsibility for environmental problems furthermore tends to be assigned to a very small number of agents or parameters, rendering explanations problematic.

What about the greening of the linguistics discipline. Has ecolinguistics made a difference? Arguably much less than it could have. Whilst other disciplines have taken aboard the concern of *Greenspeak* of how we discursively represent our world? With hindsight, it would have been better to argue that language is an ecological phenomenon, intertwined with and part of the world than to treat language as something separate which can be correlated with the world. Eco-linguistics like socio-linguistics and psycho-linguistics thus has been reduced to a hyphenated discipline. Linguistics proper continues to occupy he moral high-ground and to claim to be a proper science. It is difficult to see how a discipline that confuses representation with the phenomena it purports to represent can avoid paying attention to the discursive practices that underpin the exercise and dismiss as irrelevant observations made in *Greenspeak* and in the writings of integrational linguists such as Roy Harris (e.g. Harris 1981).

I visited Rom at his home in Iffley in 2017 and spent a delightful morning with him, discussing questions of the Philosophy of Chemistry and pronoun grammar. Like always a conversation with Rom has given me cause to think about new questions and to remember the guiding motto of Linacre College: No end to knowledge.

References

Cartledge, B. (1992). *Monitoring the environment*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fill, A., & Mühlhäusler, P. (Eds.). (2001). *The ecolinguistics reader: Language, ecology and environment*. New York: Continuum.

Göthesson, L.-A. (1997). *Plants of the Pitcairn Islands*. Sydney: Centre for South Pacific Studies.

Harré, R. (1986). *Varieties of realism: A rationale for the natural sciences*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R., Brockmeier, J., & Mühlhäusler, P. (1998). *Greenspeak: A study of environmental discourse*. London: Sage.

Harris, R. (1981). *The language myth*. London: Duckworth.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Lamb, R., & Harré, R. (1983). *The Encyclopedia of psychology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Mühlhäusler, P. (2003). *Language of environment-environment of language*. London: Battlebridge.
Mühlhäusler, P. (2000). Humboldt, Whorf and the roots of ecolinguistics. In M. Pütz & M. H. Verspoor (Eds.) *Explorations in linguistic relativity* (pp. 89–100). Amsterdam: Benjamins.
Mühlhäusler, P. (1996). Linguistic adaptation to changed environmental conditions: Some lessons from the past. In A. Fill (Ed.) *Sprachökologie und Ökolinguistik* (pp. 105–130). Tübingen: Stauffenburg.
Mühlhäusler, P., & Peace, A. (2006). Environmental discourses. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *35*(1), 457–479.
Mühlhäusler, P., & Harré, R. (1990). Pronouns and people: The linguistic construction of social and personal identity. In *Language and society* (Vol. 15, pp. viii & 303). Oxford: Blackwell.
Pavlidou, T.-S. (2014). *Constructing collectivity: 'We' across languages and contexts*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing.
Sapir, E. (1912). Language and environment. *American Anthropologist 14,* 226–242.
Whorf, B. L. (1956). *Language, thought and reality*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
Wohlleben, P. (2016). *The hidden life of trees*. London: William Collins.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 10
Governmental Power and Positioning of Marginalized People

Daniel Rothbart

The range of Rom Harré's contributions to the constructive perspective to social psychology is remarkable with ground-breaking insights in narratology, discourse analysis, theories of the person, and ethogenics. All of these field are integrated within his theory of positioning, which he developed with Fathali Moghaddam and van Langenhove.[1] A position refers to an actor's (or group's) relative stance that is implicated in discursive practices. Actors adopt, are assigned, are born into, or are forcibly imposed certain positions that afford them a certain degree of power, high or low, in their relations with others. Accounts of patients in hospitals, prisoners in jails, or soldiers in state-run military units are assigned positions. Such positions are determined by the norms, expectations, rights and obligations of the prevailing moral order (Harré and Moghaddam 2003, Chap. 1).

In this chapter I extend positioning theory to a topic of central importance in the field of conflict analysis, that is, the nature of contested governmental power over the governed. I examine how certain governments execute a particularly menacing form of power by invading the collective consciousness of a targeted population group, warping their thoughts about themselves and fabricating notions about their lowly position in the "just social order." Such invasion is advanced through instruments of collective stigmatization, where certain marginalized groups are tainted as criminals, disease-ridden or obsessed with violence, for example. Such stigmatization tends to be rationalized by governmental officials as innocuous, as if good for society as large while pernicious to the deserving few. Their power comes

[1]Positioning theory came onto the academic scene with the publication of two volumes: first, *Positioning Theory* edited by Rom Harré and Luk van Langenhove published in 1999, and second, *The Self and Others: Positioning Individuals and Groups in Personal, Political, and Cultural Centers*, edited by Rom Harré and Fathali Moghaddam, published in 2003.

D. Rothbart (✉)
George Mason University, Fairfax, USA
e-mail: drothbar@gmu.edu

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_10

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

with clear political messages regarding specific burdens, restrictions, and limitations or controls imposed upon the targeted population group.

I begin this analysis with the conception of power generally (Sect. 1). This conception is relevant for an insidious form of power in which the central authorities of the state contort notions of the social-political "reality" in ways that prefigure disciplinary control (Sect. 2). I conclude with examples of current policies and practices of the United States government for the treatment of unauthorized immigrants currently living in this country (Sect. 3). Such a treatment illustrates the impact of what I call systems of collective humiliation which, in turn, reflect Rom Harré's insights on the social construction of emotions (Harré 1986).

What is Governmental Power?

We know that hospitals have power over its patients, prisons over inmates, and religious institutions over its congregants. To say that an institution has power is virtually axiomatic to its existence. Of course, such power comes in many forms—hard (coercive) or soft (gently persuasive), good (yielding social benefits, welfare or security) or bad (threatening such benefits, welfare or security). Power can flow from top to bottom, as illustrated in the command and control system of state militaries, or from bottom to top, as illustrated in cases where local jurisdictions impact state politics.

Regarding the nature of governmental power generally, some academics adopt a realist perspective, according to which power is defined through its channels, causal mechanisms and capacity to alter behavior. But such a perspective is misguided. Governmental power, like any power among individuals or groups, is neither physically real nor is it an entity that can be possessed. From a constructive stance that I take, power is implicated in all social relations, not as a commodity to be possessed, controlled or manipulated but as a potentiality for influencing others. A similar perspective is advanced by Michel Foucault, who writes: "Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds onto or allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations" (Foucault 1990: 94).[2] Also, power lacks a fixed point of origin. Rather than the sort of top-down power that Thomas Hobbes found in the emperor's throne, governmental power is not concentrated in the hands of a single person.

Furthermore, power generally is situated in the micro-processes of a field of social relations; it is embedded in the meaning-making processes of social

[2]Despite the impression given by the violence portrayed in his case studies of domination, Foucault insists that governmental power is not necessarily pernicious. He rejects the notion that all power relations are relations of domination. With any power relation, the impacted group can react, resist, or possibly rebel. With any governmental strategy to subordinate a segment of the population comes the possibility of insubordination (Foucault 1982, p. 794).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

interactions. A field is a social-political space in which the range of interactions is determined by the socially-sanctioned directives, commands, explicit imperatives and/or tacit norms. As Pierre Bourdieu writes, these directives, commands, imperatives and norms constitute the rules of the game for the field's actors (Bourdieu et al. 1994). Such rules are implicated in the actors' patterns of practices which characterize their habitus.[3] Consider the fields of prisons, educational institutions, large corporations, religious organizations, or state-run militaries. Within a very restrictive field, an actor is expected to know her or his place by following the institution's rules, conforming to the prescribed codes of behavior and living according to the prescribed norms. For example, a primary mission of military training is transformation of the self-image of the young recruit by embedding in them the warrior's ethos. Over time, the successful recruit will likely internalize this ethos within their habitus. Of course, resistence by the recruit is always possible.

For any field of governmental institution, the structure is warped by a system of positioning for the field's actors. The combination of positions and powers within a field underpins patterns of action. The exercise of power-positioning evokes varying degrees of social pressure. With a strong display of power, an agent seeks to limit severely the freedom of movement or speech of a targeted person or group. Consider, for example, a field of prisons. With this highly regimented setting, a prison guard has wide-ranging authority to constrain the behavior of inmates. Yet, the guard's powers are not defined by their actions. Such power represents a potentiality that is not necessarily diminished with the guard's passivity during a particular episode. The guard's inaction during an encounter with an inmate does not imply a lack of power.

In summary, the positions-powers complexity is embedded within all social relations in ways that potentially impact the actions and reactions of the field's actors.

Governmental Power Over Marginalized Groups

In some countries, certain governmental agencies exhibit a menacing form of power over segments of the population by generating within them a sense of inferiority in relation to those who are cast as pure, authentic or superior. This is the power of collective humiliation that some governments in certain contexts deploy systematically for disciplinary control. The impact of such a strategy is to advance social-political inequalities.

[3]The notion of habitus goes historically at least back to the work of the Ancient Greek philosophers. For Aristotle, "habitus" refers to multiple processes for developing one's moral habits—either virtuous or vicious. One's habitus is developed through a long process of acquiring, or failing to acquire, moral qualities. Habitus becomes embedded in the ways in which one thinks, acts, and lives with others, and it is a vital aspect of our life (Aristotle 1941; 1103b, 23–5).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Such power includes symbolic violence with deployment of categories, distinctions and processes that prefigure disciplinary control. This violence can be exhibited through public pronouncements by state authorities, technical experts, and bureaucrats. The psychological target of such governmental power is not only the conscious thoughts of a population group but also the sub-conscious taken-for-granted categories about the way the world works (Bourdieu 1977: 82).[4] These categories are situated below the agent's consciousness, like an active residue of the agent's past that functions as cognitive instruments for shaping perceptions, thoughts and actions. These pronouncements need not come with the vitriolic hatred. With such power, the state can promote a collective blindness to past struggles over race, class, ethnicity, religion and gender.[5] Such symbolic violence impacts shared beliefs about how the world is organized and is typically viewed in terms of normative dualities such as safe/dangerous, home/foreign, sacred/profane, and evil/virtuous, among others.

In his influential work *Power: A Radical View*, Steven Lukes warns against the state's power to disguise, suppress, distort, bury, or fabricate aspects of "reality" in ways that configure acceptance of a dominant ideology. Such power is strategically deployed to influence the decision-making capacity of the targeted group members (Lukes 2005: 27–28). The impact of such practice includes a soul-sucking invasion of the psyche of targeted individuals—their hopes are dashed, sense of security threatened, and relationship with authority figures contorted.

The agents of such governmental power seek to conceal the invasive force of symbolic violence by diverting public awareness of their sleight-of-hand manipulation in a background maneuver. The declarations that invoke notions of the "public welfare," "safety of your children," or "victims of society's criminal element" are presented as plain to anyone who can see, anyone who loves their children and cares for their sacred nation. For example, legislators seek to reduce the tax burden on "hard-working Americans," while cutting essential services for those living in poverty, many of whom are working. Police officers seek to protect law-abiding citizens from the scourge of street violence while harassing young urban blacks through stop-and-frisk tactics. Judges who want to "send a message to criminals" impose lengthy sentences on members of a marginalized group for minor, victimless crimes. And some maneuvers include the surveillance and control

[4]Bourdieu writes:

> The effect of symbolic domination…is exerted not in the pure logic of knowing consciousness but through the schemes of perception, appreciation, and action that are constitutive of habitus and which, below the level of the decision of consciousness and the controls of the will, set up a cognitive relationship that is profoundly obscure to itself (Bourdieu 2001: 37).

[5]Bourdieu writes: "What appears to us today as self-evident, as beneath consciousness and choice, has quite often been the stake of struggles and instituted only as the result of dogged confrontations between dominant and dominated groups" (Bourdieu 1998: 56).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

of self-image of certain targeted groups. Behind the public profile of many institutional practices—the necessary decisions, common sense policies, cost-cutting measure of austerity and innocuous "way things are"—are techniques of population control.

Immigration Policies of the United States Government

In the United States, the status of unauthorized immigrants represents a major topic of contestation in the political landscape. Those seeking restrictive immigration policies tend to advance two dominant themes. First, Americans are under siege by Latino/as crossing the nation's southern border. For example, Patrick Buchanan wrote in 2006 that "real Americans" are witnessing "a great tragedy" that is unfolding, which imperils the entire nation (Buchanan 2006: 5). Iowa congressman Steve King conveyed this warning in 2013 with his tweet: "We can't restore our civilization with somebody else's babies."[6] Congresswoman Michele Bachman warned in 2014 that the immigrant population was waging war on America. She said: "Innocent people are killed by illegal aliens and hurt and robbed and beaten and raped by criminal foreign nationals that are in our country."[7] The 'immigration problem' is depicted in militaristic terms, drawing upon images of a war against an invading force against the heart of this sacred land. At stake in this invasion is nothing less than the nation's survival.

The second dominant theme from advocates of restrictive policy is that illegal immigrants are essentially criminals who pose serious dangers to law-abiding Americans. Their alleged crimes include sexual violence, murder associated with gang warfare, and drug smuggling. Also, immigrants crossing the nation's southern border are accused of stealing material resources through illicit access to social services. Presidential candidate Donald Trump warned against the hordes of invading migrants who bring death and destruction to the United States. He added riveting imagery to this warning in his tweet of July 13, 2015: "El Chapo and the Mexican drug cartels use the border unimpeded like it was a vacuum cleaner, sucking drugs and death right into the U.S. ….They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists" (Reilly 2016). His solution to the immigration problem seems crystal clear: the 11 million undocumented immigrants in the United States must leave the country either by choice or by force (Deb 2015).

Both themes reveal three sub-narratives. First, the immigrants have committed to a torrent of violence, second, such violence will recur in starkly augmented forms,

[6]His discussion of this tweet can be seen online here: https://thinkprogress.org/steve-king-stands-by-racist-claims-59457bf800ba/.

[7]NumbersUSA. "Border Surge Tele-Town Hall". Filmed (July 2014). YouTube video. Posted (July 2014)). https://youtu.be/vKaqPSnWqHA.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

and third, governmental actions must be taken for the survival of the country's innocents, who are understood as native born Americans.

With these narratives, there is a rhetorical slight-of-hand with the term "criminal alien." This term reveals while it conceals, showcasing some features of a category of people while surreptitiously blocking other features. "Criminal alien" illustrates how language usage can inform and suppress simultaneously. Some residents of the U.S. do commit crimes and some of them are unauthorized aliens by violating this nation's immigration laws. But researchers have shown that immigrants are less likely to commit violent acts than the native-born (Vaughn et al. 2014, 1135). The rate of imprisonment of immigrants for violating criminal laws is actually lower than that for native-born residents. According to the 2010 American Immigration Council, the disparity in incarceration rates for 18–39-year-old men is significant—1.6% for immigrants and 3.3% for native-born. The disparity in incarceration rates is evident over different years of census taking (Ewing et al. 2010, p. 7). However, in recent years "criminal aliens" are cast as an existential threat with direct associations to invaders, sexual predators, drug-smugglers, and terrorists. The category of "immigrants" is also infused with starkly derogatory meaning. Their stigma cannot be removed by donning new clothes, improving their English pronunciation or acquiring advanced degrees.

These narrative forms have a direct impact on governmental policies and practices. Many state governments have enacted laws that diminish the life conditions of authorized immigrants to "persuade" them to self-deport "voluntarily." The architects of such laws deploy explicitly a strategy of forced attrition, in which state agencies create conditions of extreme hardship for the targeted groups. Workplaces are raided where unauthorized immigrants are known to be employed, landlords are fined for renting apartments to them, and access is threatened to critical social services like healthcare. For example, in 2010 Arizona enacted its immigration law SB 1070, which imposes dire living conditions on unauthorized immigrants to encourage their self-deportation. The rationale given for this strategy is presented in paragraph one of this law: "The intent of this act is to make attrition through enforcement the public policy of all state and local government agencies in Arizona, to discourage and deter the unlawful entry and presence of aliens" (Maldonado 2016). With this intent, the law is designed to create fear and despair of families. Similar measures were adopted recently in Georgia, Indiana, South Carolina and Utah. Public spaces—workplaces, schools, hospitals, social service agencies—have been converted to landscapes of threat.

At the federal level, enforcement of immigration laws is the responsibility of two agencies within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS): Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). From a legal perspective, the act of crossing the border without proper authorization constitutes a felony as a violation of immigration law. Yet, various policies and practices have expanded the range of criminality applied to immigrants. For example, former acting Director of ICE, Thomas Homan, declared that all undocumented immigrants will be targeted for detection and possible deportation,

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

whether or not they violated criminal law. In his testimony to the Homeland Security Subcommittee of the U.S. Congress. Homan declared:

> You should look over your shoulder, and you need to be worried…Most of the criminal aliens we find in the interior of the United States, they entered as a non-criminal. If we wait for them to violate yet another law against a citizen of this country, then it's too late. We shouldn't wait for them to become a criminal (Foley 2017).

Such warnings serve to rationalize policies of ICE. The expansion of raids reflects a gradual convergence of criminal law with immigration policy. Under the directive 287(g), ICE entered into a partnership with local, state and federal agencies. Under this directive, these agencies partner with immigration enforcement, which allows ICE officers to perform law enforcement functions through these governmental agencies (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement 2016).

This convergence of criminal law and immigration policy is illustrated by a 2017 order by the Executive Associate Director of ICE, Matthew Albence, to all ICE officers. While President Trump insisted that his predecessors in the White House were lax on immigration enforcement, Trump ordered DHS to target immigrants who threaten public safety.[8] But Albence took the liberty of expanding the categories of criminality for which immigrants would be targeted for detection. In a memo of February 21, 2017, he ordered all ICE officers to "take enforcement action against all removable aliens encountered in the course of their duties," and that ICE officers should expand their enforcement efforts. He wrote, "DHS will no longer exempt classes or categories of removable aliens from potential enforcement." (Albence 2017, p. 1). By widening the scope of categories of removable aliens, DHS has expanded the range of people who should be inspected by ICE officers in the course of their duties. In the same memo, Director Albence identifies, in order of decreasing priority, a list of subcategories of those who should be inspected. He writes (Albence 2017, p. 2):

Regardless of the basis of removability, ERO [Enforcement and Removal Operations] should prioritize efforts to remove aliens who:

(1) Have been convicted of any criminal offense:
(2) Have been charged with any criminal offense that has not been resolved:
(3) Have committed acts, which constitute a chargeable criminal offense:
(4) Have engaged in fraud or willful misrepresentation in connection with any official matter before a government agency:
(5) Have abused any program related to receipt of public benefits;
(6) Are subject to a final order of removal but have not complied with their legal obligation to depart the United States; or
(7) In the judgment of an immigrant officer, otherwise pose a risk to public safety or national security.

[8]According to ICE reports, 240, 255 aliens were removed by ICE operations in 2016 (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement 2016).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Notice the expansion of the category of removal of aliens. While sub-categories (1), (2) and (3) focus on an immigrant who has been convicted, charged or has committed a criminal offense, the remaining sub-categories go significantly beyond violations of criminal law per se. The offenses indicated in sub-categories (4), (5), and (6) focus on the immigrants' interactions with government officials.

The vagueness of these subcategories is significant. Regarding (4), how exactly can an ICE officer determine whether an immigrant's misrepresentation to a government official is "willful"? Regarding (5), what are the indicators of abuse of a public program? For (6), what are the indicators of non-compliance of a final order of removal? The three sub-categories—(4), (5) and (6)—allow for wide-ranging interpretations by ICE officers, which in turn fosters a sort of fishing exhibition in the hunt for so-called removable aliens. The danger of reckless expansion of investigation is evident in (7). By requiring an immigration officer to assess whether the possible immigrants "pose a risk to public safety or national security," Director Albence removes the requirement that the immigrant has been convicted, charged for or has committed a criminal offense.

Conclusion

Again, in general, power is thoroughly embedded in the nexus of social psychological relations. One insidious form of governmental power centers on the psycho-political manipulation of marginalized group members, through techniques that contort pre-conscious thoughts and foster feelings of inferiority. Yet, such governmental controls are not always totalizing of mind, body, and soul. In the exercise of power, any recipient can resist, obstruct, disobey, or possibly rebel. Even in settings where outright rebellion may be seen as fruitless, the targeted group members may exhibit acts of micro-resistance. When such techniques are deployed, the sense of humiliation experienced by marginalized is itself charged with political meaning. I am not making the trivial point about the cause and effect of emotions and action, that first someone experiences a painful humiliation and then that person engages in a political act. My point is that the emotional experience itself is understood symbolically through a political lens. Their humiliation is a political experience.

References

Albence, M. (2017). Memorandum. Implementing the President's border security and interior immigration enforcement policies. Retrieved December 5, 2017, from https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/3889695-doc00801320170630123624.html.

Aristotle. (1941). Nicomachean ethics. In R. McKeon (ed.), *The basic works of aristotle*. New York: Random House.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a theory of practice*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1998). *Practical reason: On the theory of action*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2001). *Masculine domination*. Translated by Richard Nice. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P., Wacquant L., & S. Farage. (1994). Rethinking the state: Genesis and structure of the bureaucratic field. *Sociological Theory, 12*(1): 1–18.

Buchanan, P. (2006). *State of emergency: The third world invasion and conquest of America.* New York: St. Martin's Griffin.

Deb, S. (2015). Trump would take 2 years to deport millions of undocumented immigrants. CBS News. Retrieved June 10, 2018, from https://www.cbsnews.com/news/donald-trump-it-would-take-up-to-2-years-to-deport-millions-of-undocumented/.

Ewing, W., Martinez, D., & Rumbaut, R. (2010). The criminalization of immigration in the United States. American Immigration Council. Retrieved June 11, 2018, from https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/criminalization-immigration-united-states.

Foley, E. (2017). ICE director to all undocumented immigrants: 'You Need To Be Worried.' Huffington post. Retrieved June 10, 2018, from https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/ice-arrests-undocumented_us_594027c0e4b0e84514eebfbe.

Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical Inquiry, 8*(4), 777–795.

Foucault, M. (1990). *The history of sexualit,* Vol. I. London: Penguin.

Harré, R. (1986). *The social construction of emotions*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Basil Blackwell Ltd.

Harré, R., & van Langenhove, L. (1999). *Positioning theory*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishes.

Harré, R., & Moghaddam, F. M. (2003). *The self and others: positioning individuals and groups in personal, political, and cultural contexts*. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger.

Lukes, S. (2005). *Power: A radical view* (2nd ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Maldonado, D. (2016). Editorial—S.B. 1070: Attrition through enforcement. AL DÍA News. Retrieved November 15, 2017, from http://aldianews.com/articles/opinion/editorial-sb-1070-attrition-through-enforcement/15683.

Reilly, K. (2016). Here are all the times Donald Trump insulted Mexico. *Time*. http://time.com/4473972/donald-trump-mexico-meeting-insult/.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. (2016). Retrieved September 29, 2017, from https://www.ice.gov/factsheets/287g#wcm-survey-target-id.

Vaughn, M. et al. (2014). The Immigrant paradox: Immigrants are less antisocial than native-born Americans. *Social psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, *49*(7).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Part III
Psychology as a Normative Science

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 11
Ethics in Socio-cultural Psychologies

Ivana Marková

Socio-cultural Psychologies

Some years after my arrival in the UK from Czechoslovakia in 1967, a colleague of mine, who was an experimental cognitive psychologist, told me that he had just read an interesting, but a very strange and difficult book. It was *The Explanation of Social Behaviour* by Harré and Secord (1972). At that time I could not comprehend why social psychologists in the UK studied fragments of individuals broken down into dependent and independent variables controlled by the causal powers of Humean philosophy. And suddenly, here was a book with which I could connect because it conceived humans as agents in their entirety. It presented a New Paradigm in psychology, which attributed humans with powers to act, and accounted for their inner mental states, motives and intentions. That was my first encounter with the work of Rom Harré. I met Rom much later on many occasions, always full of passion for exploring a wide range of ideas in different fields, and with a huge enthusiasm for the speech act theory and for Wittgenstein.

To my mind, Rom Harré's focus on morality forms a fundamental basis for the epistemological redefinition of social psychology as a human and cultural discipline. The majority of contemporary social psychological models of humans still attempt to clarify the nature of cognition and behaviour by referring to individuals and groups *as if* they were passive information processing machines whose conduct and interactions could be explained, for instance, by the search for 'balance' or 'social comparison', by 'social perception' or by the attempts to avoid 'dissonance'. In contrast, throughout all his career, Harré regards humans as agents who take up a moral stance and attribute rights and duties to themselves and others, and mutually construct their local meanings. This perspective contrasts not only with the main approaches in social psychology, but more generally, with the majority of domains

I. Marková (✉)
University of Stirling, Stirling, UK
e-mail: ivana.markova@stir.ack.uk

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_11

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

in social sciences which aim at universalistic claims about humans and their behaviour.

In his chapter on 'Positioning theory: moral dimensions of socio-cultural psychology' Harré (2012) presents a clear statement of his theoretical viewpoint and its practical implications. He suggests possible links between his perspective and another two socio-cultural psychologies, namely, Vygotsky's socio-cultural approach, and Moscovici's theory of social representations. Although one can associate these three socio-cultural psychologies in various ways, it is their focus on moral and ethical dimensions that I shall emphasise in this chapter.

Throughout the historical and cultural development, language and symbolic communication have been vital for humans' evolving capacities to conceive themselves and others as beings who can think, who have knowledge and beliefs, who experience, use symbols, tell stories, and otherwise. Humans create intersubjective bonds, struggle for their social recognition, evaluate and judge their intentions and actions. These capacities and powers not only privilege speech and symbolic communication as vital to these processes and capacities, but they involve moral and ethical qualities. Disregarding diversities and indiscriminative usages of the notions of 'ethics' and 'morality' in various disciplines, socio-cultural psychologies conceive ethics and morality in terms of the self-other interdependences. This means that they assume that ethics and morality are established in historical and cultural conditions that are specific to groups and communities living in these conditions, and are transmitted to future generations. These interdependences between the self and other manifest themselves in thinking, communicating, using symbols and other ways of acting. Although they are mutual, asymmetries between the participants' roles and intentions provide the basis for negotiation and transformation of moral and ethical attributes in their historical and cultural genesis. This perspective is fundamentally different from the concepts of universalistic morality (for example from Kant's moral law as the categorical imperative), intuitive ethics (e.g. the innate capacity to recognize moral truths) and other positions which presuppose that the same moral principles and rational judgments apply universally, irrespective of cultural and historical conditions in which humans live.

Socio-cultural psychologies are underlain by diverse, yet complementary, philosophical traditions. Rom Harré's concern with morality is largely rooted in the Oxford speech act theory and Wittgenstein's ideas of language use; Lev Semionovich Vygotsky's ethics is informed by Spinoza; Serge Moscovici builds on values and ethics of Pascal, Spinoza and Durkheim. Each of these socio-cultural psychologies not only foregrounds theoretical features of morality and ethics, but carries implications for how they are used in local social and professional practices.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Rom Harré's Positioning Theory

Although Rom Harré explicitly formulated the theory of positioning in the nineteen nineties (e.g. Davies and Harré 1990; Harré and van Langenhove 1999), one can view it as a continuation and transformation of his earlier ideas concerning the personal and professional identity which he formulated in *Personal Being* (Harré 1983). There he presupposes the dynamic interdependence between dyadic components such as the public-private and collective-individual. As these components co-develop, the individual acquires his/her identity: he/she strives for uniqueness and for social recognition, experiences tension as his/her different obligations clash and call for alternative moral actions.

The theory of positioning is broad and profound, with the concept of 'position' covering a wide range of 'assignments of rights and duties to act and to know or believe at the core of social psychological explanations' (Harré 2012, p. 193). The moral order is embedded in the speech act theory in which the selves and others ascribe, contest, or refuse the rights, obligations and duties in local discursive practices. Harré links positioning theory to cultural psychology: 'Positions importantly determine the way people have access to cultural resources' (Harré 2012, p. 194). Cultures and historical events impose demands on activities and on ascriptions of moral beliefs. Everyday episodes unfold into unique story-lines in which the distribution of rights and duties is specific to local demands. Different societies have their specific norms for the ascription of rights and duties. In contrast to mediaeval societies, modern societies have become complex not only because of different moral interpretations of what constitutes rights and duties, but also because of political, economic and environmental concerns (Harré and Moghaddam 2003). Moral orders based on citizens' duties have become rare while citizens privilege their rights.

Harré has integrated these insights into the dynamic triadic model consisting of positions, story-lines and act interpretations, in which all components mutually determine one another: if one component changes, all three change (Harré 2012, p. 196). This triadic model is not to be understood as an unfolding structure of sequences in an episode, but it is the tension among positions and their asymmetries that define the dynamic nature of positioning.

However, the positioning theory is concerned not only with 'assignments of rights and duties to act' but also with 'epistemic positioning', that is, with the ways in which knowledge, beliefs and ignorance are distributed and contested. These are issues which, as Harré observes, have hardly ever been explored despite their far reaching societal implications. They raise questions as to who has rights and access to knowledge, why certain kinds of knowledge are concealed, how ignorance is imposed through false beliefs, and so on. Further exploration of 'epistemic positioning' is likely to bring up questions about 'epistemic trust' and 'epistemic responsibility' (Marková 2016) as well as questions about the manipulation of knowledge and beliefs for political purposes, whether in totalitarian regimes or in modern democracies.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Lev Semionovich Vygotsky's Ethics

In many of his writings Rom Harré refers to L. S. Vygotsky, whom he views as one of the key thinkers in psychology (Harré 2006), and as a representative of the New Paradigm in psychology (Harré 2012). Vygotsky's epistemology of human consciousness, language and experience highlighted the concept of the freedom of will as an ethical principle of humanity. This principle was vital for his Marxist theory of emotions that Vygotsky tried to develop in the last years of his life. He was able to complete only the first part of his theory, based on the criticism of the James-Lange approach to emotions, and of its strong reliance on Descartes's mind-body dualism (Vygotsky 1999). Vygotsky's ideas, which were supposed to form the second part of his theory of emotions, and which were inspired by Spinoza's (1677/1967). *Ethics*, are available only as notes (Zavershneva and van der Veer 2018) or as unsystematic comments in Vygotsky's published pieces (e.g. Vygotsky 1994a, 1999). Specifically, Vygotsky viewed Descartes's and Spinoza's theories of passions as directly opposing one another. He expressed his critique of Descartes' theory of passions: 'dualism, naturalism, *no development*, no *phenomena,* no *structure*, no function, its metaphysical nature'. Therefore, '[T]he ethics is impossible in Descartes' (Zavershneva and van der Veer 2018, p. 220 and 221, italics in original). Vygotsky thought that in *Ethics* Spinoza aimed to solve the problem as to how higher mental functions are possible and in particular, 'how freedom—genuine, real, practical freedom—is possible' (Zavershneva and van der Veer 2018, p. 221).

Spinoza's monism, as well as the pragmatism of James and Dewey, inspired Vygotsky to postulate the concept of the unique relationship between the self and social environment as an unbreakable unit of subjective experience (Vygotsky 1994b). The two components co-develop by affecting one another. Their uniqueness takes the form of a 'semantic orientation' (Zavershneva 2010, p. 63), that is, of the concrete and subjective experience expressed in and through speech. This concept of subjective experience is totally open and is directed towards what Vygotsky called a 'peak psychology'. For Vygotsky, the 'peak psychology' represented an image of humans in their fullness, that is, in the peak of human existence (Zavershneva 2010, p. 70). In Spinozist monism (as opposed to Cartesian dualism), Vygotsky found the connection between ontology, epistemology, ethics and psychology (Zavershneva and van der Veer 2018, p. 221) and the ways in which they reveal themselves in concrete subjective experience and in social practices. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see, to what extent Vygotsky's thoughts were influenced by the Marxist ideology of creating 'the new man' and to what extent this idea was part of Vygotsky's Spinozist position.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Social Representations and Positioning Theory

The theory of social representations (Moscovici 1961) penetrated the UK from France in the early 1980s, and was viewed with ambivalence. Both the followers and adversaries interpreted social representations in diverse and often contradictory ways. Serge Moscovici did not help. On some occasions he responded to his critiques (e.g. Moscovici 1985, 1998) but he never publicly commented on, nor criticised, diverse interpretations of his theory. He frequently claimed that he was not the owner of his theory and therefore, he did not think he had the right to legitimise or de-legitimise the work of researchers who were inspired by his theory.

Intellectual resources of the theory of social representations were manifold and they were rooted in continental philosophers, such as in Spinoza, Pascal, Hegel, Marx, Merleau-Ponty, among others, all of whom presented a dynamic perspective of humans (Marková 2017). However, Moscovici stamped his theory with the name 'social representations' which necessarily implied Durkheim's concept of 'collective representations' and therefore, not surprisingly, both followers and adversaries interpreted social representations from the Durkheimian position. Moreover, Moscovici often referred to Durkheim as his predecessor. However, he also described how in the early nineteen fifties he was looking for a name that would express his social and holistic approach to the study of social phenomena, and that would contradict 'attitudes' and 'opinions' (Moscovici 2003). Quite inadvertently, he found the term 'representations' in a passage from the book by the Father Lenoble (1943), entitled *Essai sur la notion d'expérience.* Lenoble did not refer to Durkheim in his book, but to the pre-Durkheimian and Kantian moral philosopher Renouvier, who proposed that representations are collectively constructed and shared (Marková 2003, pp. 122–123). But Moscovici (Moscovici 1998, p. 240) also stated that his original intention was not to introduce into social psychology the concept of 'collective representations' derived from Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl. Instead, he was interested in the transformation and diffusion of scientific knowledge into daily thinking. It was 'the birth of a post-scientific common sense … that led me to the concept'. In another context Moscovici argued that he came to the notion of 'representation' from Piaget. He wanted to study common sense in adults just like Piaget studied common sense in children. As he stated, it was Piaget who showed him what social psychology should be (Moscovici and Marková 2000, p. 249). Moreover, by taking communication as the centre of representation, the theory links together 'contemporary social and cultural questions' (ibid., p. 241).

Rom Harré who, since the nineteen seventies was preoccupied with the interdependent relations between the self and others, welcomed Moscovici's idea of bringing the 'social' into the 'individualistic' social psychology and he viewed the concept of social representations as having the potential of being developed along Wittgensteinian lines (Harré 1984, 1998). However, he thought that the concept of social representations required a considerable rethinking. What is 'individual' and what is 'social'? The 'social', that is, a plurality of persons, can be conceived in two

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

ways: as an aggregate of persons, or as a structured group. In the former case, 'social' refers to a set of similar individual representations (see also von Cranach 1998). In the latter case, 'social' means a supra-individual entity, the members of which share common knowledge, but it is not the property of any single individual. Harré argued that Moscovici's social representations were distributed in aggregates rather than in structured groups. He provided a number of examples giving evidence to his claim. Harré also proposed how social representations could be developed in order to account for groups as structured.

Moscovici found this interpretation of social representations as misconceived, although it was based on his published work. Just like Harré, throughout all his life, Moscovici tried to answer the question what is 'individual' and what is 'social'. Indeed, he argued very early in his career against the concept of groups as aggregates. Already in 1972 he rejected the 'taxonomic social psychology', in which the relations between the 'individual' and 'social', amounted to aggregates rather than to interactions (Moscovici 1972).

In his subsequent publications Moscovici clarified his position both on groups and on social representations; Harré appreciated Moscovici's social representations as bringing culture into social psychology, as conceiving humans as agents managing their daily life, as conceptualising representations both as having a stabilizing role in social knowledge and as being important in local social practices (e.g. Harré 2012). Harré (2006) included Moscovici among the key thinkers in social psychology which pleased Serge enormously. In outlining the future of the positioning theory, Harré (2012, p. 205) states: 'The place of Positioning Theory as a research program within the general field of Cultural Psychology is evident when we consider the importance of social representations of local moral orders in the management of specific cases as a discursive practice'.

Serge Moscovici's Ethics

As Moscovici reveals in his autobiography *Chronique des années égares,* (Moscovici 1997) in his early youth he found inspiration in Nietzsche's philosophical thoughts, in Pascal's (1670/1995) *Pensées* and in Spinoza's (1677/1967) *Ethics*. His focus on values and ethical choices was strongly influenced by his experience of Nazism and the subsequent Communist regime in Romania. In his autobiographical portrayal, Moscovici scrutinized the sources of ethical ideas that, throughout the history of mankind, created communities as well as tore them apart. Within the broad historical and cultural contexts he pondered about ethical values guiding beliefs in justice, the search for progress, and the desire of humans for immortality. He found inspiration in the ideas of Blaise Pascal relating science and religion, ethics and morality.

Later on, while doing research in Paris, Moscovici accepted Durkheim's (1979) focus on ethics as omnipresent in all social phenomena in their sacred and profane spheres. However, in contrast to Durkheim, Moscovici rejected the perspective of

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

static morality and instead, he viewed values as dynamic and driving forces of human invention and innovation (Moscovici 1972). Making evaluations and judgements of events and of humans is indispensable in all interactions in daily living. The original conception of Moscovici's interactional epistemology of the Ego-Alter-Object was his response to what is 'social' and 'individual'. The Self and Other(s) (or the Ego-Alter) define one another, and therefore, in and through interaction they are mutually interdependent. The Ego-Alter jointly generate their social reality—objects of knowledge, beliefs, evaluations, judgements and images, and so postulate the triangular epistemological relation of the Ego-Alter-Object. This triangle has some affinities to Harré's positioning triangle in sense that the triangular components are interdependent: their dynamic tension leads to their mutual transformation: if one component changes, all components change.

Among different approaches to social representations, the dialogical approach is inspired by philosophies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (e.g. Hegel, Bakhtin, Levinas). Dialogicality as the epistemology of social representations places ethics into the centre of daily thinking as well as of professional practices (Marková 2016).

Conclusion

In reflecting on these three socio-cultural psychologies, I referred to a number of features that characterise them all. It is not to say that some of these features would not be present in other approaches, but it is their conjoint presence that makes these socio-cultural approaches exceptional in advancing social knowledge.

- All three approaches presuppose, as an *epistemological point of departure*, *the self and other(s)* in their *unique* relations. While their interdependence takes on different forms, e.g. public-private, collective-individual, the self-social environment, the dissident-political regime, in all cases each pair forms an unbreakable unit: one component in each pair defines the other component. Their dynamic uniqueness is realised in and through *language and communication, and through multifaceted forms of interaction* in the construction of meanings in *concrete local situations.* These concerns have a strong influence in professional practices such as education, health-related issues and disability, as well as in politics.
- Historically and culturally, one can assume that moral orders have established themselves jointly by individuals and communities, and that they appear in two kinds of asymmetric relations.
  First, once the moral order is stabilised, it forms a relatively fixed environment in which the community gives guidance to individuals through speech acts, group structure, solidarity, rules, and otherwise. For example, Rom Harré's concept of the moral force of rights and duties established itself as an indispensable feature of public life. The community is structured by its rules and

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

keeps order by giving freedom as well as constraining individuals' conduct. Professional duties may become split among loyalties to different others, e.g. to institutions, students, personal matters, as well as to individuals' own conscience. Such clashes of responsibilities could be both real and imagined, and are part of the constructive process of identity development. Likewise, in Moscovici's (1993) theorizing, group solidarity, or fiduciary rationality, is a form of dependency among group members arising from trust and loyalty. In-group rules and norms established themselves through tradition as an ethical requirement for communication.

In other situations, it may be the self who stimulates ethical forces. For example, Vygotsky's ethics places emphasis on the individual's freedom of will and his/her capacity to control his/her actions to make them acceptable by the community. Likewise, the ethics of dissidents such as Alexandre Solzhenitsyn (Moscovici 1979) arises from their persistent forces of conscience and personal responsibility, although, this too, is co-constructed both by the dissident, and the totalitarian regime in which he/she lives.

No doubt, a more detailed scrutiny of socio-cultural psychologies would reveal more convergences as well as their incompatibilities. However, it is their convergences that firmly base them in the New Paradigm in psychology.

References

von Cranach, M. (1998). The knowledge of social systems. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The psychology of the social* (pp. 15–40). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 20*, 43–63.

Durkheim, E. (1979). *Durkheim: Essays on morals and education* (W. S. F. Pickering, Ed., H. L. Sutcliffe, Trans.). London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Harré, R. (1983). *Personal being*. Oxford: Blackwell; Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Harré, R. (1984). Some reflections on the concept of 'social representation'. *Social Research, 51,* 927–938.

Harré, R. (1998). The epistemology of social representations. In U. Flick (Ed.). *The psychology of the social* (pp. 129–137). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harré, R. (2006). *Key thinkers in psychology*. London, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Harré, R. (2012). Positioning theory: Moral dimensions of social-cultural psychology. In J. Valsiner (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of culture and psychology* (pp. 191–206). New York: Oxford University.

Harré, R., & Secord, P. F. (1972). *The explanation of social behaviour*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R., & van Langenhove, L. (1999). *Positioning theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Harré, R., & Moghaddam, F. M. (2003). *The self and others*. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Lenoble, R. (1943). *Essai sur la notion d'Experience*. Paris: Vrin.

Marková, I. (2003). *Dialogicality and social representations*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marková, I. (2016). *The dialogical mind: Common sense and ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Marková, I. (2017). A fabricação da teoria de representações sociais. *Cadernos de Pesquisa, 47* (163), 358–376.

Moscovici, S. (1961). *La psychanalyse: Son image et son public*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Moscovici, S. (1972). Society and theory in social psychology. In J. Israel & H. Tajfel (Eds.), *The context of social psychology: A critical assessment* (pp. 17–68). London and New York: Academic Press.

Moscovici, S. (1979). La dissidence d'un seul. In S. Moscovici (Ed.), *Psychologie des minorités actives* (pp. 241–266). Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Moscovici, S. (1985). Comment on potter and litton. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 24,* 91–92.

Moscovici, S. (1993). Razón y culturas. In S. Moscovici & S. Barriga (Eds.), *Arte la nueva Europa* (pp. 30–62). Sevilla, Spain: Mimeo.

Moscovici, S. (1997). *Chronique des années égarées: récit autobiographique*. Paris: Stock.

Moscovici, S. (1998). The history and actuality of social representations. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The psychology of the social* (pp. 207–247). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Moscovici, S. (2003). Le premier article. *Journal des Psychologues.* Numéro hors série, 10–13.

Moscovici, S., & Marková, I. (2000). Ideas and their development: A dialogue between Serge Moscovici and Ivana Marková. In S. Moscovici & G. Duveen (Eds.), *Social representations* (pp. 224–286). London: Polity Press.

Pascal, B. (1670/1995). *Pensées* (A. J. Krailsheimer, Trans. and Introduction). London: Penguin Classics.

Spinoza, B. (1677/1967). *Ethics* (A. Boyle, Trans., T. S. Gregory, Introduction). London: Dent.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *Thinking and speech.* In R.W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds.), *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky* (Vol. 1, pp. 39–284). New York: Plenum.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1994a). The socialist alteration of man. In R. van der Veer & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *Vygotsky reader* (pp. 175–184). Oxford: Blackwell.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1994b). The problem of the environment. In R. van der Veer & J. Valsiner (Eds.), *The Vygotsky reader* (pp. 338–354). Oxford: Blackwell.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1997). Self-control. In R. W. Rieber (Ed.)*, The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky* (Vol. 4., M. J. Hall, Trans.) (pp. 207–219). New York: Plenum.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1999). The teaching about emotions. Historical-psychological studies. In R. W. Rieber (Ed.), *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky* (Vol. 6, M. J. Hall, Trans.) (pp. 71–235). New York: Plenum.

Zavershneva, E. (2010). The way to freedom. *Journal of Russian and East European Psychology, 48,* 61–90.

Zavershneva, E., & van der Veer, R. (Eds.). (2018). *Vygotsky's notebooks. A selection*. Singapore: Springer Nature.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 12
Psychiatry as a Hybrid Discipline

G. E. Berrios

Introduction

The adjective 'mental' and the noun 'illness' do not refer to natural kinds (Beebee and Sabbarton-Leary 2010). Their combination is a *façon de parler* designed to name a historical convergence (Berrios 2011) constituted by a concept and by fragments extracted from the opaque mass of 'madness'. This means that their study can only be undertaken against a specific historical frame (Sendrail 1980; Watts 2003; Berrios 1994). 'Mental illness' (name), the new 'anatomo-clinical' model of disease (concept) (Ackerknecht 1967), and aspects of madness (behavioural referents) only came together (converged) during the early 19th Century. This occurred during the process of construction of the broader enterprise of 'Alienism', a specialism that at the time was charged with the medicalization of madness (Berrios 1996). Therefore, the period 1780–1830 can be used as an appropriate frame to study the origins of the current concept of 'mental illness'.

A large body of writings has accumulated on the definitions of health and disease (Caplan et al. 1981), amongst which those by Riese (1953), Canguilhem (1966), Taylor (1979) and Gadamer (1996) are of importance. Following a different approach, Anglo-American analytical philosophers have sought to define health and disease outwith their historical context (Boorse 1975), and their formulaic definitions (Cooper 2002) are often more concerned with logical counter-examples and biological foundations (Wakefield 1992) than with the fundamental historicity and prescriptive underpinnings of the concept of disease (Norès 1996). In this regard, it may be useful to consider abandoning the view that a valid definition of mental illness will only be achieved after 'physical illness' is fully defined. Marked differences between these two concepts suggest otherwise. In this chapter the view will be proposed that the concept 'mental illness' is *sui generis* because it has a

G. E. Berrios (✉)
Cambridge University, Cambridge, UK
e-mail: geb11@cam.ac.uk

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_12

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

hybrid structure, that includes descriptions taken from the natural sciences and prescriptions from the social sciences. This view may well drive a wedge between the concepts of mental and physical illness, but this is a problem for the philosopher of medicine to worry about.

The close association between Alienism (Psychiatry) and Medicine was only legislated upon during the early 19th century. Hence, more evidence concerning its usefulness will be required before it is declared to be a fact of progress or of nature. The internal conceptual contradictions that affect psychiatry make it very different from general medicine. This explains why the epistemological borrowings imported from the latter have signally failed to resolve the problems of the former. Psychiatry does require to develop its own native philosophy. So far, particularly in Anglo-American psychiatry, this need has been met by resorting to off-the-shelf philosophical forms of analysis utilized in the generic study of the philosophy of mind (Berrios 2006). This will not do for psychiatry. A truly helpful philosophy will need to be rooted in the history of madness and emphasize more the cultural than the logical structure of the problem. Alternative conceptualizations of mental afflictions will also have to be included even if they run counter to the current fashion. The first duty of the mental health worker must be to the mentally afflicted.

The Components of the Convergence 'Mental Illness'

Mind

Due to the time-lag that often separates inception from adoption of philosophical ideas, the concepts of 'Mind' available to early 19th century Alienists were not related to those of Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Maine de Biran, etc. but rather to earlier ones such as those proposed by Locke (in its Condillacean version) and the Scottish Philosophers of Common Sense.[1]

French Alienists made use of two models of the mind (Berrios 1988). According to one, taken from the Scottish Philosophers of Common Sense (and introduced into France by Pierre Paul Royer-Collard,[2] brother of the alienist Antoine-Athanase) (Swain 1978) the mind was a cluster of innate and dissociable active and passive powers. According to the other, as proposed by John Locke, in its Condillacean

[1]On the general philosophical background in France during the 19th century see: Brooks III, J I: *The Eclectic Legacy: Academic Philosophy and the Human Sciences in Nineteenth-Century France*, London: Associated University Presses, 1998.

[2]In a bookstall Royer-Collard found a copy of the French Translation of Thomas Reid's 'Essays' and this provided him with the ideas with which to oppose Condillac, at the time the predominant philosophical influence in France. (p108, de Barante M: *La Vie Politique de M. Royer-Collard. Ses discours et ses Écrits*. Vol 1, Paris: Didier, 1861).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

interpretation,[3] the mind was a tabula rasa and a passive receptor of primary ideas originated in reality and secondarily put together by the laws of Association. Dualist in structure (Berrios 2018), both models of the mind were able to provide madness an epistemological bridge between the putative brain lesion and its surface symptoms.

Until the early 19th century, the view was still influential that the mind (soul, *l'âme*, spirit, etc.) could not become decomposed or diseased. Descartes reinforced this view and by providing the res extensa with ontological autonomy encouraged empirical analysis of the body. During the early 1800 s Alienists (particularly those who were orthodox Roman Catholic) faced a quandary: although free to seek the localization of madness in the brain via post-mortem studies, they could not parcel out the res cogitans into functional regions that might allow them to establish the needed correlations. This is the reason why Faculty psychology, based on Phrenology (Cooter 1979) and the Scottish model of the Mind, became so popular during this period. It allowed the mind to become a mosaic of powers, faculties or mental functions, which could then be inscribed in the brain (Gall and Spurzheim 1811). Ever since neuropsychology and neuropsychiatry have been able to postulate unidirectional causal links (Riese 1950) between the bottom stratum (the brain) and the top stratum (behaviour) thereby matching up function to site (Uttal 2001).

Illness

In regards to the concept of illness it is important to distinguish between the history of the words (historical etymology), concepts (conceptual history) and referents (history of objects or behaviours) (Berrios 1994). In popular 18th century parlance: 'disease' meant distemper, uneasiness, malady; 'illness' meant badness or inconvenience of any kind, sickness, malady, disorder or health, and wickedness; and 'disorder' meant want of regular disposition, irregularity, confusion, tumult, disturbance, bustle, sickness, distemper, neglect of rule, discomposure of mind, turbulence of passions (Chalmers 1994). This suggests that they constituted a family of words whose members depended upon one another for their definition.

Since the work of Sydenham and Willis in the 17th century,[4] the ontological stability of a disease was made to depend upon the interaction between internal (putative) causal forces and stereotyped somatic responses. According to the *more botanico* view developed during the 18th century, diseases were considered like plants; indeed, most of the great nosologists of the period were also botanists.

[3]Condillac read Locke in the translation of Pierre Coste and developed his own version of Lockean empiricism (Le Roy G: *La Psychologie de Condillac*. Paris: Boivin, 1937).

[4]Sydenham T: *The works of Thomas Sydenham MD*. 2 Vols. London Printed for the Sydenham Society, 1848. Sydenham's approach has been called *more botanico*, i.e. 'in the fashion of botany' and was firmly held by 18th century nosologists (see: López Piñero JJ: *Historical Origins of the concept of Neuroses*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 15.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

To classify per *genus et differentiae, more botanico* taxonomists needed to privilege certain features of each species (sexual organs in the case of plants and certain symptoms in the case of diseases).[5] With only a minor change the 19th century adopted the same model of disease: the forces that kept the disease true to form (i.e. looking more or less the same irrespective of the patient affected) were to be the tissue structures and functions pertaining to the 'diseased' organ. In other words, the definition for a disease was now to be sought in the specificity of its substratum and aetiology (Chamberet 1818).

After having offered some information on the history of the word, concept and referent, it is now possible to analyze the construction of the concept of 'mental illness' during the first half of the 19th century. This took place firstly in French medicine (Ackerknecht 1967).

The 18th Century Background

In the technical language of the history of medicine 'Nosography' refers to the description of 'disease' and 'Nosology' to is classification. Given that both disciplines reached their epistemological acme during the 18th and 19th centuries, there is little point in exploring later periods of their history. In regards to madness it would of course be anachronistic to talk about 'mental illness' and 'psychiatric classifications' during the Enlightenment as both notions only made their appearance during the first half of the 19th century (Berrios 1999). Within the epistemological constraints set by 19th century philosophy of science and pre-Darwinian taxonomic theory, alienists managed to create the models and frames of current psychiatry (Berrios 2008). Important to national pride and to the academic reputation of Alienists and their Institutions, the dissemination and success of definitions and classifications of madness depended then (as it does now) on the political and economic power of their creators.

The Objects of Psychiatry

One of the tasks of the Epistemology of Psychiatry is to explore the nature of psychiatric objects, i.e. mental symptoms and disorders. Because of their ontological stability, mental symptoms can be considered as the units of analysis or fundamental building bricks of psychopathology (Marková and Berrios 2009).

[5]On Linné's epigram: '*Symptomata se habent ad morbum ut folia et fulcra ad plantam*', Pinel commented: 'The revolution brought about by Linné in natural history, together with the introduction of a method to offer descriptions that be short and exact, could not but greatly influence medicine'. (p. lxxxiv, Pinel Ph: *Nosographie Philosophique*. Vol 1, 5th Edition. Paris: Brosson, 1813).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Ontological stability refers here to the capacity of certain objects to show trans-temporal and trans-cultural persistence. Psychiatric diseases or disorders can be reconceptualized as higher-level, contingent, clusters of mental symptoms held together by a sort of glue whose nature remains unknown, i.e. it is not clear whether it is biological, cultural, statistical, etc. In this sense categories such as schizophrenia, general anxiety disorder, obsessional compulsive disorder, personality disorder, etc. are but temporal heuristic devices with little intrinsic ontological stability. Whatever enduring power they may seem to exhibit is likely to be parasitical upon the ontological stability of the combination of mental symptoms of which they are made.

Most current mental symptoms are likely to owe their ontological stability to the fact that they may contain a neurobiological kernel, and to the fact that they are shaped by means of cultural configurators forming part of the official repertoire of a given cultural and historical niche. The hybrid model proposes that 'mental symptom' is the generic name for a class of heterogeneous phenomena (Marková and Berrios 1995) each of which will need to be studied independently in the future.

It is important to enter the caveat that the contingency model proposed here is not the expression of an antipsychiatry view because it fully accepts the claim that mental symptoms are often enough direct expressions of neurobiological distress modified by cultural configurators. The proportional participation of the biological and cultural components in the formation of a mental symptom is likely to determine the type of treatment or management sufferers require.

The Concept of 'Mental Illness'

The so-called anatomo-clinical model of disease was based on the belief that there is a correlation between the manifestations of a disease and the body. During the early 19th century the concepts of 'sign' and 'symptom' became redefined as units of analysis. This encouraged the development of a discipline called 'Semiology' whose task was to describe them in detail. In response to this, the old concept of madness—that until then had been defined as a metaphysical entity—was broken up into fragments that became what is now called 'mental symptoms'. *Pari passu*, the body was being reconceptualized as a mosaic of specialized organs and tissues each of which might be held responsible for certain symptoms and signs. The final stage in this evolution was the appearance of medical physiology (the study of functions based in biological sciences) which in the realm of general medicine allowed for the neat connection between tissues and symptoms (Rothschuh 1973).

The medicalization of Alienism encouraged the direct application to madness of the anatomo-clinical model of disease. Indeed, every aspect of Alienism was reconceived as being part of Medicine including the professionalization of its practitioners, the creation of rites of passage (examinations, degrees), social networking systems (associations, guilds, meetings), databases (journals, books) and the building of exclusive venues of care (mental asylums). Therefrom, all the

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

traditional categories related to 'madness' (alienation, lunacy, insanity, vesania, distraction, dementia, etc.) were replaced by the new concept of 'mental disease'. Alienism became, de facto, if not *de jure*, a branch of medicine, and it has remained so to this day.

These historical facts can be handled in two ways by the epistemologist of psychiatry. It can be proposed that the process in question reflected 'discoveries' made by the ineluctable progress of science; this is the sense in which many consider madness to be a 'fact of nature'. Alternatively, the medicalization of madness can be considered as a 'contingent' event, as a social response to a problem. Hence, its success should depend less on any intrinsic 'truth' than on its social usefulness and on the fact that it fits in well with the socio-economic needs of capitalism.

Regarding the analysis of 'mental illness', the two above narratives lead to different consequences. The claim that it is only a natural phenomenon, does away with the possibility of understanding madness (or at least some forms of madness) as purely symbolic acts susceptible to interpretation and to hermeneutic management. Ab initio, this limitation might have seemed a small price to pay as compared with the potential benefit of naturalizing madness without residuum. This was the promise of a medical cure by manipulating the (putative) biological substratum of madness. The fact that this promise has not really been fulfilled must be explained. The stock answer is that it is matter of more time and more money.

But it could be argued that the 'full naturalization' of madness may be misconceived, even if this challenges the conventional medical view and raises scientific, social and professional issues. This because the 'contingent' relation narrative indicated above can accommodate both biological and hermeneutic accounts of madness. The 'fact of nature' view fails because it has been applied indiscriminately to all forms of mental affliction. The hybrid model to be proposed below advocates for the creation of subgroups of afflictions, each susceptible to a different conceptualization and management. Given that Psychiatry is not a contemplative but a modificatory discipline, the crucial questions should be whether there are ways of conceptualizing madness that can give rise to more efficient, ethical and affordable management routines than those currently in use.

The Hybrid Structure of Mental Symptoms

According to the Cambridge model, mental symptoms are hybrid objects, that is, entities constituted by a neurobiological signal drastically modified by cultural and interactional configurators (Aragona and Marková 2015). The configurating in question changes not only the form or intensity of the neurobiological signal but may also change its content and specificity (Berrios and Marková 2006). The process of symptom-formation within this model is conceived in terms of various pathways along which subjective mental experiences are created. One example would be when dysfunctional or distressed brain addresses issue out signals that

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

upon entering the patient's awareness create subjective states that often enough have not been felt before by the patient. Because these unprecedented experiences are initially ineffable, pre-linguistic and pre-conceptual, sufferers have no templates or configurators ready-to-hand to describe, classify and name them.

To make sense and communicate these unprecedented experiences, sufferers need to configure them into mental and speech acts. In the case of first time experiences they may first go through a period of perplexity (Fuentenebro and Berrios 1995) and then resort to the configurators that their culture provides. In addition, the meaning of these experiences is further configured through the interaction with their social environment. This means that from the moment of their construction mental symptoms are 'hybrid objects' in the constitutive sense of the term, that is, they are dense combinations of neurobiological and cultural information; and the cultural configurator can change both the content and the form of the mental symptom (Berrios and Marková 2002).

Conclusions

The concept of mental illness can only be explored in relation to successive historical frames. The association between Alienism (Psychiatry) and general medicine is contingent upon a historical event and hence there is little reason to consider it as a fact of nature. If the association is not working well, it is the duty of those charged with helping the mentally afflicted to seek alternative professional links and conceptualizations for madness.

Whilst there is evidence that mental symptoms do have ontological stability, mental diseases remain historical constructs parasitical upon combinations of mental symptoms. The nature of the glue that within each 'mental disease' keeps the symptoms together has not yet been explained.

During the 19th century alienism borrowed from general medicine the so-called 'anatomo-clinical' model of disease. To this day, this epistemological device enjoins psychiatrists to anchor the psychiatric objects in neurobiology. Looking for a 'biological invariant' responsible for surface events (symptoms) still seems a task worth pursuing. This has led to a neglect of the mechanism of psychogenesis.

A hybrid model of the structure of psychiatry and of the objects of psychiatry has been proposed. The model conforms with the neuropsychiatric postulate that mental symptoms must have neurobiological inscription but emphasizes the role of cultural and interactional configurators which on occasions may transform the same biological signal into different mental symptoms and viceversa.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

References

Ackerknecht, E. (1967). *Medicine at the Paris hospital 1794–1848*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

Aragona, M., & Marková, I. S. (2015). The hermeneutics of mental symptoms in the Cambridge School. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicopatologia Fundamental, 18,* 599–618.

Beebee, H., & Sabbarton-Leary, N. (2010). *The semantics and metaphysics of natural kinds*. New York: Routledge.

Berrios, G. E. (1988). Historical background to abnormal psychology. In E. Miller & J. Cooper (Eds.), *Adult abnormal psychology* (pp. 26–51). Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone.

Berrios, G. E. (1994). Historiography of mental systems and diseases. *History of Psychiatry, 5,* 175–190.

Berrios, G. E. (1996). *The history of mental symptoms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berrios, G. E. (1999). Classification in psychiatry: a conceptual history. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 33,* 145–160.

Berrios, G. E. (2006). Mind in General and Sir A. Crichton. *History of Psychiatry, 17,* 469–486.

Berrios, G. E. (2008). Baillarger's Essay on a classification of different genera of insanity (1853). *History of Psychiatry, 19,* 358–373.

Berrios, G. E. (2011). Convergences that are no more. *History of Psychiatry, 22,* 133–136.

Berrios, G. E. (2018). Historical epistemology of the body-mind interaction in psychiatry. *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience, 20,* 5–12.

Berrios, G. E., & Marková, I. S. (2002). Conceptual issues. In H. D'Haenen, J. A. den Boer, & P. Willner (Eds.), *Biological psychiatry* (pp. 9–39). Chichester: Wiley.

Berrios, G. E., & Marková, I. S. (2006). Symptoms—historical perspectives and effect on diagnosis. In M. Blumenfiels & J. J. Strain (Eds.), *Psychosomatic medicine* (pp. 27–38). Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Berrios, G. E., & Marková, I. (2016). Towards a new epistemology of psychiatry. In L. J. Kirmayer, R. Lemson, & C. A. Cummings (Eds.), *Re-visioning psychiatry* (pp. 41–64). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boorse, C. (1975). On the distinction between disease and illness. *Philosophy & Public Affairs, 5,* 40–68.

Canguilhem, G. (1966). *Le normal et le pathologique*. Paris: PUF.

Caplan, A. L., Engelhardt, H. T., & McCartney, J. J. (Eds.). (1981). *Concepts of health and disease*. London: Addison.

Chalmers, A. (Ed.). (1994). *Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English language (first published in 1756)*. London: Studio Editions.

Chamberet, J. B. (1818). Maladie. *Dictionaire des sciences médicales* (Vol. 30, pp. 172–203). Paris: Panckoucke.

Cooper, R. (2002). Disease. *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Biology and the Biomedical Sciences, 33,* 263–282.

Cooter, R. J. (1979). Phrenology and british alienists, c. 1825–1845. *Medical History*, *20*, 1–21; 135–151.

Fuentenebro, F. Y., & Berrios, G. E. (1995) The predelusional state. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, *36*, 251–259.

Gadamer, H. G. (1996). *The enigma of health*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gall, F. J., & Spurzheim, G. (1811). *Des dispositions innées de l'âme et de l'esprit*. Paris: Schoell.

Harré, R. (1970). Powers. In R. Tuomela (Ed.), *Dispositions* (pp. 211–233). Dordrecht: Reidel.

Marková, I. S., & Berrios, G. E. (1995). Mental symptoms: Are they similar phenomena? The problem of symptom heterogeneity. *Psychopathology, 28,* 147–157.

Marková, I. S., & Berrios, G. E. (2009). Epistemology of mental symptoms. *Psychopathology, 42,* 343–349.

Norès, J. M. (1996). La maladie et le problème du mal. Thèse de l'Université Paris V, René Descartes, Paris.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Riese, W. (1950). *La pensée causale en médecine*. Paris: PUF.
Riese, W. (1953). *The conception of disease*. New York: Philosophical Library.
Rothbart, D. (Ed.). (2004). *Modeling: gateway to the unknown. A work by Rom Harré*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
Rothschuh, K. E. (1973). *History of physiology* (G. B. Risse, Trans.). New York: Krieger.
Sendrail, M. (1980). *Histoire culturelle de la maladie*. Paris: Privat.
Swain, G. (1978). l'aliéné entre le médecin et le philosophe. *Perspectives Psychiatriques, 65,* 90–99.
Taylor, F. K. (1979). *The concepts of illness, disease, and morbus*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Uttal, W. R. (2001). *The new phrenology. The limits of localizing cognitive processes in the brain*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Wakefield, J. C. (1992). The concept of mental disorder. *American Psychologist, 47,* 373–388.
Watts, S. (2003). *Disease and medicine in world history*. London: Routledge.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 13
Rom Harré as a Moral Philosopher

Svend Brinkmann

Introduction

The first time I met Rom Harré was in 2006, the day before my PhD defense. Rom was on the committee, and we were having dinner in Aarhus together with my supervisor, Steinar Kvale, and another member of the committee, Alan Costall. Needless to say, I was quite nervous, in part because of the uncertainties of having to defend my work the next day, and in part because I was having dinner with such scholars that I admired so deeply. I had read most of Rom's contributions to psychology, and he was—and remains—one of the most important sources of inspiration for me. However, it was tremendously delightful to meet him that evening and experience such a kind and generous man, who told funny stories about another PhD defense he had recently attended in Paris, where there had been a very large audience, much to Rom's surprise, including the candidate's grandmother! I had to inform Rom that my grandmother, too, was going to attend the next day (PhD defenses are public in Denmark, sometimes attracting hundreds of people).

Since then, Rom—and his concepts and clear-headed way of approaching psychology—has been present in my work. I shall try to explain how in the following by firstly articulating the normative approach to psychology found in Rom's work, before, secondly, discussing the possibilities for a universal source of normativity in human mental life, which leads us to what we conventionally think of as moral philosophy. In Rom's case, I believe that psychology and moral philosophy become intertwined, as they should be. In that sense, Rom is a prime exponent of the 19th century approach to psychology as belonging to "the moral sciences" (Brinkmann 2010).

S. Brinkmann (✉)
Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark
e-mail: svendb@hum.aau.dk

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_13

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Psychology as a Normative Science: Tasks, Tools and Taxonomy

More than anyone else I can think of, Harré (following the convention of academic writing, I shall now switch to using surnames) is to be thanked for having articulated and defended the idea that psychology should be seen as a normative science. In one way, this important idea goes all the way back to Aristotle, who saw the need for a combination of causal and normative perspectives in the study of mental life. Although Aristotle understood psychological phenomena such as thoughts, emotions, and motivations in terms of the natural sciences of his times, he did not think that they could be fully understood from this perspective alone. We also need the "dialectician" in order to grasp it (Robinson 1989). For only the latter would rightly define e.g. anger "as the appetite for returning pain for pain, or something like that, while the former would define it as a boiling of the blood." (Aristotle quoted in Robinson 1989, p. 81).

The dialecticians—of which Harré is a prime contemporary representative—understand that anger (like any other psychological phenomenon) is never just a physiological or neurological happening (like a "boiling of the blood" or some modern neurophysiological equivalent), but always also something done or performed, which is why there is such a thing as *justified* anger in the face of preposterousness (and there is certainly also unjustified anger). What makes "boiling of the blood" *anger* (rather than a mere physiological perturbation) is precisely that it is performed in a context where it makes sense to question, justify and state the reason for "boiling of the blood". Anger is thus a psychological phenomenon in so far as it is a normative phenomenon that can be done more or less well, performed more or less correctly, and therefore is subject to praise and blame. If anger belonged entirely to the realm of causal happenings, we should confine it to the science of physiology. As Harré (1983, p. 136) noted in his early book on *Personal Being*, the reason why dread and anger are psychological phenomena (i.e., emotions) but not indigestion or exhaustion—although all have behavioral manifestations as well as fairly distinctive experiential qualities—is that only the former are normative and thus subject to praise and blame, because they belong to the moral orders of human cultures.

With this in mind, it is no wonder that Harré has tirelessly urged us to *move forward* to Aristotle (Harré 1997). For psychologists, this would indeed amount to genuine progress, since our science has been unrightfully dominated by causal approaches, mimicking the mechanistic physical sciences of latter centuries, which is both unfavorable to the subject matter of psychology and unfair to the physical sciences. Harré himself, however, has not so much drawn on Aristotle as on the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein in the attempt to develop the foundations for a "psychology for the third millennium" (Harré and Moghaddam 2012), i.e., a discipline that is finally adequate to its subject matter, studying "active people carrying out their projects according to the rules and conventions of their social and material environments." (p. 6).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Harré sees the need for this kind of Aristotelian-Wittgensteinian "hybrid psychology" if we are to integrate knowledge of the causal workings of the brain and central nervous system with our understanding of human beings as persons that may act for reasons in order to achieve their goals (Brinkmann 2018). Harré's main means of integration are the task-tool metaphor and the taxonomic priority principle (Harré 2002; Harré and Moghaddam 2012). The task-tool metaphor is based on the fact that living human beings must be described as active agents. We are engaged in ongoing projects in our lives—raising children, playing tennis, baking cookies, solving problems at work etc.—and Harré refers to these projects as cognitive tasks. They are rightly described in what he calls a P-grammar (i.e. with reference to *persons'* reasons for action within social practices). However, we normally need various tools in order to complete the tasks that we are engaged in. Obviously, I cannot bake cookies without having access to flour, butter and sugar, for example, but I also need tools like a rolling pin and an oven. Certain chemical reactions occur when the ingredients are mixed and baked, and these can be described in terms of a molecular grammar (M-grammar). But what justifies the activity itself being properly described as "baking cookies" is not something that can be understood in terms of the grammars that express the workings of molecules or organisms. It is only a genuine human activity when we view it in terms of the person grammar. Only here does it make sense to talk about baking cookies in normative terms, as something that can be more or less successfully. If the cookies do not turn out well, we turn to the person who made the cookies to complain and not to the oven (of course, an oven can be broken, but we do not hold the oven morally accountable in such a case, because only persons can be responsible as moral agents).

The point is that our tasks are always identified with reference to persons' actions and intentions, whereas the functioning of the tools is described based on grammars that we use to talk about molecules and organisms. This is the core of the task-tool principle. Furthermore, a central assumption in Harré's hybrid psychology is that the brain is a tool for people's tasks (Harré 2012). The brain's functioning should be described with the use of the O-grammar, since it is an organ that has a specific neurochemical structure (invoking the M-grammar). We must avoid committing the otherwise common mereological fallacy of attributing characteristics to the brain that properly belong to the domain of persons (Bennett and Hacker 2003). Simply put: The brain is not a person, and so it does not think, act or feel (although it is a central tool that enables persons to do these things more or less well). Harré's hybrid psychological assumption is thus that there is no contradiction between describing the brain's functioning causally (e.g. based on M-grammar) and the person's actions normatively (based on P-grammar), but rather that these are two complementary descriptions of the same process.

Following from this task-tool principle, the so-called taxonomic priority principle says that we necessarily point out material tools and mechanisms based on criteria that are derived from the meaningful, human world of cognitive tasks and projects. This means that the side of psychology that works based on O- and M-grammars (e.g. neuroscientific psychology) is always piggybacking on the side of psychology that works based on P-grammar. Or, in more positive terms: the

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

causal and functional approaches in psychology are necessarily developed on the premises of normative psychology. The person—i.e., "the embodied, publicly identifiable and individuatable and unanalyzable being around which the human form of life revolves" (Harré 1998, p. 177)—is primary in psychology, which means that the P-grammar is likewise primary, and O- and M-grammars are secondary. The principle thus emphasizes the fact that a tool is inevitably defined relative to the tasks that it can be used to perform (Harré 2002, p. 138). We cannot understand what a tool is used for based solely on the knowledge of the tool's composition in isolation (i.e. only from the knowledge of its molecular or organic structure). It is only possible to understand a tool if we understand the social practices and life forms (the normativities) that give the tool its meaning.

Positioning Theory as a Moral Psychology

In addition to Harré's normative psychology that I have sketched above, he has developed an approach to the study of mental life in its social forms called positioning theory. I have previously argued that positioning theory is itself a normative, indeed moral, tool rather than a value neutral approach to social life (Brinkmann 2007). I shall here briefly state the three main assumptions of positioning theory (the "positioning triangle" in the words of Harré and Moghaddam 2003) in order to indicate that they in fact constitute a systematic moral psychology (what follows reworks sections from Brinkmann 2007).

Unsurprisingly, the core concept in positioning theory is position, defined as "a cluster of rights and duties to perform certain actions with a certain significance as acts, but which may also include prohibitions or denials of access to some of the local repertoire of meaningful acts" (Harré and Moghaddam 2003, pp. 5–6). In every social context, practice, or situation there exists a realm of positions in which people are located, and such positions are *inescapably moral* (Harré and van Langenhove 1999). They are moral in the sense of involving "oughts". For example, if I am positioned as the leader of the expedition, I simply ought to guide the participants to the best of my abilities. This is what it means to be a leader, and here we see that positions are "functional", which means that there is no naturalistic fallacy involved in deriving oughts from descriptions.

Harré (2005) has argued that we should understand the duties and rights that constitute positions in terms of powers and vulnerabilities. Rights, Harré argues, are derived from vulnerabilities: We can only have rights because of our vulnerabilities. In simple terms, the hungry have a right to be fed, because without food they will be unable to engage in valuable activities and ultimately die. Not every vulnerability, however, but only those that are tied to substantive interests, engender a right. Harré and Robinson (1995) define an interest in Aristotelian fashion: "For an entity to have an interest is for it to be constituted in such a way that, where the interest is acknowledged and honoured, the entity more fully realizes whatever potentialities it possesses." (p. 520). Although those vulnerabilities of living beings that are tied to

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

substantive interests are necessary and sufficient conditions for the ascription of rights, we should avoid a reification of rights (and duties). They do not exist as metaphysical *entities*, but rather belong to what Harré calls "the discursive domain" (Harré 2005, p. 237), i.e., as conditions of a moral order.

Just as rights are derived from vulnerabilities, duties are derived from powers. We can only have duties because we have the power to do certain things; or, as Kant famously said: an "ought" implies a "can", i.e., a power to act and make a difference. This means that the issue of what constitute powers and vulnerabilities is context dependent. For example, the grandmother who looks after her grandchild has a duty to take care of the child, and the child has a corresponding right to be taken care of. But if the grandmother is going blind, and they are about to cross a road together, then the child may have (all things being equal) a duty of guiding them safely across the road, and the grandmother has a right to ask for help.

The next core concept of positioning theory is storyline, pointing to the fact that social episodes do not just happen haphazardly, but rather unfold according to norms and already established patterns of development. Storylines are "expressible in a loose cluster of narrative conventions" (Harré and Moghaddam 2003, p. 6), and understanding the storylines that unfold and order specific social episodes is crucial to act as a capable moral agent. To take a simple example, if we witness someone verbally abusing another person, then it makes a huge difference to our perception of the situation if we learn that the storyline unfolding here is one of theatrical play. Different reasons for action confront the agent relative to different storylines.

Finally, there is the concept of acts: Every socially significant action, including speech, as Harré and Moghaddam (2003, p. 6) point out, must be interpreted as an act; that is, not just as an intended action (e.g. a handshake), but as an intelligible and meaningful performance (the handshake can be a greeting, a farewell, a seal etc.). As we have seen, for any intelligible human act we can ask not just whether it happened, but also whether it was done well, and there is thus an irreducible normative element to human acts. Identifying acts presupposes an identification of the reasons on which they are based, and this in turn involves understanding the social episodes and practices in which reasons exist.

In short, I believe that positioning theory is not just a toolbox for social analysis, but also for the capable moral agent. Moral agents need the ability for self-detachment from the immediacy of their own desires. Understanding the positions of oneself and others means getting clear about the situational rights and duties involved, which presupposes detachment from one's immediate desires. Furthermore, moral agents need the capacity to imagine alternative realistic futures (MacIntyre 1999). According to positioning theory, certain storylines unfold in and order social episodes, and imagining futures centrally involves imagining certain story lines unfolding. Finally, moral agents need the disposition to recognise and make correct practical judgements concerning a variety of values in order to act well. The result of a practical judgement is an act in the sense of a meaningful social performance.

All in all, with positioning theory we have the outlines of human moral capabilities grounded in an ontology of rights and duties. This theoretical complex can

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

be considered as a moral psychology or a blueprint for a kind of moral *Bildung*. We should teach our moral novices something like positioning theory in practice if we want them to become excellent practical reasoners. However, there is still a question to be asked about the possible universality of the norms that order social life. Are all such norms socially constructed or culturally relative? Or should we see (some of) them as universal? I shall end my chapter by considering this question.

Universal Moral Necessity

Harré himself comes close to a universalist position in moral philosophy when discussing the rights and duties that emerge from human vulnerabilities and powers. But, as he says, such rights and duties are not mysterious "entities" that are attached to human beings, but rather discursively constituted. So, the question becomes whether everything discursive is contingent (i.e. socially constructed) or not. I believe we have reason to say the latter, and Harré has often invoked the otherwise sadly neglected work of Anthony Holiday on *moral powers* to make this point (Holiday 1988).

Holiday, a South African philosopher, journalist and anti-apartheid activist (who died in 2006), argued that what he called semantic necessity—i.e. what Wittgenstein (1953) spelled out as the regulative norms in language use—must be seen as moral necessity (Holiday 1988). In other words, the language that we speak, and which makes us human, is ultimately possible only because of certain universal moral values. Holiday argues more specifically that certain "core language games" are essential to any language imaginable. Core language games function to preserve a set of moral values without which language would lose its communicative force, and hence its meaning. Holiday identifies three such core language games that I will mention briefly (see Brinkmann 2016, on which the following is based):

First, there are truth-telling language games: In general, human collectives praise truth-telling and condemn and punish lying. It is no coincidence that we have linguistic practices that function to preserve the value of truthfulness, for this is not a value that can intelligibly be seen as contingent or socially constructed. Rather, it is presupposed by processes of social construction, because it is constitutive of our capacities to communicate. For there to be linguistic social constructions, there must be a language, and language is only imaginable if people are committed to truth-telling. It is a fundamental fact, as Løgstrup (1956) also argued, that a basic trust is primary in social interactions, practices and conversations. As Holiday says, adherence to the truth-telling norm "is not itself conventional, but the condition of there being any conventions whatsoever." (Holiday 1988, p. 93). In other words, truth-telling is a universal moral value in a transcendental sense, i.e., a necessary background condition for communication and human sense-making. Harré and Robinson (1997) have identified other non-constructed conditions for the possibility of language based on Wittgenstein and Thomas Reid (they call these conditions "ethological"), but the addition of specific moral conditions is significant.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Second, there are universal justice language games: Although concrete ideas about the just and the unjust vary around the world, human collectives everywhere need justice language games in order to determine guilt and innocence in non-arbitrary ways. The practices of courts of law are institutionalized versions of such language games, but they also exist in everyday life. Holiday's point is that if Wittgenstein was correct in his famous insistence that to imagine a language means to imagine a form of life, then justice, like truthfulness, is a pre-conventional value, and not a socially constructed value. As a value, it is a condition for our having language and culture, rather than something constructed in speaking. If there were no objective distinctions between guilt and innocence, "it would not be possible to distinguish harm-attracting activities from safe ones" (Holiday 1988, p. 105), and there would thus be no reason to suppose "that such-and-such a language game was a harmless one to play, or that this or that way of trying to act in accordance with a rule, though it did us no harm yesterday, would not be treated as treason tomorrow." (p. 105). Without justice language games, Holiday claims, we would not be able to engage in language games at all, and language would be impossible.

Finally, we have what Holiday calls ritual language games: If there is to be language, he argues, there has to be "deep-seated agreement which is only possible if the integrity of the persons who speak the language is sustained, and clearly this cannot be done unless reverence for persons and their rights to speak and be listened to is a prevailing norm." (Holiday 1988, p. 109). Such reverence presupposes a respect for ritual, and Holiday refers to anthropologist Mary Douglas's view of rituals as enactments of social relations that enable people to know their own society. In this view, rituals are necessary to create and maintain any kind of complex sociocultural life, and insofar as language belongs to a form of life, the non-conventional value of respect for ritual is presupposed in our having a language in the first place. Like truthfulness and justice, such respect is what we might call a transcendental condition for the possibility of human discourse and language.

In short, Holiday's Wittgensteinian argument is a powerful rejoinder to the view that all moral ideas are socially constructed and culturally relative. Many of them certainly are, but if Holiday is right, we have to admit the intriguing point that there are objective moral values that make language and discourse possible. Core language games refer to those discursive practices that serve to preserve and sustain such moral values and also the complex social and psychological life made possible by them. If this is true, we can conclude that we not only live in a moral world because we have language, discourse and a complex mental life, but we also have language and a complex mental life because of objectively real moral values.

Conclusions

Harré has provided us with the foundations for a much-needed normative psychology, which, basically, is a psychology that is adequate to its subject matter. And, with the discussion of rights and duties, he has begun to articulate the

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

ontological grounding of normativity as such in human life. I have argued that Holiday's work on core language games is useful in this context, since it emphasizes the reality of certain universal sources of normativity. Harré has long insisted that it is conversation (in a broad sense) that creates a social world, just as causality creates a physical world (Harré 1983). And, if the arguments of this chapter are valid, then we must conclude that certain universal moral values make conversation (and thus human mental and social life) possible.

I shall end with one dimension of moral life that has not been much addressed by the Aristotelian-Wittgensteinian focus on normativity: What Løgstrup (1956) calls *the ethical demand*. According to Løgstrup, this is exactly a pre-cultural, pre-conventional and in a sense pre-conversational demand to use the power we inevitably have over others as interdependent beings for their sake rather than our own. It is a kind of moral responsibility that is grounded in nothing other than the vulnerability of the other (something that was also thematized in the phenomenology of Levinas). Harré limits rights to the discursive domain, but perhaps there are moral features of the social world that cut across the discursive and the cultural? This, at least, is what Løgstrup and Levinas have tried to argue, and I believe that it would be fruitful to stage a conversation between their line of thinking and that of Wittgenstein and Harré (I have provided a sketch in Brinkmann 2016, and will pursue this further in the future).

References

Bennett, M. R., & Hacker, P. M. S. (2003). *Philosophical foundations of neuroscience*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Brinkmann, S. (2007). Practical reason and positioning. *Journal of Moral Education, 36,* 415–432.

Brinkmann, S. (2010). *Psychology as a moral science*. New York: Springer.

Brinkmann, S. (2016). Cultural psychology and its values. *Culture & Psychology, 22,* 376–386.

Brinkmann, S. (2018). *Persons and their minds: Towards an integrative theory of the mediated mind*. London: Routledge.

Harré, R. (1983). *Personal being*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R. (1997). Forward to Aristotle: The case for a hybrid ontology. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 27,* 173–191.

Harré, R. (1998). *The singular self: An introduction to the psychology of personhood*. London: Sage.

Harré, R. (2002). *Cognitive science: A philosophical introduction*. London: Sage.

Harré, R. (2005). An ontology for duties and rights. In N. J. Finkel & F. M. Moghaddam (Eds.), *The psychology of rights and duties: Empirical contributions and normative commentaries* (pp. 223–241). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Harré, R. (2012). The brain can be thought of as a tool. *Integrative Psychological and Behavioral Science, 46,* 387–395.

Harré, R., & Moghaddam, F. M. (2003). Introduction: the self and others in traditional psychology and in positioning theory. In R. Harré & F. M. Moghaddam (Eds.), *The self and others: Positioning individuals and groups in personal, political, and cultural contexts* (pp. 1–11). London: Praeger.

Harré, R., & Moghaddam, F. M. (Eds.). (2012). *Psychology for the third millenium: Integrating cultural and neuroscience perspectives*. London: Sage.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Harré, R., & Robinson, D. N. (1995). On the primacy of duties. *Philosophy, 70,* 513–532.
Harré, R., & Robinson, D. N. (1997). What makes language possible? Ethological foundationalism in Reid and Wittgenstein. *Review of Metaphysics, 50,* 483–498.
Harré, R., & van Langenhove, L. (1999). The dynamics of social episodes. In R. Harré & L. van Langenhove (Eds.), *Positioning theory: Moral contexts of intentional action* (pp. 1–13). Oxford: Blackwell.
Holiday, A. (1988). *Moral powers: Normative necessity in language and history*. London: Routledge.
Løgstrup, K. E. (1956). *The ethical demand.* (This edition 1997). Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
MacIntyre, A. (1999). *Dependent rational animals: Why human beings need the virtues*. London: Duckworth.
Robinson, D. N. (1989). *Aristotle's psychology*. New York: Columbia University Press.
Wittgenstein, L. (1953). *Philosophical investigations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 14
The Social Construction of Emotions

W. Gerrod Parrott

The Social Construction of Emotions

Psychologists now routinely accept that human emotions are shaped by culture, but it was not always so. In the mid-twentieth century, emotion was not a common academic topic, and in psychology, when it was addressed at all, emotion was understood more as a source of disorganization than of functionality, more as a topic of biology than of cognition, language, or culture (e.g., Young 1943). Rom Harré contributed to changing that understanding. This chapter will describe how he did it, which was primarily through two edited books that argued for a social constructionist approach to emotions and assembled an engaging assortment of chapters that displayed the usefulness of that approach. The title of the first was, appropriately enough, *The Social Construction of Emotions* (Harré 1986). The second book, on which I collaborated with Rom, was *The Emotions: Social, Cultural, and Biological Dimensions* (Harré and Parrott 1996). That project led to our other collaborations as well as to our deepening friendship, and this chapter will tell that story as well.

The Emotion Revolution

Although interest in emotion never fully ceased in the mid-twentieth century, a broad resurgence of academic interest began during the 1960s and 1970s, when what is now called the "emotion revolution" or the "affective turn" got its start. A small number of important philosophical and psychological studies in the 1960s built momentum toward a widespread renewal of interest across a broader range of

W. G. Parrott (✉)
Georgetown University, Washington, D.C, USA
e-mail: parrottg@georgetown.edu

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_14

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

disciplines in the 1970s. In philosophy, this revival is evident in the essays collected in Amélie Rorty's (1980) volume *Explaining Emotions*. In anthropology, there was an expansion of research into how emotion is shaped by culture, a representative sample of which was collected by Richard Shweder and Robert LeVine (1984) in their volume, *Culture Theory*, and more extensively reviewed by Lutz and White (1986). In sociology too, emotion became the focus of much innovative work (see Kemper 1990).

In psychology, the volume of new emotion research was even greater, partly because of the size of the discipline and the number of subfields that could address emotion, and partly because of psychology's extensive previous history with the topic in the nineteenth century. But whereas the philosophers, anthropologists, and sociologists were concerned with the cognitive elaboration and cultural diversity of emotions, the psychological renaissance largely proceeded from assumptions that emotions were innate, involuntary, primitive, and non-cognitive. This emphasis was evident in two of the earliest compilations to emerge. The 1978 *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* was entirely devoted to the subject of emotion (Howe and Dienstbier 1979), but five of its six chapters emphasized biology, behavioral conditioning, or evolution. The one exception in the Nebraska volume was James Averill's chapter on anger, which highlighted the cognitive, legal, social, and cultural facets of that emotion. Another early collection was Plutchik and Kellerman's (1980) influential compilation of theories of emotion, in which 12 of the 14 contributions primarily addressed evolution, pan-cultural universals, bodily expressions, or continuity between humans and mammals, along with psychoanalytic and two-factor perspectives. The two exceptions: once again, a chapter by James Averill, this time presenting a general theory of social constructionism, and a chapter by Richard Lazarus, writing about the importance of cognitive appraisal.

In short, the early emotion revolution in psychology contrasted with that in philosophy, anthropology, and sociology in regard to its assumptions about the nature of emotions and the methods used to study them. With a few exceptions, the psychologists disregarded emotions' incorporation of subtle social knowledge, culturally-specific moral standards, and the distinctions marked by different languages. Furthermore, they employed the research methods of Behaviorism, biological psychology, and context-free experimental manipulation that would be ill-suited to exploring such topics. Rom Harré's multi-faceted scholarly background made him ideally suited to challenge both of these issues in the mid-1980s.

The Ethogenic Approach

As an undergraduate at the University of Auckland, Rom started out studying chemical engineering and mathematics. As an aside, I would note that it seems more common than one might expect for good social theorists to have a background in the physical sciences. Perhaps proficiency with physical science makes one less prone to scientism and reductionism when studying human social life.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Perhaps knowing physical science makes one less insecure about one's scientific credibility. Regardless of whether it influenced his later social theories, the mathematics and chemical engineering definitely established the basis for Rom's legendary intellectual range. He continued mastering new fields throughout his career. Along with his astonishing productivity, Rom's versatility was frequently commented upon by his admirers at Georgetown University. I recall remarking in 1990 that in that single year Rom had published several books, one of which put forward a theory of the relation between pronoun systems and thought (Mühlhäusler and Harré 1990) while another contributed to the philosophy of quantum field theory (Brown and Harré 1990)!

Returning to Rom's scholarly background, he graduated from the University of Auckland with a degree in mathematics—he didn't have enough money to complete the other degree in engineering—which qualified him for a job teaching maths in Pakistan (Belli, Aceros, and Harré 2015). From Pakistan, Rom went on to do post-graduate work at Oxford, where he studied not only mathematics but also philosophy of science and linguistic philosophy, the latter under the supervision of none other than J. L. Austin. Rom's early publications were in philosophy of science, particularly on the shortcomings of logical empiricism and positivism.

Oxford's cultivation of interdisciplinary discussion soon led to Rom's interacting with social psychologists, whose scientism and causalism struck him as naïve, and whose methods and metaphysics seemed utterly mismatched to their subject matter (Belli et al. 2015). Rom embraced the problem of social psychology and strove to develop more suitable theories and methods. His alternative to traditional social psychology was "the ethogenic approach," which combined the Oxford School's language analysis with microsociological methods developed by the symbolic interactionists and ethnomethodologists (Harré 1977). With Paul Secord, he founded *The Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, a journal that would become home not only to ethogenic analysis but to all manner of insightful articles about social psychology. I did not realize Rom's role in founding that journal until recently, but throughout my career I have always found that journal to be an intellectual oasis, and I'm now especially pleased that it was where my very first academic publication appeared (Silver, Sabini, and Parrott 1987).

By the early 1980s, all the elements were in place for Rom to address the social construction of emotion. The transition point is clearly visible near the end of a book that Rom co-authored with David Clarke and Nicola De Carlo, entitled *Motives and Mechanisms* (Harré, Clarke, and De Carlo 1985). Published a year before Rom's first emotion book, *Motives and Mechanisms* represented a summing up of the ethogenic approach. It explained the shortcomings of contemporary psychology and proposed a new psychology to replace it. Its critique of psychology's research methods drew on Rom's work in philosophy of science. Its critique of psychology's individualism was based on the work of sociologists and of the more socially oriented developmentalists, such as Vygotsky. Its prescriptions for a new approach included the techniques of the ethnomethodologists and linguistic philosophers. Flowing naturally from all this, in a final chapter entitled "Can Some New Research Domains Now be Identified?," was a detailed proposal for applying

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

the new psychology to the study of human emotions. This section reads like a précis of the following year's emotion book. Occupying fully half of *Motives'* final chapter, this section explicitly linked the topic of emotion to the ethogenic approach. Techniques of linguistic philosophy were used to illustrate the importance of emotion vocabulary, while microsociology and anthropology were applied to demonstrate the cultural relativity of emotions. The chapter's specific examples foreshadowed specific chapters from the upcoming emotion book.

The Social Construction of Emotions

Thus it came to be that—in the face of a psychological emotion revolution that emphasized universal basic emotions, limbic system structures, and pan-cultural expressions—Rom put together an edited book that argued for a social constructionist approach. *The Social Construction of Emotions* (Harré 1986) was remarkably successful in establishing an alternative to universalist accounts. According to Google Scholar, the book had been cited over 2100 times by the end of 2018, with the rate of citation holding steadily in the range of 75–100 per year for the past 15 years, showing no sign of declining even 30 years after publication.

There are many reasons for this book's enduring impact, but one certainly has to be its title, *The Social Construction of Emotions*, which clearly labeled its point of view and, as such, could be cited by future authors as a handy stand-in for an entire theoretical perspective. Inside the cover, that perspective was fleshed out in three sections: the first addressed theory and methods; the second focused on specific types of emotion in contemporary Western cultures; the third examined specific types of emotion in other cultures and historical periods. The first part of the book appears to have had the most impact given that the book's four most highly cited individual chapters are all among the six in that section. Of particular note are a pair of chapters authored by Claire Armon-Jones, who at the time of publication was a doctoral student in philosophy in Rom's Linacre College at Oxford. One of her chapters, "The Thesis of Constructionism," set forth a broad conceptual framework that grounded social constructionism in the Western philosophical tradition from Aristotle to the present day; her other chapter explored how emotions' social functions are specific to particular cultural systems. Readers who had looked inside the book searching for a general defense of social constructionism found that Armon-Jones' chapters, along with Rom's own introductory essay, lived up to the book's billing. This section's other three chapters addressed more specific theoretical topics and were written by by well-regarded authors: Errol Bedford, Theodore Sarbin, and James Averill.

The remainder of the volume covered more specific topics, which was essential for one of the book's major rhetorical strategies, to demonstrate that the social constructionist approach addresses a variety of noteworthy topics that are neglected by other perspectives. Reading through *The Social Construction of Emotions* is a bit of a romp, actually, and the reader comes away feeling that this approach opens the

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

doors to an expanded range of fascinating topics. These chapters explored nuances of anger, envy, and loneliness that are elided when emotional life is reduced to a small set of basic emotions. The variety of human emotional experience came alive in chapters about unique emotional concepts and practices in Japan, Spain, Micronesia, and elsewhere.

It is Rom's own personality and way of life, I believe, not merely his broad intellectual background, that made such a volume possible. Energetic and sociable, he expands the communal intellectual life of an Oxford college onto a global scale. He travels the world giving talks and seminars while always seeming to be teaching classes at several universities simultaneously, making friends and starting up collaborations wherever he goes. *The Social Construction of Emotions* is an intellectual romp in part because that is exactly what Rom's own life is.

More than most edited books, *The Social Construction of Emotions* is more than the sum of its parts—it is a mosaic that Rom assembled from bits and pieces he encountered in his intellectual journeys and then arranged to illustrate his vision of what emotions are and how they can be studied. Some of the chapters were previously published and reprinted in the new book. Other chapters were invited specifically for the volume when Rom suggested that something an author was working on would fit. The scope of the ethogenic approach is evident in the range of disciplines that contributed: of the book's 15 chapters, 6 were written by psychologists, 5 by philosophers, 2 by anthropologists, with a sociologist and a psychiatrist providing the remaining two. Like a mosaic, his vision is only apparent when one steps back and views the whole.

Georgetown University and a Sequel Emotions Book

It was not long after the publication of *The Social Construction of Emotions* that Rom and I found ourselves at the same university and I was able to join in the fun. I had first met Rom in the early 1980s when he gave a colloquium at the University of Pennsylvania where I was a graduate student studying emotion. One of my mentors at Penn was John Sabini, whose work with Maury Silver was often published in the *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour.* That work included an article about envy that Rom later republished in the social constructionism book, as well as the article co-authored with me about embarrassment that became my first publication. After graduating from Penn in 1985 and going off to a postdoc at the University of Illinois to learn about more mainstream experimental approaches to emotion and social psychology, I joined the faculty at Georgetown University in 1987. I was attracted to Georgetown by the distinctly nontraditional intellectual climate of the psychology department there. In those days the Georgetown department was one of a few that encouraged work in theoretical and philosophical psychology. It was a very stimulating and hospitable environment for me, conducive to balancing conceptual and empirical research. It also attracted a stream of stellar visitors, including Rom, who began teaching occasional undergraduate

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

courses at first, then, after retiring from Oxford, joined the department every spring semester for 25 years. Ali Moghaddam joined us soon after, attracted, I believe, for similar reasons.

With Rom's emotion book hot off the press, he and I soon got to talking about emotions. Those discussions led to a number of joint projects where our backgrounds and approaches proved highly complementary. Our mutual engagement with Jan Smedlund's "psychologic" inspired us to combine research about embarrassment with ideas from Wittgenstein to demonstrate that, as much as we sympathized with Smedlund's critique of pseudoempiricism, his rigidly formal method of psychologic could not model everyday emotion concepts such as embarrassment (Parrott and Harré 1991). When the unexpected death of Diana, Princess of Wales, produced an outpouring of public mourning, Rom and I wrote an article that considered the nature of collective emotions and related this event to generational changes in British norms for displaying emotions and their impact on expectations about the role of the monarchy (Parrott and Harré 2001b). We published the Diana piece in a special journal issue that we edited about social and cultural accounts of emotion (Parrott and Harré 2001a). When Ali and Rom were developing their positioning theory, we discussed how emotions played a role and I furnished a chapter for their groundbreaking book (Parrott 2003). When archaeologists reflected on the possibility of discerning ancient emotions from architectural ruins, Rom and I brought our perspective to bear (Harré and Parrott 2000).

Our biggest collaboration was a new edited book, a sequel to Rom's *The Social Construction of Emotions*. Since the publication of that book, major developments had rapidly taken place in the study of emotions. Cultural psychology and neuroscience both made important advances, while interest in emotions was growing faster than ever in sociology and philosophy. Fields such as history and literature were becoming involved as well. Rom and I, too, had evolved in our thinking. We wanted to bridge the gap between the ethogenic approach and biology by addressing how evolved responses are shaped by cultural practices. We wanted to illustrate how emotions function socially and how cultures shape and deploy them to serve useful roles within the cultural system.

We thought up a succinct title that crystalized these ideas: *Emotions as the Embodiment of Social Control*. Unfortunately, after signing with Sage to deliver the book, we found that our editor stubbornly clung to some questionable theories about how to sell books. "The book's title," he pronounced, "should be as broad as possible so as to maximize the number of people who will consider buying it." So he insisted on the much more generic *The Emotions: Social, Cultural and Biological Dimensions*. Never mind that Sage's title was lacked punch, or would never be cited as a stand-in for an idea, or was identical to that of Nico Frijda's magnum opus of 1986 (I later had to soothe Nico's hurt feelings). The editor would have it no other way.

We were fortunate in many other respects, however. Sage did deliver attractive cover art—our cover's monochrome rendition of Malcom Harvey Young's "Winter" holds up nicely with the Albrecht Dürer "Melencolia I" that graced the

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

dust jacket of Rom's *Social Constructionism* book. And we obtained extraordinary writing from our contributing authors.

We followed much the same plan as with Rom's first book. We collected a number of already-published articles and commissioned an equal number of new ones, and found authors to be enthusiastic about contributing, even insisting that they tweak previously published material for the occasion. We included wide-ranging topics and perspectives to preserve the sense of broadening horizons and frolicsome exploration. We augmented the range of topics and approaches by supplementing the book's 13 chapters with 7 briefer contributions, which we called "vignettes." Historians and literary scholars contributed pieces, as did philosophers, anthropologists, numerous psychologists… and Charles Darwin.

The book's first section focused on the emotions most relevant to social control. Rom and I wrote a chapter about embarrassment. We reprinted John Demos' historical study—now a classic—of how seventeenth-century Puritans and nineteenth-century New Englanders used shame and guilt in different ways. We invited our graduate student, Inmaculada Iglesias, to write an essay about the role of *vergüenza ajena* in social life in her native Spain. Janet Landman forged a white-hot defense of experiencing regret in an essay about how cultures differently value emotions. We reprinted some of Gabrielle Taylors's philosophy of guilt, and a brief vignette by Christopher Ricks on Keats and embarrassment. Yes, it was another intellectual romp.

The second section focused on cultural variability. Peter Stearns provided a new historical study of how conceptions and customs of grieving have changed over time, and we brought back the two anthropologists who appeared in the previous emotion volume, Catherine Lutz and Paul Heelas. The third and final section focused on embodiment and consisted of chapters that disputed conventional interpretations of current biological and evolutionary topics. Feisty essays from a variety of prominent researchers challenged psychologists' assumptions about emotions: that they are primitive and biological, reducible to specific biological states, signaled by universal facial expressions, or hardwired for specific feeling states.

The Emotions appeared in 1996, precisely ten years after the social construction book. Did those two volumes influence how emotions are understood and studied? I believe they did, although not quite in the way that Rom initially intended. That is, it is not the case that contemporary social psychology journals are filled with ethogenic research, nor that contemporary emotion research is framed entirely in terms of social construction. Nevertheless, emotions are now understood quite differently than they were in 1986, and Rom's publications certainly played some role in that.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Friendship

Along with our intellectual partnership came a friendship that I will always treasure. Our ideas often developed as we met over lunch. Rom visited our house for dinner and met my children when they were quite little. He and his wife Hettie kindly hosted me in their home in Iffley Village when I visited Oxford. Rom and I shared a love of music and we kept up with each other's children's often-musical accomplishments. All three of my children graduated from Georgetown University, and one of them, Natalie, studied with Rom, taking his unique Philosophy of Psychology course that focused entirely on the works of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Natalie enjoyed the course immensely, learned much from Rom's lectures, and saved all of her books and notes from the class—events that were more consequential then they may seem. Four years later, in 2016, Rom taught his final semester at Georgetown University. He had to stop teaching mid-semester because of an illness, and our department needed to find substitute instructors for each of his two courses. One course, a survey of key thinkers in psychology, could be team-taught by members of the Psychology Department faculty, but how many people are available on short notice who can fill in for a course on Wittgenstein's psychology? We were at a loss until I thought of my daughter, who had since completed a master's degree in philosophy at Northwestern University, who now lived close by, who still possessed detailed notes from the course, and who just happened to be available for an extra teaching gig. She was hired and taught the remainder of the semester. I still hear from students who enjoyed that course "taught by Harré and Parrott," and it gives me great pleasure to see Rom's perspective on psychology, which was such an influence on me, transferred to yet another generation of students.

References

Belli, S., Aceros, J. C., & Harré, R. (2015). "It's all discursive!" Crossing boundaries and crossing words with Rom Harré. *Universitas Psychologica, 14*(2), 756–767.

Brown, H. R., & Harré, R. (Eds.). (1990). *Philosophical foundations of quantum field theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Harré, R. (1977). The ethogenic approach: Theory and practice. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 10, pp. 283–314). New York: Academic Press.

Harré, R. (Ed.). (1986). *The social construction of emotions*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harré, R., Clarke, D., & De Carlo, N. (1985). *Motives and mechanisms: An introduction to the psychology of action*. London: Methuen.

Harré, R., & Parrott, W. G. (Eds.). (1996). *The emotions: Social, cultural and biological dimensions*. London: Sage.

Harré, R., & Parrott, W. G. (2000). Commentary on Tarlow, S. "Emotion in archaeology". *Current Anthropology, 41,* 732–733.

Howe, H., & Dienstbier, R. (Eds.). (1979). *Nebraska symposium on motivation, 1978* (Vol. 26: Emotion). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Kemper, T. D. (1990). *Research agendas in the sociology of emotions*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Lutz, C., & White, G. M. (1986). The anthropology of emotions. *Annual Review of Anthropology, 15,* 405–436.

Mühlhäusler, P., & Harré, R. (1990). *Pronouns and people: The linguistic construction of social and personal identity*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Parrott, W. G. (2003). Positioning and the emotions. In R. Harré & F. Moghaddam (Eds.), *The self and others: Positioning individuals and groups in personal, political, and cultural contexts* (pp. 29–43). Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.

Parrott, W. G., & Harré, R. (1991). Smedslundian suburbs in the city of language: The case of embarrassment. *Psychological Inquiry: An International Journal of Peer Commentary and Review, 2,* 358–361.

Parrott, W. G., & Harré, R. (Eds.). (2001a). Emotions in cultural contexts in space and in time [Special issue]. *International Journal of Group Tensions, 30*(1).

Parrott, W. G., & Harré, R. (2001b). Princess Diana and the emotionology of contemporary Britain. *International Journal of Group Tensions, 30*, 29–38.

Plutchik, R., & Kellerman, H. (Eds.). (1980). *Emotion: Theory, research, and experience: Vol. 1. Theories of emotion*. New York: Academic Press.

Rorty, A. O. (Ed.). (1980). *Explaining emotions*. Berkeley, CA: University Of California Press.

Shweder, R. A., & LeVine, R. A. (Eds.). (1984). *Culture theory: Essays on mind, self, and emotion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Silver, M., Sabini, J., & Parrott, W. G. (1987). Embarrassment: A dramaturgic account. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 17,* 47–61.

Young, P. T. (1943). *Emotion in man and animal: Its nature and relation to attitude and motive*. New York: Wiley.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 15
Discursive Cognition and Neural Networks

Grant Gillett

Rom Harré contested the view of the mind as an abstraction from neural processes; "I hold that people create themselves and their patterns of interaction by virtue of the psychological and social theories to which they subscribe" (1983, 24). That is not to deny that a human neural network is the biological site of action of the elements of discursive self-formation and interactive function that human beings realise but only to deny that reductive scientific methodology could encompass what was involved without supplementation by other modes of inquiry. Socially situated *autopoiesis* or self-making as part of the attainment of personal being lifts human nature and human psychology out of a mould in which a direct read-over from animal psychology and neurological function is seen as determining many of the contours of human psychology. Our complex and clearly embodied reality as situated organisms in a human life-world encompasses complex functions which configure our social and political life as agents of self-formation and progressive historical change affecting our mode of adaptation. Our complex self-forming function creates values and aspirations and also scripts which hold up to us images of lives worth living. Such "lode stones" steering our individual life courses is problematic for psychiatry as a medical science and for philosophy of mind and psychology as framed by animal biology in that it implies that we cannot treat human cognition as having a biological subject matter straightforwardly prefigured in simpler (non-linguistic) animals. The more complex discursive picture makes a well-informed psychiatry less of a purely biomedical discipline and more inclusive so that issues of self-formation according to valued self-images as elaborated in literature and the arts became part of the genesis of the phenomena at the heart of human psychology and psychiatry. In this culturally resonant process, post-colonial and socio-political factors must play a part in the formulation and analysis of the mode of adaptation of human beings whose indigenous context of adaptation is importantly and strikingly different from that of (predominantly European) colonisers. It is no accident that these non-biological factors affect mental function

G. Gillett (✉)
University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand
e-mail: grant.gillett@otago.ac.nz

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_15

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

for large groups significantly over-represented in the mental health and criminal statistics of all post-colonial contexts (McIntyre et al. 2017). As might be expected, there are both overlaps and holistic (or complex) interactions between biomedically characterised factors in disease and socio-political factors. Both impact on the development and configuration of human psychological function in any specific context.

Kant's Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view (hereinafter A) is an early enlightenment attempt to introduce the idea of human self-formation whereby we are creatures who shape ourselves according to "what man is prepared to make of himself" (A 196). This work prefigures interesting themes resonating with Wittgenstein's analysis of thought and language:

> It is sometimes said that animals do not talk because they lack the mental capacity. And this means; "they do not think and that is why they do not talk." But – they simply do not talk. Or to put it better: they do not use language – if we accept the most primitive forms of language. – Commanding questioning, recounting, chatting, are as much a part of our natural history as walking, eating, drinking, playing (Wittgenstein 1953, #25).

Harré moves beyond *homo natura,* and natural history in that sense, to take account of "cognitive subjects" who take their place within an anthropomorphic context of discourse, socio-political adaptation and our modes of adaptation to it. That shift of focus takes account of "many different interpretations and there are social processes by which conversational moves and other interpersonal happenings are stabilized and fixed" (Harré 1983, 73). These discursive processes generate values according to which we shape ourselves within that anthopological context of adaptation. The problems made highly visible in post-colonial contexts and social structures affect the psychological characteristics that emerge in the affected human agents. To be a human agent who responds to a context of acting is to be a creature with a sub-personal psychology developed in an ecological setting that forms psychological entities like drives, motivations, intentions and desires, and so on. But these are moderated and re-formed in a value framework that cannot be reduced to sub-personal organismic variables. Thus a human agent is capable of overcoming temptations and distractions or "native tendencies" to realise self-generated "higher" plans and ways of being susceptible to socio-politically formed values. A human being is of a type that "can adopt new principles and curb its own desires" (Harré 1983, 29).

Kant, nearly two centuries ago, noticed this role of ourselves in self-conception and self-creation remarking "we make pretended discoveries of what we ourselves have introduced into our own minds" (A 17). He noted also that this complex and non-transparent process introduces a principle of efficacy or potency that is not reductively causal in that an idea or set of ideas—of self and what self ought to be like—can be formative in a self-configuring and self-directing process different from mechanistic causation but characteristic of human mental function; "to be able to make an abstraction from a sense impression … is proof of a far greater faculty than just paying attention, because it gives evidence if freedom of the faculty of thought and sovereignty of the mind in having the condition of one's sense

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

impressions under one's control *animus sui compos*(A 14)." This top-down control of self and the contents of mind is a learned skill and it exists in degrees, as Kant illustrates by a light hearted quip "Many a suitor could make a good marriage if he could only shut his eyes to a wart." (A 15) Kant's quip evinces a natural realism and sensibility and a sharp eye for an interesting philosophical point about perception, value and the construction of conscious representation all of which are often portrayed in a purely bottom-up causal manner (although that may be so when the blemish nags at one and cannot be overlooked).

Harré is sharply aware of the complex subtleties of self-formation in the light of the self-images of an age and their evaluative valences and reminds us that as human psychologists we are engaged in an unfinished project of charting philosophical anthropology as a study of embedded beings making themselves according to variously transparent normative requirements. Like Macintyre, he notices "Human actions are made intelligible by reference to intentions, purposes, decisions and desires. These do not function as causes … the expression of intention or decision or desire in either explanation or justification of our action is not to refer to an antecedent event" (1971, 201). Such things are logically and meaningfully related to human conduct in ways that Harré explores using the term "discursive". The domain of interacting discourses at play in the human mind is a field that is not chaotic but complex and dynamic to the extent that from certain viewpoints (such as mechanistic or computer-modelled neuroscience) it may seem to lack system and conduct itself randomly or chaotically but that is not so. Thus the development of human subjects, as "flesh" in a human—social and political—context, is influenced not by causation according to mechanism and information-technological processes but by relational and discursive phenomena that demonstrate the complexity of social engagement—a realm of forces and "nudges" not easily commensurable in ordered systems. For many of us the norms and forms of a valued self that influence our lives during development and self-formation are both contextually inflected and have become "second nature" so that we may even consider all beings like us alike in respect of them (the idea of learning to communicate effectively, of being a friend, of belonging to a family which inculcates in one certain values and valued relationships, and so on). But this familiar bedrock of human ways of being is only alike in certain respects to the formative influences on animals and we can forget the complexity and recalcitrance to systematization of the forces at work in our self-creation, even in relation to the self-images of a given age (MacIntyre 1971). The human neural network resists systematisation and yet is exquisitely sensitive to the myriad influences to which it responds and that is why complexity or even "chaos" theory is alive and well in trying to understand the human neural network as a natural system initially glimpsed by Aristotle according to the learning of his day (Gillett 2018).

The human neural network, moulded by "nudges" and attractors that shift the interplay of influences within it, is subtly reflective of the wider context within which a brain develops: "the phenomenal experience of lived body space is related to intersubjective and, hence, objective space, this is, in fact, linked to some extent to the doctrines of a coextensive "soul" and "body" (Fuchs 2018).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Fuchs "naturalises" a profound theoretical stance according to which the constructed or anthropogenic world of relationships and social structures complexifies human psychology and thus an analysis of the psyche/soul in an irreducible way explored by Harré: "every event is capable of many different interpretations" (73) involving "social processes", "conversational moves" and other "interpersonal happenings" that stabilize our dealing with each other and create our varying profiles of "mental organisation as individuals" (75). In this complex world of dynamic relations "people appear as locations for speech acts" through which we do things to each other with words (Austin 1962). This mode of being, configured for discursive and interpersonal function, is a powerful influence on each of us and means that we carry the mark of our uniquely situated ontogeny throughout life. That marking is sometimes complex and multi-layered although moderated by the ethos of a family who have inscribed us far beyond the genes they have passed on. That complex mental construction obeys the logic of stories not of impersonal causes and provides the tools we use to fascinate, entangle and (when it is done in the right spirit) lovingly ensnare others so that we live linked to them by shared events and scenes as they unfold and are made memorable by random acts of kindness born of the desire to shape lives with each other. This development is subjective and intersubjective, the focus of qualitative research if only because the complexity of the human neural network and the "brain as an organ of the person … that is socially and culturally scaffolded" (Fuchs, 73). That process is not tractable by the limited but effective tools of material cause and effect as constructed in a post-industrial analysis of human function. Harré "understands" this limitation and prefigures a flowering of human social science building on his pivotal work at the meeting point of many traditions.

Each of us tells and lives a story which both makes sense and is worthy of certain value judgements themselves multiple, historically nuanced, and socially embedded rather than universal. That may seem anathema to the aspirations of natural science but it is unavoidable for a realistic and insightful psychology which overlooks a penetrating philosophical analysis only at great cost. Neural network theory can cope with such difficult to quantify realities and acknowledge such things as post-colonial inflections shaping *homo anthropologicus*, through subtle and multiply intersecting means difficult to quantify. Harré understood this task and its complexity in a way that modern society and social science finds more and more relevant as we struggle to comprehend the relations that make the self-formation of human beings a potent force in human psychology. This is evinced in many ways as was brilliantly illustrated to me in an Indian train station where we were trying to figure out why the apparently scheduled train had not come; the office worker said "Perhaps the train has not come or perhaps you have made a mistake; we British know about these things." Harré would delight in such an anecdote with his sharp eye for glimpses of the forces to which he alludes and their formative role in an ethos of humanistic study that he captures in a typically incisive abstraction "Conversation is to be thought of as creating a social world just as causality generates a physical one (1983, 65)."

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Harré's discursive analysis takes our self-forming work seriously embedding the view that the human intellect and capacity for social and relational activity creates an order of natural and species-specific modes of epigenetic adaptation not shared in non-discursive animals. We do incorporate our socio-political ethos into the formation that results in a situated and distinctive self (marked perhaps by an Italian *bravura* or desire to make the *bella figura*). Factors which have causally impinged on the *psyche* through their emotive or motivational impetus and those which have commended themselves in the context of values discursively shaping an individual and the neural network that effects self-formation. The diverse ecological and discursive context that we inhabit holistically blends metaphysically diverse influences through its complex function and dynamic functioning. That function may seem chaotic rather than complex but only to a stance defined within a mechanistic scientific image and it ensures we are finely aware and richly responsive creatures on whom nothing is lost even though conscious endorsement and integration may not fully manifest that holism unless we exhibit a certain kind of developed attentiveness (Nussbaum 1990, 148).

The socio-political features of the mind function as a combined model and imposed dynamic template for self-formation adapted to the human context in which one "lives and moves and has one's being." The nuanced functions that are generated and resist systematisation at levels other than those articulated by their proper study make self-formation a topic for consultation and negotiation rather than detached functional analysis. One's role in that process changes over the course of a human life as one progressively more fully attains the standing of a being who is a member if "the kingdom of ends" both worthy to be respected and apt for inclusion in deliberations about the formation of one's own identity and its developmental context.

A child gains maturity in a more adequate and healthy way within a family that recognises them as having a significant role in their own self-formation, that role is, to some extent, *sub judice* and open to a kind of benevolent and flexible paternalism. Harré notices that his departure from Cartesianism (in both its dualistic and mechanistic forms) must discharge a philosophical debt "how is the commonplace distinction between the brain as a thinking feeling machine and its thoughts and feelings to be expressed (67). The debt is to a conception of the fragility and uniqueness of human ontogeny and he defends "the autonomy of psychology" not merely as a metaphysical issue but by relating it to an order of being in which the moral order of interpersonal relations brings us into dynamic relationship with forces that are not brute causes but draw us in certain directions of self-moulding change and development. Kant's "spontaneity" then becomes an adjustment to the "bringing about" of certain aspects of personal being that takes account of the ineliminable role of the person as a person in a social and political context of self-formation. We see this illustrated profoundly and tragically when we look at the adverse health statistics related to self-neglect and self-harm that are found in almost all post-colonial indigenous populations (Borscham et al. 2018).

Philosophical analysis, when we take our own role seriously, becomes complexified "as a system of *phenomenological* disciplines, which treat correlative

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

themes and are ultimately grounded, not in an axiomatic ego cogito, but on an all-embracing self-investigation" (Husserl 1960, 156). This shift in mode of philosophising and ultimately psychology paints thought as an interested melding between our encounter with the world and a self-a/effecting structure of abstractions and ideas emerging in discursive reality; in this we are not in the role of disinterested observers but rather participants in life who are multiply affected, as Harré clearly saw. A discursive being assesses, defends, critiques and moulds him or herself guided by ideas and their socio-political valences, a never-ending project which carries on as personal being becomes being present to and actively conceptualised by and with others generating one's own engaged participation. As such the individual does not merely contextualise events but finds a place for them within a world view that equips the person for life. Religious and spiritual beliefs and practices use discourse to moderate physiological, affective, behavioural, and cognitive mechanisms for coping with distress and illness, and other diverse life events. These mechanisms may also act as protective resources preventing the development of disease in healthy people. They also reflect and, in an ongoing and immaterial way, make each of us present on an eternal tableau which is not spooky but focuses on the *psuche*—a presence to imagination and inclusion of the personal being that each of us has played a central part in crating through "consciousness, agency and autobiography."

In the sense that Harré not only highlights in his work but explores with both philosophical and scholarly mastery, *homo natura* is potentially and partially surpassed (or one might say completed) by a new mode of collective intentional and self-engendering adaptation according to that which one judges to be best in the self-images of any age. That nub of goodness is an impetus upon which we may or may not act according to modes of evaluative, empathic, and critical engagement with each other. The discourses of the age provide us with texts or images of the human which motivate us and which we can aim to realise in ourselves and realise ourselves within. In this sense, discourse shapes us not through relations best analysed causally (although a neural network does the necessary causal work) but through an holistic nexus wherein things move us that may not be tractable as efficient causes but ought to be included in an understanding of who any one of us is and how s/he became that individual. But that more inclusive framing does not negate cognitive neuroscience, it merely exposes the limit of the functional or narrowly causal reading of neural processes that has tended to supply many of the metaphors through which we do scientific analysis. When we refocus on discursive being and the self-making involved, the refusal by Kant and Wittgenstein to render persons in the mechanistic scientific terms of a reductive age and time receives a very contemporary endorsement from Harré and his nuanced work.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

References

Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words* (J.O. Urmson, Ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Borscham, R., Young, J., Moran, P., Spittal, M., & Kinner, S. (2018). Self-harm in the criminal justice system: Public health opportunity. *The Lancet Public Health, 3*(1), e10–e11.

Fuchs, T. (2018). *Ecology of the brain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gillett, G. (2018). *From Aristotle to cognitive neuroscience*. London: Routledge.

Harré, R. (1983). *Personal being: a theory for individual psychology*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Hunter, M. E. (2002). Mental health care in aboriginals is neglected. *Canadian Family Physician, 48,* 459.

Husserl, E. (1960). *Cartesian Mediations. An introduction to Phenomenology*. (D. Cairns, Trans.). Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media.

Kant, I. (1798 [1978]). *Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view*. (V.L. Dodwell & H. H. Rudnick, Trans.). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

MacIntyre, A. (1971). *Against the self-images of the age. Essays on ideology and philosophy*. London: Duckworth.

McIntyre, C., Harris, M. G., Baxter, A. J., Leske, S., Diminic, S., Gone, J., et al. (2017). Assessing service use for mental health by Indigenous populations in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America: A rapid review of population surveys. *Health Research Policy and Systems, 15*(1), 1–17.

Nussbaum, M. (1990). *Love's knowledge*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Part IV
Wittgenstein and Psychology

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 16
Harré and Hinges—Metaphysics of Ungrounded Foundations

Bo Allesøe Christensen

Introduction

Throughout Rom Harré's writings Wittgenstein has always been one of the most important interlocutors. Already in the early book with Paul Secord *The Explanation of Social Behaviour* (1972, 171), Wittgenstein played an important role facilitating the change, proposed by the authors, of moving social psychology away from an experimental phase towards a more sociological and cultural orientated psychology. In the *Being* books from the 1980s Wittgenstein also provided a significant platform. Here for understanding the role of rules and norms providing the fine normatively structured grid people use, when accounting for their social, personal, physical and emotional being. Finally, the discourse psychology worked out with Grant Gillet in the beginning of 1990s (Harré and Gillet 1994), and the related development of positioning theory, which Harré took part in with, among others, Luk van Langenhove and Fathali Moghaddam, presented Wittgenstein (and Vygotsky) as providing the tools for instigating a discursive revolution in psychology. The aim here was studying cognition and emotion as lived and positioned, in and through discourse, understood as including all sorts of symbolic manipulations according to rules.

Now the utilisations and applications of Wittgenstein just sketched, aimed at elaborating themes from Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. In recent years Harré has turned his attention to Wittgenstein's later writings, primarily *On Certainty* (Wittgenstein 1969), and especially to the notion of a hinge, and with it a hinge-proposition. Inspired by Moyal-Sharrock's idea of a 'third-Wittgenstein' (Moyal-Sharrok 2004a, 2004b), that the post-investigation writings, and especially

B. A. Christensen (✉)
Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark
e-mail: boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_16

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

On Certainty, present us with another Wittgenstein[1]—not necessarily separate from the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* and the *Philosophical Investigations*—Harré has sought to interpret these hinge related notions in congruence with his general Wittgensteinian view on psychology.

In recent studies of Wittgenstein, it has become common to distinguish between different readings of his work. Often with one side, going back to Friedrich Waismann, and picked up and developed by Cora Diamond, James Conant, the late Gordon Baker and others (Kahane et al, 2007; Crary and Read 2000) claiming that Wittgenstein's overall goal is *therapeutic*. The therapy here consists not in solving philosophical problems but rather dissolving them, i.e. why they are considered problems in the first place. Hence, and unlike the other side which we will here dub a more *foundational* approach, Wittgenstein is not seen as presenting substantial hypotheses, theoretical claims or edifying critiques about how things at bottom actually are, or are supposed to be (Bronzo 2012; Kahane et al, 2007). So, whereas the latter attributes substantial arguments and views to Wittgenstein, the former claims that Wittgenstein's goal is to turn the reader away from engaging in any theoretical or explanatory endeavour.

Against this background I will, in this chapter, inquire into how we are to understand Harré's reading of the third Wittgenstein, because a certain tension seems to exist herein. For Harré hinges are presented as both some sort of a foundation (e.g. Harré 2015, 493), as well as being a means of therapy (Harré 2009). Hence, claiming that hinges are to be understood as related to a substantial view *and* what is supposed to dismantle a substantial theoretical view is somewhat puzzling. Now, Harré could of course just claim that his interpretation reflects the fact that Wittgenstein held different views of doing philosophy through the different phases of his career. This, however, will quickly lead to inconsistencies dismissing any discussion of a possible continuity within Wittgenstein's thinking, stressed by many interpreters (Kahane et al. 2007) including Harré himself. Against these puzzles I will argue here that Harré actually makes a subtle point stressing a certain dynamic interdependence between the two readings.

An important part of Harre's reflections on the third Wittgenstein turns on the aforementioned notion of a hinge, and its importance for cultural psychology. Harré is not alone in considering the importance of this. In a similar vein Sullivan also claims that the turn to hinges is significant, since this holds the promise of combining two understandings of what psychology is. It possesses the potential of bridging "…the gap between what Shotter (2010) described as the orientational or relational and empirical difficulties that correspond to the river-flow and bedrock of knowledge" (Sullivan 2017, 191). For Sullivan this implies a focus on hinges as illuminating the *limitations* of mainstream empirical and critical psychologies. However, Sullivan is unfortunately not specific about what these limitations are, but

[1]It should be stressed here, that a significant question in Wittgenstein research turns on whether the whole idea of a third Wittgenstein is plausible (see for example Venturinha 2007). I will not address this issue here, but instead accept Harré's embracing of the idea and focus on the notion of hinge.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

here Harré can help. Harré has namely expressed what I take to be a similar worry in relation to cognitive psychology: that one problem is confusing a hinge with the expression of it, and thereby understanding the relation between them as if it was a causal (mechanistic) relation (Harré 2007). Instead a hinge connotes the complex (non-causal) relationship between an empirical relationship to the world, but understood within a context articulated through the normative use of rules and manipulation of symbols. Hence, against a too empirical or experimental psychology Harré would emphasise that any description of empirical circumstances must comply with a normative dimension of language use for identifying these circumstances. Furhermore, against a mainly constructivist psychology he would emphasise the concrete empirical relation to the world also. Hence, hinges and their expressions in hinge-propositions, do *not* bring two separate realms, the empirical and the normative, together. Rather, what hinges point to is the fact that within different practices the empirical and the normative are already related and *entangled* (Christensen 2014).

Now, how are we then to relate this understanding of hinges to the tension described above? Well, one way is akin to the abovementioned notion of therapy. The aim here is dissolving any problems following the limitations suggested by Sullivan and described more thoroughly by Harré, but without explaining these limitations aiming to replace them with some purportedly more accurate theory. However, this dissolving, I will take Harré to claim, is still a kind of realisation, serving as a dynamic piece of knowledge interacting in unpredictable/unforeseen/indeterminate but still meaningful ways within future hinge therapeutic sessions.

Harré and the Third Wittgenstein

Harré (2007, 2008a, b, 2009) follows the suggestion presented by Moyal-Sharrock and Avrum Stroll of dividing Wittgenstein's thinking into three phases. The first is the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus*, where logic serves as the exclusive grammar of empirical grounded discourse. The second, consisting of the *Blue and Brown Books* plus the first part of the *Investigations*, widens the scope of meaning and rules incorporating what was excluded in the first. Finally, the second part of the *Investigations* plus *On Certainty* make up a third phase, where the notion of 'rule' as expressing "…normative constraints on thought, speech and action is supplemented by other concepts for expressing the character of normative constraints that shape forms of life, notably that of a 'hinge'" (Harré 2007, 114) Thus, for Harré a continuity exists in Wittgenstein's investigations, exploring different but related parts of the forces shaping our form of life.

Harré defines a 'hinge' as whatever is able to serve as a source of stable linguistic and social practices, fixing not only the meaning of words but also the propriety of actions. The use of the notion hinge, then, indicates a move towards considering ethology and non-linguistic practices as normatively constrained in addition to thought, speech and action. Though Wittgenstein only uses the word

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

'hinge' three places in *On Certainty*, Harré claims that Wittgenstein's use, and with it 'hinge-proposition', was directed against a sole normative and performative expression of 'rule', expressing "…his transforming insight that the linguistic implications of the use of the metaphor of 'grammar' as the collective term for normative constraints is still too restrictive." (op. cit., 115) Hence, as Moyal-Sharrok (2004b, 98) claims, for the third Wittgenstein it might be something more like our acting or the practices in which we engage which is at the 'bottom' of our language-games, and not certain propositions we consider as immediately true. This however, can be interpreted in different ways.

Readings of *On Certainty*

As claimed above we can generally distinguish between foundational and therapeutical ways of interpreting Wittgenstein (se also Williams 1995; Hutchinson 2007), and the same applies to readings of *On Certainty*. Moyal-Sharrock and Brenner (2005, 1–15) distinguish between four readings, of which only two are relevant here. First, they suggest merging a foundational and transcendental reading, arguing that most of the different foundations, be they grammar, language-games, or practices, work predominantly in a transcendental way. I will follow their lead and speak of the foundational reading as emphasising a transcendental grounding of some sort. Notice here, that Moyal-Sharrock's claim above that our acting is at the bottom of our language-games, places her in this category. I will claim below that this is *not* Harré's position. Second, they identify an epistemic reading, focusing narrowly on epistemological discussions of knowledge and scepticism, relevant for psychology and cultural psychology as a whole, but not in our case. Third, they recognize a fourth therapeutic reading leading away from the foundational reading and towards a less theoretical reading, avoiding, as Hutchinson claims, "…committing Wittgenstein to untenable philosophical positions." (2007, 693).

This commitment has Wittgenstein advancing specific doctrines, like a use-theory of meaning, thereby ignoring what Wittgenstein actually says, e.g. "For a *large* class of cases of the employment of the word "meaning"—though not for *all*—this word can be explained in this way: the meaning of a word is its use in the language…" (Wittgenstein 2009, §43). The modality of the word *all* in the quote indicates, quite obviously, that appealing to use cannot explain or describe the meaning of all words. Thus, for Wittgenstein (and his therapeutic readers) understanding meaning as use is not supplying us with an explanation solving a problem, like how do words refer, but is rather giving us a description whereby "…problems are solved, not by coming up with new discoveries, but by assembling what we have long been familiar with. Philosophy is a struggle against the bewitchment of our understanding by the resources of our language." (Wittgenstein 2009, §109) Therapy, then, is not putting forth philosophical psychological hypotheses as

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

solutions to a given problem. It is more like a disenchantment dissolving whatever grip a problem has on us, by reminding us of what we are already familiar with.

Unlike the foundationalist reading, and therefore *pace* Moyal-Sharrock's claim of practices being at the bottom, pointing towards examples of word-uses are therefore not presenting us with a foundation for understanding the creation of meaning, like *the* practice of speaking about hammers, or *the* discourse of minds. Rather, it is providing us with a description of the different and sometimes more or less related aspects of what is already going on in this and related practices. Harré's worry above, of the confusion between a hinge and the expression of it, could be understood as a case of doing therapy by *reminding* us that unlike hinge-expressions, which are related to grammar and rules, hinges point towards actual and potential ways of acting, i.e. our concrete empirical ways of engaging in and with the world. What I claim, then, is Harré agreeing with the therapeutic reading but still claiming that the reminder, the analytical and descriptive assembling of things we are familiar with, serves as therapeutic realization functioning in a 'foundation-like' way of proceeding, or moving forward. *Not* as a theory, but more as a practical guide. And, tracing or unearthing hinges is one such therapy.

Hinge and Hinge-Propositions

Claiming that hinges are nothing like rules means understanding them not like instructions the following of which ensures what you say or do is correct, meaningful or proper, rather "…the way that hinges influence forms of life, whether universal of local, is unlikely to turn out to be the exercise of a single directive force" (Harré 2007, 117). In Harré's interpretation hinges therefore underscore the argumentative line of *On Certainty* as "…a meditation on how it can be that matters of fact come to play the role of metaphysical foundations of forms of life." (Harré 2009, 119) I take it, that *come to play* signals a certain modality, a dynamic interplay between a possible, a necessary and a declining role of how facts serve as foundations.

Hinges are like 'shaping' forces on forms of life, similar to concepts in that both are realised in practices and expressed in propositions, which, when formulated, turn out to be empirical (Harré 2015, 494). Hence, hinges have what Moyal-Sharrock claims is a doppelgänger status. She refers to the place where Wittgenstein (1969, 98) uses the expression 'der Gleiche Satz', meaning sentences treated at times like an empirical proposition and at times like a rule. Doppelgänger sentences therefore indicate the possibility of the same sentence having different uses and therefore different statuses: "Depending on the context, the same sentence (e.g. I have a body) can be used to function as a *rule* of grammar, an empirical *proposition* or a spontaneous *expression*. The *doppelgänger of a hinge* is a sentence made up of the same words as a hinge, but which does not *function* as a hinge" (Moyal-Sharrock 2004b, 140–141).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

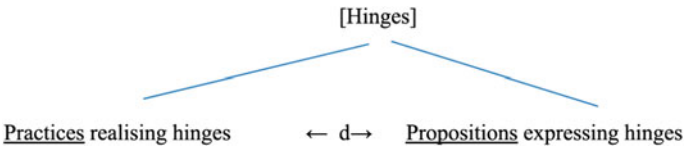

Fig. 16.1 Taken from Harré (2015, 494) (d is for doppelgänger)

Harré elaborates on the last sentence in Moyal-Sharrock's quote suggesting a distinction between *a proposition expressing a hinge* and *a proposition being a hinge* (op.cit). Talking about hinges, we necessarily use propositions serving as descriptions of putative matters of fact, but these are not necessarily hinges themselves. For Harré the difference can be pictured in Fig. 16.1, with the right arrow denoting *expression* and the left *realisation*.

Hinges, thus, are deep constraints "…realised in practices subject to local norms or standards of correctness and expressed in doppelgänger propositions, broadly empirical hypotheses that could have been otherwise." (Harré 2015, 495)

Harré therefore speaks of hinges as foundational, but not in the sense that they *are* empirical given foundations. Rather they *come to play* a foundational-like role in our lives. As described above this involves a dynamic interplay between a possible, a necessary and a declining role. Hinges can therefore also turn out to be wrong, "Creating a hinge from an empirically false proposition is one source of error, while taking a hinge expressing norms of practice that derive from true empirical principles to have the mandatory force of a grammatical rule is another" (Harré 2009, 119) Grounding society on a proposition that certain classes of people are more worth than others is an example of the first, while claiming that the sun can best be described as a giant ball of helium and hydrogen fusion is of the second. However, the refutation of a supposed fact, something everybody knows, is not always followed by the abandonment of the normative force of the hinge in question. People sometimes still speak *as if* a natural scientific description in general is more accurate than a poem describing the sun, or claim climate-denial to be believable. In both cases the realization that the metaphysical foundation of specific hinges playing a role in our lives is wrong is also possible. So, what is the purpose of pointing to hinges? Well, for Harré it is a form of therapy.

The Case of Hinge-Therapy

So, some hinges come to play a foundational role in our lives, but can also stop playing this role. Hinges are, therefore, in a certain sense ungrounded (Harré 2009, 126) To give an example: as Harré claims we do not suddenly discover the subjectivity of other people. Rather, we interact with other people as particular individuals with whom we naturally share thoughts and feelings by participating in a form of life. We therefore react naturally towards people expressing grief, for

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

example, because we understand what state a grieving person is in. If we discover we were wrong, then we also react accordingly in a natural fashion by changing our behaviour. Thus, we do not adopt an abstract theoretical attitude grounding or inferring from some behavioural evidence, perhaps using something like a theory of mind as *interpretandum*, to the unobservable mental attitudes of others. Subjectivity is "…not a theoretical hypothesis. Our human lives hinge on it." We do not infer from peoples' behaviour to their inner lives, since "Understanding how others feel is a natural endowment: an aspect of the human form of life, a hinge on which our uses of psychological concepts turn." (Harré 2009, 125) Subjectivity as a hinge is therefore both *empirical*, through the natural endowment of humans as a species, as well as *normative*, through the specific rules, symbols and expressions through which it is expressed.

Hinges might therefore be described, for Harré, as *ungrounded foundations*; as having the metaphysical role putative matters of fact come to play in our lives in the dynamic fashion referred to above. Hinge therapy therefore consists in realising, Wittgenstein (OC§152) also uses the word *discover*, what is taken as a hinge, as grounded in actual ways of acting, plays a metaphysical role in sustaining our forms of life. Hence discovering in the sense of realising that as a putative matter of fact, it is just that, putative. Discover*ing* makes hinges less something argued for and more something taken for granted. In a similar fashion Harré proposes that hinge therapy discloses the deep normative constraints tied to one's particular form of life, expressed through "*This is where I live.*" (Harré 2009, 121) And in this one might, of course, be wrong. Hinge therapy therefore results in "…a kind of modesty—one acknowledges that one could have been wrong about what one took for granted in the accomplishing the practices of a form of life." (Op.cit)

This modesty, or humility means, that if a hinge proposition turns out to be false (e.g. my expressions relating to you as grieving) then one must show the willingness to abandon the foundation upon which it is taken to be based (if you are not in grief, my reactions to you must be changed). Hence, the therapy consists in reorienting oneself in relation to what one already understands in practice, and in this case reorienting oneself towards the putative matters of fact taken as sustaining our forms of life, upholding the context of where we live. And this reorientation, of course, serves as an ungrounded foundation potentially the object of a new therapy. So, what I take Harré to show us in his interpretation of the third Wittgenstein is that foundation and therapy somehow goes together. Doing therapy by excavating hinges show us, or reminds us, of the ungrounded foundations of what we do, our practices. This then serves as a means of reorienting ourselves and the practices we engage in, resulting in the possibility of a new fragile and ungrounded foundation. I take this to be the gist of Harré's claim that:

> Failure to realise that a normatively constrained practice is grounded in a contestable matter of putative fact is a source of error as profound as the misunderstandings of grammars. A cure for a certain kind of dedicated adherence to a way of thinking and acting is simply to display the relevant hinge proposition or propositions that are foundational to the practice, so that the victim can see that they are false. (Harré 2009, 120)

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

False in the sense of these propositions presenting a foundational-like picture of 'how things really are'. In terms of Harré's discursive psychology this therapeutic process can be understood as a sort of *re*-positioning of the victim alluded to in the quote. Seeing that the picture the propositions present is false, is a first step in loosening this picture's grip on the victim. The second step would be showing other ways of seeing things thereby releasing the thought-constraints of the old picture. This realisation can, of course, then become ossified and be displayed as false through another therapeutic process.

Conclusion

What I have tried to show here is, that what appears as a certain tension in Harré's thinking about the third Wittgenstein, apparently accepting both a foundational and a therapeutic reading of Wittgenstein, might actually be the force of his reading. Discovering what role hinges, the putative matters of fact, play in our form of life, is a form of therapy showing the ungrounded foundations of our actual practices. As a therapeutic process it is potentially reorienting ourselves towards these foundations through dissolving or affirming the hold these hinges has in our lives, thereby serving as a new ungrounded foundation in need of therapy.

References

Bronzo, S. (2012). The resolute reading and its critics. *Wittgenstein-Studien, 3,* 45–80.

Christensen, B. A. (2014). Why do we care about post-humanism? A critical note. *Geografiska Annaler. Series B. Human Geography, 96*(1), 23–35.

Crary, A., & Read, R. (2000). *The new Wittgenstein*. London and New York: Routledge.

Harré, R., & Secord, P. F. (1972). *The explanation of social behaviour*. Lanham, MD, England: Rowman & Littlefield.

Harré, R., Gillett, G. (1994). *The discursive mind*. SAGE Publications.

Harré, R., Langenhove, L. v. (1998). *Positioning theory*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Harré, R. (2007). Wittgenstein and the foundations of cognitive psychology. In *Moyal-Sharrock*, pp. 114–128.

Harré, R. (2008a). Grammatical therapy and the third Wittgenstein. *Metaphilosophy 39*(4–5), 484–491.

Harré, R. (2008b) Review of *Wittgenstein and His Interpreters.* Notre Dame Philosophical Reviews. Retrieved October 7, 2018, from https://ndpr.nd.edu/news/wittgenstein-and-his-interpreters/.

Harré, R. (2009). Wittgenstein's therapies: From rules to hinges. *New Ideas in Psychology, 27,* 118–132.

Harré, R., (2014) New Tools for Philosophy of Chemistry. *HYLE—International Journal for Philosophy of Chemistry 20*(1), 77–91.

Harré, R. (2015). The person as the nexus of patterns of discursive practices. *Culture & Psychology, 21*(4), 492–504.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Harré, R. (2017) Can we Piece Together a Coherent Account of the "Person" from the Writings of Wittgenstein? In C. Kanzian, S. Kletzl, J. Mitterer, K. Neges (Eds.) *Realism-relativism-constructivism* (pp. 397–407). Berlin and Boston: De Gryter.

Hutchinson, P. (2007). What's the point of elucidation? *Metaphilosophy, 38*(5), 691–713.

Kahane, G., Kanterian, E., & Kuusela, O. (2007). *Wittgenstein and his interpreters*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Moyal-Sharrock, D. (Ed.). (2004a). *The third Wittgenstein. The post-investigations works*. Hampshire, England: Ashgate.

Moyal-Sharrock, D. (2004b). *Understanding Wittgenstein's On Certainty*. Hampshire, UK and New York, USA: Palgrave Macmillan.

Moyal-Sharrock, D. (Ed.). (2007). *Perspicuous presentations. Essays on Wittgenstein's philosophy of psychology*. Hampshire, UK and New York, USA: Palgrave Macmillan.

Moyal-Sharrock, D., & Brenner, H. (Eds.). (2005). *Readings of on certainty*. Hampshire, UK and New York, US: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sullivan, G. B. (2017). *Wittgenstein's philosophy in psychology. Interpretations and applications in historical context*. Hampshire, UK and New York, USA: Palgrave Macmillan.

Venturinha, N. (2007) Against the idea of a third Wittgenstein. In H. Hrachovec, A. Pichler, J. Wang (Eds.) *Papers of the 30th International Wittgenstein Symposia*. Retrieved May 10, 2019, from http://wittgensteinrepository.org/agora-alws/issue/view/181.

Williams, M. (1995). *Unnatural doubts.* Princeton University Press.

Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *On certainty*. New York: Harper & Row.

Wittgenstein, L. (2009). *Philosophical investigations.* (PI) (Revised edition by P.M.S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte). Malden, MA and Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 17
Psychology and Non-sense: Schizophrenese as Example

Rupert Read and Bo Allesøe Christensen

Introduction

Often when we claim to understand something, we imply understanding the *meaning* of it. Hence, understanding a game of tennis is understanding the meaning of what is going on between the players, the judge and the audience. This *going on* can, of course, be framed theoretically in many different ways, depending upon whether one's focus is on structures, symbols, the material surroundings etc., with corresponding methods and theories providing the respective interpretative frame. Harré has been one of the precursors, along with Winch (1958) and others, arguing the importance of using Wittgensteinian methods and notions in facilitating an understanding of cultural psychological notions. The aim is not the production of endless vagaries of theories, but developing our sensitivities towards the diversity and uniqueness of cultural practices. In this sense, we can develop a description of the "grammar" of the practice of tennis by understanding how rules, norms and symbols are used by both tennis players and the audience. A grammar is thereby "…a conceptual system by the application of which a field of meaningful phenomena is brought into being" (Harré 2004, 1444). Knowing these conventions of tennis allows the audience to watch and understand what the players are doing in and as a tennis match, while also making tennis playable (alongside balls, net, rackets, a certain physique etc.), in a way unlike badminton, to the players themselves.

The connection between rules, norms, symbols and a specific practice outlines a meaningful space where, in the above case, tennis makes sense. Tennis thereby becomes a meaningful practice having a distinctive significance in contradistinction

R. Read (✉)
University of East Anglia, Norwich, UK
e-mail: R.Read@uea.ac.uk

B. A. Christensen
Aalborg University, Aalborg, Denmark

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_17

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

to other practices where other things are engaged with and rules used. Rules, norms and symbols in practice thereby provide in this way a space of non-sense as well, and it is this notion of non-sense we will focus on here. In one interpretation non-sense seems to be defined as the point where sense stops, as a space surrounding sense. Thus, tennis is not badminton. However, though the rules, practices and artefacts of badminton make no sense within a tennis game, they make sense on their own. So, despite it being non-sense to say "Tennis is badminton" we can make sense of why this is non-sense, by explaining the difference between these two sport activities. Paraphrasing the anthropologist Mary Douglas, we might say that *non-sense is just sense out of place* with the explanation providing non-sense with a place where it makes sense. Or, the explanation provides the non-sense with a sense we did not see before; it was (in) a sense "hidden".

We will ask whether this—we take it as a "common-sensical" perspective on how to understand the relation between sense and non-sense—is the right frame for understanding certain "non-sensical" cultural-psychological phenomena. And we will analyse Wolcott's suggestion of modelling the 'language' of schizophrenic people, schizophrenese, on (Wittgenstein's notion of) a solipsistic, private—and for all others—non-sensical language, (Wolcott 1970).[1] Wolcott's interpretation of schizophrenese comes close to the frame just sketched: despite its non-sensical character we *could* actually interpret and explain schizophrenese so it makes sense. Our analysis, however, will show that Wolcott adopts a traditional way of understanding Wittgenstein, in contradistinction to a recent resolute/therapeutic interpretation of Wittgenstein.[2] Using the latter, we will present a different picture of how a Wittgenstein inspired approach can inform our understanding of schizophrenese.

In the following we will, first, use a distinction coined by Stephen Mulhall, describing two interpretative strategies for understanding the private language argument, a substantial and a resolute. Second, we will describe Wolcott's interpretation of Schizophrenese as a non-sensical private language, involving a *logico-syntactical* strategy and question, 'therapeutically', the substantial nature of this strategy. This will recapitulate and supplement Read's interpretations of schizophrenia (Read 2012), and we will end with a brief comment on cultural

[1]We mostly bracket Wittgenstein here, because though Wolcott refers to Wittgenstein as inspiration, he does not discuss Wittgenstein's argument in detail. Hence, our focus here is neither on the many existing interpretations of Wittgenstein's idea of a private language, nor the validity of Wolcott's interpretation (for a general overview, readers should consult Baker 1998). We assume, in a certain sense along with Wolcott, that schizophrenese can be understood (sic) as a private language, and our "therapy" revolves around whether his approach or strategy is viable.

However, it will be self-evident to an informed reader that our approach relies heavily on Wittgensteinian thinking, and the usefulness of Wittgenstein's own thinking in relation to the matter we are describing will emerge into prominence as this paper unfolds.

[2]Some Wittgenstein interpreters distinguish between a resolute and therapeutic reading of Wittgenstein. Since this distinction has no bearing for our argument, we use resolute and therapeutic interchangeably.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

psychology and non-sense exemplified by our Wittgensteinian interpretation of schizophrenia.

In sum: we shall argue that schizophrenese is not best heard as just another language-game. It does not stand as badminton does to tennis; nor can it even be adequately comprehended by imagining someone playing tennis according to the rules of badminton. Rather, one should be clear that there isn't anything well-defined that counts as imagining *that*. There is indeed no that there. Sense stands to schizophrenese as tennis does to nothing. To an absence of a game.

Non-sense, Private Language and Schizophrenese

It may help, at least at a first pass, to consider something like an idea of a private language in the context of schizophrenia. We can ask whether linguistic articulations like word salad or verbigerations amount to mere gibberish. Or if they are better characterised as a private language made up of words; or perhaps even better as meaningful units understandable only by the schizophrenic person uttering them. Furthermore, we can ask, how we can know? Is "schizophrenese" as Wolcott terms it, something we might be able to consider meaningful in itself by providing a theory for it, or if not, how do we then come to an understanding of it?

Now, a useful distinction between substantial and resolute readings of the private language argument has been made by Mulhall (2007). It corresponds to the overall distinction between traditional and resolute/therapeutic readings of Wittgenstein noted above, and comparing it to Wolcott's interpretation it will provide us with some clues for understanding schizophrenese as a possible private language.

Mulhall (2007, 1) describes the substantial reading as distinguishing between nonsense and gibberish, with the former consisting of violations of logical syntax, by combining perfect legitimate elements but in an illegitimate way. So, for example, the concepts of *sun*, *happy*, *the* and *is*, are perfectly understandable in themselves, but combined as *The sun is happy* the sentence is non-sense. It is not gibberish, for while the sentence does not make any sense, it still has a grammatical *form* (as well as an argument form, *S* is *H*, and a predicate logical form, $\exists(x)Fx$) which can be accounted for, by providing a theory of rules (and criteria for applying these rules) establishing the right conjunction(s) of the sub-sentential elements into sense-carrying sentences. Nonsense, then, is sense out of place; it is understanding that "happy" (or "sad") cannot be used about the sun, but is usable in other similar kinds of sentences.

For Mulhall (2007, 5), then, the substantive reading provides a theory of meaning "…a specification of the conditions under which a sentence makes sense…" thereby indicating that *if* we theoretically get the criteria, rules and grammar right for a piece of discourse, *then* we can also make sense of why it happens to be nonsensical, and conceive of possible future instances of its instantiation as well. Explicating rules, criteria and grammar then, shows how people makes sense and nonsense of a given piece of discourse. Within this

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

interpretation one prominent way of taking Wittgenstein's private language argument (roughly PI§243–326) allegedly shows that a language understandable by only one individual is incoherent, because whenever a piece of language-use is taken to be correct, it is correct in terms—not of whatever the individual makes of using the language personally but—in terms of the community of language users the individual is part of.

In Witherspoon's terms (2000, 315), this is a kind of Carnapianism, understanding how the use of words and sentences outside a proper "linguistic framework" lapse into nonsense. The meaning of a sentence is a function of the form of and concepts entering the sentence, just like the sentence above. Witherspoon (2000, 341) furthermore claims that Carnapianism in addition is committed to the thesis that the proposed meaninglessness of a sentence is a (quasi-)function of the same grammatical form as sensical sentences. Thus, *the sun is warm* and *the sun is happy* both have the same form, but *is happy* only has a quasi-fulfilling predicative role, since it does not contribute to the meaning of the sentence. Hence, we can reframe Mulhall's point above that by doing a logical-grammatical analysis we explicate how different quasi-predicate and quasi-subject roles are contributing to the meaninglessness of sentences as well. Readers will note that this substantial reading is similar to the common-sensical understanding of sense and non-sense introduced in the beginning, the difference perhaps being the former's more nuanced linguistic description. However, as Witherspoon notes, the point above turns out to involve a predicament. Providing such a substantial theory of meaning implicitly assumes that the realm of meaninglessness actually contains a rich structure. And this, as Witherspoon writes, implies that "…certain sentences are nonsense because of the kind of sense they have." (2000, 342). Hence, the frame actually debars any possibility of understanding nonsense as what it is, namely non-sense. An *absence* of (a/any) sense.

So basically, a substantial theory provides a meaningful explanation, by presenting a theory of meaning of *what* (the substance of) non-sense is. It is sense out of place (e.g. in the wrong game), for example being in the wrong place by not contributing to the meaning of the sentence in which it occurs. The resolute or therapeutic reading argues against this, claiming, according to Mulhall (2007, 5), that there are no ineffable insights about non-sense to be explained by providing a theory of meaning delimiting and recognising the intelligibility of the distinction between sense and nonsense. Rather, Mulhall characterises the therapeutic reading as "…the capacity to recognize when a sign has not been given a determinate meaning—even when it appears that it has been" Mulhall (2007, 7). Hence, the therapeutic reading can be understood as a process of *elucidating* something as non-sensical in a given situation without assuming a theory of sense or meaning explaining, or interpreting it. Nor is the making of a general theory of discriminating sense and nonsense to be the result of this elucidation. Instead the therapeutic reading claims that recognising the (at times) indeterminateness of meaning is a more correct Wittgensteinian point of departure, also when dealing with schizophrenese.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Wolcott on Schizophrenese

The aim of Wolcott (1970) is providing a new paradigm for the study and understanding of 'schizophrenese'. He uses schizophrenese to characterise utterances classifiable as neologisms, word salads or verbigerations (ibid., 127) The problem, then, is, when a person speaks schizophrenese, this person seems to be speaking a private language in a 'Wittgensteinian' sense, i.e. using words and sentences the meaning of which only this person knows. Can this person be understood and how?

Wolcott answers this by reframing it as involving three questions: *is schizophrenese a language,* and language is here understood in a logical-grammatical sense similar to the one described above, only Wolcott terms it a Reichenbachian sense: consisting of a set of signs plus vocabulary, whose use is dictated by (formation, truth and derivation) rules with criteria for the application of these rules (Reichenbach 1947); *is schizophrenese a private language*, with 'private' denoting signs and categories unshared with and unverifiable by others; and given schizophrenese, *is intersubjectivity then possible*, with intersubjectivity denoting a set of meaningful signs reciprocally shared. (ibid., 127) Wolcott thereby hopes to show that *if* schizophrenese is a language in the depicted sense, then it cannot be entirely private but must contain meaningful shareable elements. Furthermore, it will then be possible for other people (*in casu* the therapist) to make sense of schizophrenese.

Wolcott's approach therefore first outlines the conditions for a language to be meaningful. His theory of meaning presents a *form* for a language with a grammar consisting of concepts, rules and criteria for applying the rules, supplied with different linguistic functionalities.[3] Furthermore, the hope is that in explaining schizophrenese as a piece of discourse using the theory of meaning, this will enhance our understanding of it by distinguishing between sense and nonsense, between joint-meanings and pure idiosyncratic meanings, with joint-meanings making a fruitful dialogue between speaker and listener possible. Wolcott therefore recommends that instead of encouraging the schizophrenic patient to speak schizophrenese, "…a stance that might implicate the psychiatrist in learning many varieties of schizophrenese, I would suggest that the psychiatrist should seek to get the patient ultimately to use ordinary language." (1970, 133) Claiming that ordinary language "…is more efficient, more logical, and more conducive to linguistic competence than schizophrenese" (ibid., 133) and therefore more recommendable is inevitable, if we recall Mulhall and Witherspoon's arguments above.

[3]Wolcott also follows Reichenbach in distinguishing a cognitive and instrumental functioning of language, with the former being the use of language expressing true statements, while the latter is for the purpose of influencing another person. In addition, the instrumental can be divided into three sub-functionalities: communicative, suggestive and promotive. "Communication involves the transmission of meaningful messages to someone else with the aim of having him believe the information. Suggestion is the use of language with the intention of arousing emotions of another. The promotive use of language involves the intent of inducing another to perform certain actions." (ibid., 126).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Schizophrenese is sensical within the theory of meaning Wolcott proposes, because it delineates a distinction between sense and nonsense, and explains how schizophrenese as nonsense makes sense here. Hence, it is less about recognising the indeterminateness of meaning in Mulhall's sense, than subsuming it under the pre-given theoretical projection of language and sense proposed. In other words, and a point we will return to later, Wolcott's psychiatrist above is actually taking a position *external* to the context where schizophrenese occurs, not really recognising or engaging with what is actually said. This is because Wolcott's analysis is foundering on the same cleft stick that afflicts the substantial theory/reading of nonsense: One claims to say what the nonsense means, and thus inevitably undercuts its status as nonsense, and moves outside the space of any person who in fact has uttered nonsense.

Wolcott's analysis 'shows' that schizophrenese makes sense because it resembles a language: it has rules of assonance, association and metonymy for establishing word meaning, as well as rules of concretion, asyndeton and disjunction for sentence meaning. These rules are, furthermore, applied according to the following criteria, *continuity*, "Once schizophrenese is systematized into a private meaning system, the rules are kept." (ibid., 132), and *contextual appropriation*, i.e. if the context is right the rules are likely to be applied. Furthermore, it is also a private language in what Wolcott takes to be a 'Wittgensteinian' sense, i.e. a language referring to private objects which are inner, unknown and unshared by others. 'Despite' this, intersubjectivity is still theoretically possible through joint-meanings, i.e. by the patient and the psychiatrist referring to the same noun-phrases or verb-phrases, or upholding a continuous dialogue keeping to the same general topic. Thus, the statement "666-sick sick sick" is considered a private schizophrenese statement, an instance of assonance "…more readily decoded by the receiver. But the equation of the number "6" with the adjective "sick" remains a private word-meaning. It is an instance of a *token* or unique connotation of a sign" (ibid, 130) Wolcott is here implying that despite the sentence failing to make any sense (it is private), its meaninglessness still contains an explainable rich structure. Thus, using his model for what a language is, he can 'explain' schizophrenese and its syntactical rules and criteria. This strikingly resembles the substantial reading presented by Mulhall above that if we theoretically establish the criteria, rules and grammar for a piece of discourse, then we can make sense of *why it happens to be nonsensical* and conceive of possible future instances of its instantiation as well (cf. Wolcott's idea of continuity and context of appropriation).

After this characterisation of Wolcott's substantial reading of sense and nonsense as related to the use of schizophrenese, let us move on to how a therapeutical reading understands this.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

What Would the Therapeutic Point Be Then?

Let us take stock. By approaching schizophrenese in a *logico-syntactical* way, Wolcott ends up in what resembles a paradoxical position, that the apparently nonsensical is actually sensical. The person speaking schizophrenese can be still understood because schizophrenese follows, similar to other kinds of languages, rules and criteria for applying these rules. Thus, schizophrenese makes sense and displays a quasi-logical structure, despite the admission it is non-sensical. What would the therapeutic vision be of the preliminary diagnosis above? Well, it wouldn't try to replace Wolcott's proposal of a theory of how schizophrenese makes sense with yet another theory, but recognize that in the case of schizophrenese it might not make sense at all! This possibility has to be held open: that in some cases, we cannot succeed in attributing sense to something without 'violating' it, without turning it into something it is not. (This is what Wittgenstein thinks, of some instances of philosophical nonsense: that they are irreparable without becoming something other than what their utterer wanted them to be. That the utterer has irreconcilable desires with regard to her words, and is not aware of this; see Read 2001, 463.)

Our analysis above shows that Wolcott's theory of meaning is incapable of recognizing the indeterminateness of meaning, because it depicts non-sense in a very sensical way, by presenting a *logico-syntactical* frame for it before engaging with it. It is this which makes Wolcott's (and the psychiatrist he refers to) position *external;* it resembles an explanation or interpretation of how schizophrenese "really" works, carried out from the outside. However, that shouldn't make us succumb to theorizing about engagement (as if asking how it really works from the inside) as the way forward either. For the therapeutic approach *analysis and description is 'therapy' enough*, and we might add two clarifying therapeutic points using Read's investigations of different perspectives on schizophrenia. First, that any understanding of schizophrenese will have to match the self-understanding of the person using it (and that such understanding therefore will not be feasible if there is no *possibility* of a successful self-understanding on which to base it). Second, that schizophrenese in at least some (radical) cases most likely cannot be understood because it simply has no content, it is non-sense. (The two points, obviously, are linked.)

Firstly, Read has in different places (e.g. Read 2001, 2012) discussed and criticized interpretations of schizophrenia invoking the concept of nonsense as well as solipsism, insofar as those interpretations presume that what they result in must actually make a kind of sense. For such a mode of hermeneutics is self-contradictory. Nonsense is nonsense.

What, then, would the right approach for understanding schizophrenia be? Read (2001) starts out by following Winch (1958, 1964), claiming that a sound approach, when we speak about human sciences like psychology, should at least be based on an *unimpositional* analysis and "…description of, roughly speaking, the self-understandings-in-action of the people or person one is studying" (Read 2001, 456).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

One avoids thereby, hopefully, disturbing the description and analysis of people's practices as they themselves understand them, i.e. not altering the norms, or rules they are following. Instead one aims for the simple criterion that the analysis and description can be accepted by those described. Unlike Wolcott's proposal of a theory of meaning, interpreting and explaining these practices by making a representation of them, i.e. imposing a certain model, Winch would have us look at what is going on. We would thereby present an analysis and description matching (as far as possible) the self-understanding of the people engaging in these practices. So, the example above, "666, sick-sick-sick", is interpreted by Wolcott as representing a quasi-logical way of expressing a verbigeration. But this might be too quick a "deciphering" of schizophrenese, as claiming *what* is "really" going on. We need to consider whether it even makes sense to model schizophrenese on a (quasi-)logical way of speaking, as well as the following question: does this logic (or any other logic) match the self-understanding of the person expressing this? Can we even speak of self-understanding when it comes to a person speaking schizophrenese? Is there a way of deciphering 'schizophrenese' which does not turn it into something far too much like the language of those not subject to the radical (self-)disorder of schizophrenia?

This move of Read's can be read as a kind of radicalisation of the warning that Winch famously makes against covertly turning Azande discourse into something easily domesticable into English language and culture.

From a Winchian perspective Wolcott's approach is therefore predominantly over-intellectualist, suffering from what we might call a 'logicalist' bias: assuming the person investigating schizophrenese to be chiefly a logician or theorist of meaning, and the investigated person *as engaging in a quasi-logical endeavour the therapist can systematically explain*. This bias blocks Wolcott from "seeing" cases (in their own terms) of schizophrenese so bizarre or recalcitrant they cannot be understood, or explained at all. It is simply impossible to assume (without violence or imposition) overall that schizophrenese as an expression of a schizophrenic's self-understanding can be understood within *any* logico-syntactical frame. It excludes the aforementioned indeterminateness of meaning; the "…arbitrarily many ways of describing (or "interpreting")—and thus, unmisleadingly expressed, *none*" (Read 2001, 460). Hence, we might as well claim here, that there actually is *nothing to* understand. So, a Winchian approach thus extended would make us more sensible to the acceptance that our descriptions might very well make us realize that there might be nothing to describe. Especially because of the likely impossibility of seriously addressing any affirmation the schizophrenic could make of our putative description. Indicating this, Read presents cases of severe schizophrenics where a successful interpretation, it would seem, simply cannot occur, because "…there simply aren't, here, any true self-understandings available" (2001, 461). For: Such a true understanding would imply the emergence from and decisive leaving behind of the schizophrenia.

Accepting this we might still imagine the possibility of asking whether schizophrenese then is more like a case of solipsism, i.e. the person speaking it

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

making up a meaningful private language (like a private linguist) but unable to express this meaning to others?

Analysing and critiquing this possibility, Read follows Conant (1991) and Diamond's (1991) reading of the early Wittgenstein's thoughts on non-sense and solipsism.[4] This reading centers, in a way, on a specific remark by Wittgenstein (*Tractaus* 5.62) (Read 2001, 466) stating that what solipsism correctly means cannot be said, but must instead show itself. This could be read as indicating that the schizophrenic's "world" can only be *shown* focusing on the limit of schizophrenese against "normal" use of language; i.e. the limit of the schizophrenic's language is the limit of the schizophrenic's world. This, however, may lead us to think that schizophrenese makes sense within a solipsistic 'world'. It is then allegedly just a different *form* of language compared to "normal" language, and we are unable to express its inherent meaning (using our normal language) without making it sound like nonsense, "…we are *inclined* to believe that it is something that retains ineffable truth, even if we (as it were) unfortunately happen to be unable to state it" (Read 2001, 466). So, what we have here is the temptation to *reify* schizophrenese as a meaningful phenomenon. Only its sense is hidden and must be brought out ('*shown'*) using means of expression other than normal language, e.g. Wittgenstein's developed logic in the *Tractatus*, or as in our case, Wolcott's logico-syntactical expression. So, then we would have here a new version of Wolcott's line of thought.

Following Diamond and Conant, Read argues this is *not* how Wittgenstein's remark (or the purpose of *Tractatus*) is to be understood. Instead the purpose of the *Tractatus* is to convince us that the logic 'cannot' show what cannot be said, *because there is nothing to show*: "Diamond et al. seek to understand the logic of the Tractatus—while leading up to the conclusion that it has in a vital sense no logic whatsoever. TLP's "logic" is a "logic" of illusion, of what we are inclined to believe, of a set of psychologically attractive but ultimately *empty* pseudo-claims…" (Read 2001, 464). The implication of Diamond and Conant's reading, then, is that the remark above (*Tractaus* 5.62) is not claiming a truth to solipsism, which unfortunately is unstateable. Rather, "Solipsism, is merely a name for a certain set of logical temptations, temptations from which we can potentially be delivered, once we cease to think of "it" as retaining a truth at all behind its "front" of non-sense" (Read 2001, 466). So, and this brings us to the second point, schizophrenese has no content, there are no logico-syntactical structures to be systematically comprehended or explained. It is simply non-sense. Einfach unsinn, in Wittgenstein's terms.

[4]Similar to Mulhall's distinction between a substantial and therapeutic reading above, some Wittgenstein interpreters suggest a substantial break in Wittgenstein's thinking between the early (*Tractatus*) and late works (*Philosophical Investigations*), while others emphasise the continuity in Wittgenstein's use of the therapeutic approach. Conant and Diamond are on the continuity side, hence their interpretation of non-sense and solipsism in the *Tractatus* relates to the late work as well. The logic of their radical mode of interpretation extends to the logic of the anti-'private-language' considerations.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Hence, this aligns with a Wittgensteinian view on non-sense, that there is nothing to be learned from it, because there is nothing in it. It is only a nothing that masquerades as a something. Schizophrenese, thus, "…can be most properly viewed as plain non-sense—something with which nothing can (as yet) be done…" (Read 2001, 466). This therapeutic point is, that there is, we strongly suspect, simply no logico-syntactical "truth" or meaning within schizophrenese for us to discover or handle. Proposing a theory of meaning explaining "word-salad" or "verbigerations" cannot capture an essential logical structure behind the proposed non-sense of schizophrenese, because our best conclusion must be that no structure exists. The therapeutic approach therefore helps us resist the temptation of assuming an inherent structure or even system. Instead, "There is simply nonsense: pseudo-sentences, forms of words, etc. for which we have not as yet found a use, and as of now literally cannot imagine so doing" (Read 2001, 467). Schizophrenese therefore is clearly best not characterized as a language. 'It' might be private (if we can describe the person speaking it as having a sense of privacy; or at least an 'inner world'; though below we shall question even that) but not as a language. The person is not a private linguist; as Wittgenstein sought to teach us, there isn't anything that can satisfactorily be designated as such a thing. The profound failure of most readings of Wittgenstein's 'private language' discussions is that they in effect assume that a 'private language' IS a language. Rather than realising that, Wittgenstein meant us to come to see that the temptation to so much as imagine that we can imagine a private language is the very non-sense that possesses us.

If we were forced to describe 'schizophrenese' as logical it would be patho-logical, suffering from the illusion of being like a language with a meaningful structure behind its non-sense.

The suffering of schizophrenia in certain impenetrable cases may indeed be just this: that, far from being locked in a world that one cannot communicate to others, one might be said to lack even the consistency of a world. One would then lack anything stable to communicate. The tragedy then would be of a grimmer nature than unreachability or 'ineffability'. For if that were the best way to understand the situation—understanding the absence of there being something *to* understand—then the absence of a language would correlate with the absence of a world.

There *is* then a sense in which the would-be speaker of 'schizophrenese' resembles the 'private linguist'. But the sense is radical indeed: they resemble each other in that we have not been given good reason to believe that they can possibly exist, and have good reason to believe that there isn't any such thing as them doing so. The schizophrenic whose discourse resists a non-impositional, non-imperialistic serious and empathetic effort to understand is then like the 'private linguist'; they are someone whose words do not add up to anything. There is more to humanity, it would seem, than is dreamt of in Wolcott's proposal: we should hold open the possibility that in cases of sufficiently serious psychopathology, there is no 'private language', because there is no language. There is only a tragic simulacrum of it. A perpetual desire, perhaps, to speak. To communicate. But only the would-be forms of such a content that would want, hopelessly, to be speakable. Nothing ineffable to say.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Coda

Our discussion here has not been a discussion of schizophrenia as a clinical phenomenon, though obviously our hope includes that it might have hints or implications for such a discussion. Instead we have followed the tradition of Sass (1992, 1994), and Wolcott (1970) before him, claiming that something philosophically significant and relevant can be expressed about schizophrenia by invoking a Wittgensteinian perspective. Against their more substantial understanding of Wittgenstein, we have presented the advances of a 'therapeutic' reading inspired originally by people like Peter Winch and Rom Harré. Arguing against the possibility of interpreting or explaining what really lies behind the non-sense of schizophrenese, what we can learn from extending the therapeutic approach and of Wittgenstein and Wittgensteinians like Winch and Harré is finetuning our analytical and descriptive sensibilities towards the diversity, contextualized nature and hence non-substantiality of certain psychological phenomena. Broadening our interpretive horizon beyond the sense-making limit imposed by traditional hermeneutics, to take in the radical possibility we think implicit in a resolute reading of Wittgenstein: that the right way to understand (sic) some philosophical urges, and probably, as we have sketched, some somewhat analogous psychopathological experiences, is to be clear that there isn't any *there* with enough stability or substantiality TO understand. And that to presuppose that there *must* be is to be captured by a dubious philosophical ideology that risks projecting and imposing a false sense.

If so then we can understand *why* we might well not understand—that's the sense of understanding we would attribute to Winch as an extension of his approach—without having to presuppose that it will always make best sense to go on trying to understand. Even if the human thing to do still feels like it will be to go on trying, and not giving up on a fellow-human.

References

Baker, G. (1998). The private language argument. *Language & Communication, 18,* 325–356.
Conant, J. (1991). Throwing away the top of the ladder. *The Yale Review, 79,* 328–364.
Diamond, C. (1991). *The realistic spirit*. Cambridge, MA: MIT.
Harré, R. (2004). Discursive psychology and the boundaries of sense. *Organization Studies, 25*(8), 1435–1453.
Mulhall, S. (2007). *Wittgenstein's private language*. Oxford University Press.
Read, R. (2001). On approaching schizophrenia through Wittgenstein. *Philosophical Psychology, 14*(4), 449–475.
Read, R. (2012). *Wittgenstein among the sciences*. England: Ashgate.
Reichenbach, H. (1947). *Elements of symbolic logic*. New York: The Free Press.
Sass, L. (1992). *Madness and modernism*. New York: Harper and Collins.
Sass, L. (1994). *The paradoxes of delusion*. Ithaca, USA: Cornell University Press.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Witherspoon, E. (2000). Conceptions of nonsense in Carnap and Wittgenstein. In A. Crary & R. Read (Eds.), *The new Wittgenstein* (pp. 315–349). London and New York: Routledge.

Winch, P. (1958). *The idea of a social science and its relation to philosophy*. London: Routledge.

Winch, P. (1964). Understanding a primitive society. *American Philosophical Quarterly, 1*(4), 307–324.

Wittgenstein, L. (2009). *Philosophical investigations*. (PI) (Revised edition by P. M. S. Hacker and J. Schulte). Malden, MA and Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

Wolcott, R. H. (1970). Schizophrenese: A private language. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 11*(2), 126–134.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Chapter 18
On the Soul, the Death of the Soul, and the Nature of Evil

P. M. S. Hacker

Mind, the Body, and the Soul

In this synoptic paper I should like to contribute to the formation and defence of a secular conception of the soul, to elucidate the relation between the mind and the soul, as well as the relations between mind and body, and soul and the flesh. In the course of so doing, I shall invoke arguments that I have elaborated elsewhere.[1]

The mind is not a something, but not a nothing either, because it is not a thing (or, more pretentiously, an 'entity') of any kind. All our talk of the mind boils down to talk of our distinctive intellectual powers and of our intellectual capacities (second-order powers to acquire intellectual powers through learning and experience) and their exercise. These powers are corollaries or consequences of the fact that human beings are essentially language-using animals (*homo loquens* rather than *homo sapiens*). In this sense of 'mind' (which approximates Aristotle's 'rational *psuchē*'), animals do not have minds, since they are not language-users and they lack the intellectual powers distinctive of human beings. They also lack souls, since only animals with a mind can have a soul—and that too is a conceptual, constitutive, truth. For only creatures capable of knowing the difference between good and evil can be said to have a soul.

Beings that possess a mind and a soul are bodies, in one sense of that polysemic word. More specifically, they are living bodies. They are spatio-temporal continuants consisting of matter that are self-moving, sentient, self-conscious, in possession of intellect and (rational) will. Human beings are *not* embodied, but rather, as Aristotle said, they are *ensouled*. Although they *are* bodies, they also *have* bodies, but the body a human being *has* is distinct from the body the human being

[1]In particular in the three volumes of my tetralogy on human nature: Hacker (2007, 2013, 2018).

P. M. S. Hacker (✉)
University of Oxford, Oxford, UK
e-mail: peter.hacker@sjc.ox.ac.uk

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6_18

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

is (*HNCF* Chap. 9). To be sure, the body a human being has is not a distinct *body* from the body he is. Rather, all talk of the body someone has, all talk of someone's beautiful, athletic, aged, feeble, bruised, sunburnt body is no more than talk of *somatic characteristics* of the human being in question. Everything true of our body is true of ourselves, but not everything true of ourselves is true of our body. I may be thinking, but my body cannot be, since thinking is not a somatic characteristic. Talk of our body is therefore complementary to talk of our mind, which is concerned with the intellectual powers that a human being possesses and exercises. There is no *relation* between my mind and my body, since the somatic properties and the intellectual powers of a living animal are not relata. How then does talk of the soul fit into this schema?

Like 'mind', 'person', 'self' and 'body', 'soul' too is polysemic. 'She is a merry old soul' is synonymous to 'She is a merry old body' in Scottish English—both meaning person. In 'There were 276 souls on board when the ship went down' it means human beings. In 'The estate near Moscow was sold together with more than 300 souls' it means serfs. In 'He sighed, and breathed no more—his soul had departed this world' it means no more than 'he died'—'the soul' here signifying the principle of life. These uses are of no interest to us in this context. Nor, in general, are dualist conceptions of the soul as a temporarily embodied substance that is logically independent of the body, that pre-exists human incarnation or that survives the death of the body, or both. This is the domain of religion (Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Islam[2]), theology and much metaphysics. The notion of the soul as a unitary spiritual substance that can exist in disembodied form is incoherent (*HNCF* Chap. 8). It lacks criteria of identity and individuation, and presupposes the intelligibility of possessing psychological attributes dissociated from the logical possibility of behavioural expression, as well as the intelligibility of possessing concepts of psychological attributes without grasping the criteria for their ascription to others. However, the Platonic metaphysical conception of the soul is of great interest despite the fact that it informs both ancient and renaissance neo-Platonist ideas about the soul and its immortality, and, via Augustine, moulds the misconceived Cartesian conception of the soul as a spiritual thinking substance causally connected with, but separable from, the physical organism. The reason it is of interest is that it contains much insight into human beings and their doing evil. These insights can be stripped of their ontological and metaphysical trappings. Correctly formulated, this notion of a soul fills a gap left by the Aristotelian conception of the rational *psuchē*. It answers to a need in forming our conception of human nature.

[2]Judaism is equivocal about an afterlife, the belief sitting more comfortably with Kabbalistic mystical Judaism (post eleventh century AD) than with traditional mainstream rabbinical Judaism. Hints of an afterlife of sorts occur in the Pentateuch, *she'ol* being mentioned a few times. Replete with twittering shades, it was evidently akin to the Homeric Hades but played no evident role in the ethics of the Pentateuch. During and after the period of the Second Temple subordinate movements within Judaism display elements of Zoroastrian principles assimilated during the Babylonian exile, including belief in eternal life, apocalyptic beliefs, and dualist beliefs concerning the powers of good and the powers of evil, and, in the fullness of time, beliefs in demons. But all these, though they characterized mainstream Christianity, were not part of dominant rabbinical Jewish belief.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

The Soul and the Moral Powers of Man

In the *Crito* (47c), Socrates remarks that the soul is 'that part of us which is improved by right conduct and destroyed by wrong'.[3] So human beings have a soul. This demands clarification since the question arises of the relationship between the mind, which is to be understood as the set of intellectual and volitional powers of man and their exercise, and the soul, which is associated with good and evil, our powers to do right and wrong, our sense of justice, our susceptibility to remorse, and our feelings of compassion. Socrates presents the soul as *a part* of a human being, but we must take the idea of part here with a pinch of salt, since parts are smaller than the wholes of which they are parts, and the soul is neither smaller nor larger than the human being whose soul it is, nor the same size either. Finally, according to Socrates, the soul of a human being can be destroyed by doing wrong. This too needs elucidation, since it follows that human beings may lose their soul, and they may exist without souls. These three points will be examined.

In the sequel Socrates elaborates:

> There is a part of us which is improved by healthy actions and ruined by unhealthy ones. If we spoil it by taking the advice of non-experts, will life be worth living once this part is ruined? The part I mean is the body. …
>
> What about that part of us which is mutilated by wrong actions and benefited by right ones? Is life worth living with this part ruined? Or do we believe that this part of us, whatever it may be, in which right and wrong operate, is of less importance than the body? (*Crito* 47e)

The medical analogy is profound. We care a great deal about our good health and physical integrity. We view loss of a limb as a great misfortune, depriving us of the ability to function as a normal human being. Plato presses the analogy: are there not parts of our non-somatic nature that can be damaged, perhaps irremediably damaged, by abuse and misuse—by doing evil? Should we not care for our soul at least as much as we care for our physical constitution and health?

In the *Phaedo* (66a), Plato draws another construction line:

> The body fills us with loves and desires and fears and all sorts of fancies and a great deal of nonsense with the result that we literally never get an opportunity to think at all about anything … we are slaves to its service.

In the sequel Socrates takes this line of argument too far, imagining the bliss of the soul without the body. We need not go down that dead-end: it is, on analysis,

[3]Of course, the term used is *psuchē*, but the Socratic and Platonic conception of the *psuchē* is quite distinct from the Aristotelian one. The latter is primarily a biological concept, the former is largely a metaphysical and ethical one.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

unintelligible. But refusing to follow such fanciful asceticism does not prevent one from recognizing that the appetites, which we share with animals, are firmly bound to our physical nature, needs and cravings. The appetites may hold us in bondage if egotism, self-indulgence, and hedonism constantly triumph over rationality, reasonableness, and self-restraint. We may be enthralled by our acquired appetite for (addiction to) alcohol; we may be victims of our own gluttony; and we may be enslaved by concupiscence. These are not somatic characteristics—one's body (the body one has) is not gluttonous, nor is it an alcoholic or beset with the priapic afflictions of Don Juan. It is for this purpose that we have the expression 'the flesh', which we contrast not with the mind, but with the soul. For the dividing line between the soul and the flesh is quite different from that between the mind and the body. Not being somatic features of human beings, the appetites are not allocated to the body, but they are not allocated to the mind either, since they are not associated with intellectual powers. Animals, which lack minds are similarly subject to appetites, addictions and cravings (see *TP* pp. 7–12). But, not having minds, we do not allocate their appetites to the flesh by contrast to the mind.

Human beings have a soul. That is not an empirical statement, but a conceptual, constitutive one. It characterizes the nature of mankind, as does the statement that human beings have a mind. These are not informative propositions, but explicative ones. They may serve to remind one that if a creature can be said to be a human being, then it follows that it can *intelligibly* be said to have a mind and a soul. This is, in effect, a rule for the use of the expressions, 'human being', 'mind', and 'soul'. Does it follow that *every* human being has a mind or soul? No—only that it *makes sense* to speak of the mind or soul of any being that is human, and that it is part of the *species nature* to have a mind and to have a soul. But one may lose one's mind (go mad) and one's mind may be destroyed by severe injury to the brain or by Alzheimer's disease. So too one may lose one's soul (while keeping one's mental faculties intact), one may destroy one's soul, and one's soul may be irretrievably damaged, twisted, or scarred either by one's own evil actions or by what one has been forced to undergo. (But one's soul cannot be damaged, twisted or scarred by doing good.)

Is every human being born with a soul? This is a delicate matter, akin to the question of whether neonates are persons. It is clear that new born children are no more sensitive to moral and aesthetic considerations than they are able to engage in reasoning and are sensitive to reasons. On the other hand, just as they are born with the capacity to acquire the powers of reason, so too they are born with the capacities to acquire a moral conscience, knowledge of good and evil, and a moral and aesthetic sensibility. For various reasons pertaining to how small children must be treated, one may resolve to characterize them as having minds and souls in virtue of their innate second-order powers. Alternatively, one may hold that they will naturally acquire a mind as they master a language, learn to reason, begin to raise the question 'Why?' in all its endless multiplicity. One may claim that children only gradually develop a soul as they come to know the difference between right and wrong, acquire a sense of justice and fairness, and learn to assume responsibility for their deeds. Their soul evolves side by side with their personality as they slowly

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

grow out of the egocentricity of childhood. Does this mean that *if* there are children who are born psychopaths, naturally and irremediably indifferent to moral and perhaps aesthetic considerations, then they are born without a soul and without the potentiality for one? Alas, it does. Given that nature occasionally produces physically and mentally profoundly defective children, it should hardly be surprising that it produces innately morally defective creatures too. But one must bear in mind the fact that not all psychopaths become evil. Some may become highly effective front-line troops, or lions of industry and tigers of finance who keep within the law.

Socrates averred that the soul is that part of a human being that is improved by right conduct and damaged by wrong-doing. I noted that 'part' sits uneasily here. But we may quietly discard the mereology and speak of *the moral powers* and *susceptibilities* of a human being. We should conceive of the soul along lines similar to the manner in which we conceive of the mind (*HNCF*, Chaps. 8–10), namely as a diffuse set of non-somatic powers that are fruitfully collected together by the epithet 'mind' in as much as they are all linked to sensitivity to reasons and the ability to reason. Similarly, the soul is not an 'entity' of any kind, but a set of capacities, abilities, and susceptibilities distinctive of mature human beings, acquired in a community in the course of maturation, through practice, training, teaching, experience, and reflection. They too involve reasoning and recognition of reasons. Hence possession of a soul presupposes possession of a mind. But the powers of the soul are moral powers and moral sensibility. They include knowledge of good and evil (knowledge being a diffuse power (*IP*, Chap. 4).[4] This is the most important knowledge that a human being can attain. Indeed, *it is what makes us human*. Knowing the difference between right and wrong is *practical knowledge*, as Aristotle noted and Ryle explained. It is exhibited in the way one lives, in the forms of one's self-awareness, in the attitudes one assumes, and in one's relations with one's fellow human beings.

With the soul are associated not merely knowledge of good and evil, but also the moral virtues and vices, the former (to continue Socrates's medical analogy) being marks of the health of the soul and the latter signs of ill-health, diseases of the soul, and of corruption. It was not for nothing that the medievals characterized the worst vices (as they saw matters) as 'mortal sins', for they spell the death of the soul. Possession of a conscience is a feature of the soul of man, not of the mind. A conscience is acquired in the course of internalizing moral norms and values and *making them one's own*. It *should be* refined by experience and reflection. One's moral sensibility should increase with age. Susceptibility to guilt, remorse, and repentance are corollaries of a conscience and are constituent passive powers of the soul. The powers of the soul are strengthened by transcending the demands of selfishness, self-centredness, and narcissism, by gratitude, loyalty, trust, respect for others and self-respect, by a sense of justice and fairness, by compassion, and by the humility that is essential for honesty with oneself, self-knowledge and self-understanding. To achieve moral maturity is an asymptotic *telos* of the life of a human being.

[4]The soul also incorporates aesthetic sensibility, but the latter appears to be independent of moral sensibility. It will not be discussed here.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

The Death of the Soul

In his book *East/West Street*, Philippe Sands relates that when the Nazis occupied Lemberg (Lvov) in Galicia, the savage persecution of Jews began immediately. Professor Maurycy Allerhand, a distinguished professor of law at the University of Lemberg was immediately interned. Seeing a German guard mercilessly beating another inmate, Allerhand went up to the German and asked '*Have you no soul*?', whereupon the German took out his revolver and shot Allerhand dead. Martha Gellhorn, in her report on the Eichmann trial, remarked that Eichmann is a warning to us all that we must *guard our own souls*.[5] In Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Kurtz peers into the *darkness of his own soul* and can find there nothing but horror. In Vasily Grossman's *Life and Fate* (2006, Chap. 18), Anna Semyonovna, in her last letter to her son Viktor Shtrum before she was murdered by the Nazis, wrote:

> I've seen that the people who shout most loudly about delivering Russia from the Jews are the very ones who cringe like lackeys before the Germans, ready to betray their country for thirty pieces of German silver. And strange people from the outskirts of the town seize our rooms, our blankets, our clothes. It must have been people like them who killed doctors at the time of the cholera riots. And then there are people *whose souls have just withered*, people who are ready to go along with anything evil—anything so as not to be suspected of disagreeing with whoever's in power. (Grossman 2006, 66) (My italics)

None of these writers are religious. That they all invoke the soul of man is striking and important. To do evil is to destroy one's own soul. This is not a causal statement. Evil-doing is intrinsically related to the death of the soul.

The soul, Socrates averred, can be damaged, mutilated, and destroyed. This idea is completely detachable from theological considerations, but it requires elucidation. I wish to draw a distinction between what is wicked and what is evil by reference to the idea that doing evil crosses definitive boundaries that, once transgressed, allow of no return, whereas doing what is wicked allows for remorse, repentance, and making good the wrong done. One who does evil destroys his own soul. The wicked damage their souls. The morally indifferent, the by-standers to evil, allow their souls to wither. What does this mean?

[5]'We consider this man, and everything he stands for, with justified fear. We belong to the same species. Is the human race able—at any time, anywhere—to spew up others like him? Why not? Adolf Eichmann is the most dire warning to us all. He is a warning to guard our own souls; to refuse utterly and forever to give allegiance without question, to obey orders silently, to scream slogans.' Gellhorn (1962, 52–59) Her report is far more thoughtful than Hannah Arendt's *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (Arendt 1963).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

To do evil is to lose one's soul. In so doing, one becomes indifferent to inflicting terrible suffering and humiliation on others and to the slaughter of others. One may become depraved, and positively take pleasure in the suffering one inflicts and the slaughter one effects, delight in the power one wields and the sense of superiority it gives one. One destroys one's moral sensibility. This was patently true of the Nazi murderers. It is striking that hardly any of the Nazi war criminals expressed any remorse for their deeds. Nor, as far as I know, has anything been heard of the remorse of the Turkish *genoçidaires* for their slaughter of Armenians, or from Soviet Cheka, OGPU, NKVD, or KGB officers or commissars guilty of crimes against humanity. One may also lose one's soul or one's soul may wither through the terrible suffering one *undergoes*, in which one's moral sensibilities are battered to dust and from which one cannot recover. This was surely true of countless psychologically scarred survivors. It was powerfully and harrowingly depicted by Rod Steiger in Sidney Lumet's film *The Pawnbroker*.

In deliberately doing evil one destroys one's soul, setting oneself beyond the pale of humanity. Powerful expression of *one form* of this thought is given by Vasily Grossman's Anna Sergeyevna:

> I asked you how the Germans could send Jewish children to die in the gas chambers. How, I asked, could they live with themselves after that? Was there really no judgement passed on them by man or god? And you said: Only one judgement is passed on the executioner – he ceases to be a human being. Through looking on his victim as less than human, he becomes his own executioner; he executes the human being inside himself. (Grossman 2011,128)

It does not follow that one is aware of having destroyed one's soul. (Someone who has become addicted to pornography will probably have destroyed the possibility of a loving, mature, sexual relationship with another person, but they may be wholly unaware of this.) The barriers of evil one has constructed around oneself may exclude any understanding of the good—it has become, one might say, *invisible*. Or it may be distorted, as in a hall of mirrors, appearing to the evil-doer as a form of weakness and stupidity. Or the ramparts of evil that one has constructed around one by adopting or acquiescing in an evil ideology or bigoted religion may relieve one's conscience of the evil of what one does or of what one fails to do. The results of one's blindness are awful. In living an evil life, one shuts oneself off from genuine love, from truth and honesty with others and with oneself, from having an open heart, from shame, guilt and remorse, and it deadens whatever compassion one may have had. One stultifies one's own life, cleaving to childhood egocentricity ('I am the centre of the world') and narcissism, and assuring the impossibility of any kind of maturation and self-fulfilment as a human being.

A solitary evil-doer in a normal society, condemns himself to fear of being discovered, to suspicion of his neighbours who may disclose his evil deeds. He commits himself to a life of lies and deceit, as he strives to conceal the wrong he has done. A Mafiosi or member of a gang that systematically engages in evil-doing, doubtless enjoys the camaraderie and excitement of destruction and domination, as well as the booty. But he will lie and cheat to protect himself and his co-criminals

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

from retaliation. He will very likely be paranoid in his fear of rivals and of betrayal. He will not be able to trust even his closest comrades for fear of double-cross in the struggle to maintain his position or to rise in the criminal hierarchy.

A member of an evil-doing militia such as the Brownshirts, or the Cossack bands described by Isaac Babel, will be arrogant—he will look upon others who lack the power he has with contempt. He will be ruthless and merciless, for he can show no 'weakness' before his fellow evil-doers. But can he 'look himself in the face'? Can he look into his own soul (as Conrad's Kurtz did in *The Heart of Darkness*)? Can he be honest with himself? Can he disclose his hidden fears and nightmares to anyone to gain relief from them? He cannot even admit to himself that he is doing evil.

A successful leader of a nation dedicated to evil will be exhilarated by his successes, self-satisfied and arrogant. He will be egocentric, for evil is in general the dominion of the ego (Freud) and the domination of self-centredness (sometimes denominated 'the self'). Vindictiveness, vengefulness, greed, hatred, envy, malice, ingratitude, lust, indifference to justice and fairness, contempt for the powerless, are all characteristic of wickedness and manifestations of egocentricity. Arrogance, by contrast with self-esteem, is a hallmark of dictators and tyrants, who need to feel important, powerful, and envied. Others are there but to serve their purposes. Members of an evil leader's entourage are to be manipulated and controlled, and if they stand in his way, they are to be destroyed. But he will live in fear of being toppled from the pinnacle of power he has achieved, he will seek for plots everywhere, and if he finds none, he will confabulate them (as Stalin did).

The subjective consequences of doing evil doubtless differ when someone continues his life of evil-doing as opposed to putting that life behind him. In the latter case, as exemplified by ex-Nazis who evaded punishment, human psychological defence mechanisms do their work. Memories are suppressed and when revived are distorted. No doubt camaraderie was felt and exhibited in SS reunions, where Nazi songs were bellowed in inebriation, and memories were shared—but the reminiscences would have been highly selective—not of burning people alive and bayoneting children, but rather of recollected tomfoolery, of dangers shared and hardships jointly overcome. Such people returned to normal life in a normally functioning society, for the most part casting a curtain of silence over their evil deeds. They may return to a family life with children, take up civilian jobs and have distinguished careers. How then can they be said to have destroyed their soul?

One may say that by the evil they have done they have foreclosed the possibility of being a member of a moral community, no matter how respectable a member of the social community they may have become. For were they to retrieve their own moral sensibilities, which they destroyed by their evil deeds, they would be unable to forgive themselves for what they have done. They would, so to say, have to damn themselves as evil men. They cannot but compartmentalize their lives, drive the evil of their past underground, exercise a highly selective and distorting memory, conceal their past from their children and grandchildren and fear its disclosure. They cannot face themselves, but only lie to themselves as they deceive others. Can they not redeem themselves? Can they not admit their evil to others and to themselves and strive to live a morally good life? Can they not be forgiven? After all,

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Christians believe that God can forgive all sins, given appropriate remorse and repentance.

This, I think, is a disturbing doctrine. Not even God, if there were a God, would have the right to forgive moral monsters who have committed atrocities, no matter how much they might come to feel remorse and strive for atonement. Were he to do so, the dead would rise up and curse him. But there is no God. Can't the wicked redeem themselves? An example will help our reflections—the Leopold/Loeb case: Nathan Leopold (1904–71) and Richard Loeb (1905–36), exceptionally intelligent and gifted students, murdered fourteen year old Robert Frank in 1924, simply to prove that they could commit the perfect crime and that they were Nietzschean supermen who had passed beyond the constraints of good and evil. Both in prison, and after his release on parole in 1958, Leopold dedicated himself wholeheartedly and unremittingly to good works in prison and for the benefit of prisoners. Did he not thereby redeem himself, return across the dreadful boundary between wickedness and evil and earn forgiveness? Could others forgive him? Could the parents of the murdered boy forgive him? It seems to me that they would have no right to do so. Only Robert Frank might have done so, but he was the murdered victim. Might Leopold forgive himself? Not if he had come to understand the difference between good and evil, and to grasp the enormity of his deed. This he did. He evidently strove mightily to redeem himself, but surely with the knowledge that what he had done was unforgivable—that he himself could not forgive himself. To do evil is not to incur a debt that may subsequently be discharged.

One may not destroy one's soul, but, as Anna Semyonovna observed, one may merely allow it to wither. It is in this sense that Ian Kershaw said that the road to Auschwitz was paved with indifference. It is this that was manifest, as Victor Klemperer (1998) so vividly described, when his fellow academics crossed to the other side of the street when they saw him coming, after he had been excluded from his university post by Nazi decree against Jews. The withering of one's soul may ultimately lead to its death, as was patent in the Kielce pogrom in Poland in 1946 in which Jewish survivors from death camps, who returned to the Polish village that had been their home were murdered by the Polish villagers who had expropriated their houses and possessions.

But one's soul may shrivel and darken even when one is a bystander to evil without actively engaging in it, but when one *fails to stand up*. In his last novel *Everything Flows*, Vasily Grossman chillingly describes a successful scientist Nikolay Andreyevitch as he realizes that he has become smug in his refusal to support evil:

> The divine impeccability of the immortal State turned out not only to have repressed individual human beings but also to have defended them, to have comforted them in their weakness, to have justified their insignificance. The State had taken on its iron shoulders the entire weight of responsibility; it had liberated people from the chimera of conscience. …
>
> Examination of one's own self – how very unpleasant it was. The list of one's despicable acts was unbelievably odious.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

> It included general meetings of the Institute; sessions of the scientific council; solemn meetings on important anniversaries; routine meetings in the laboratory; banquets; celebrations in the homes of the important and evil; jokes told during dinners; conversations with directors of personnel departments; letters he had signed; an audience with the minister.
>
> And the scroll of his life contained all too many letters of another kind: letters unwritten – although it had been his sacred duty to write them. Silence – when it had been his sacred duty to speak; a telephone number it was imperative to ring, and that he had not rung; visits it was sinful not to pay, and that he had not paid; telegrams never sent; money never sent. Many, many things were missing from the scroll of his life.
>
> And, now that he was naked, it was absurd to take pride in what he had always prided himself on: that he had never denounced anyone; that he had refused, when summoned to the Lubyanka, to provide compromising information about an arrested colleague; that instead of turning away when he happened to meet the wife of an exiled colleague, he had shaken her hand and asked after the health of their children.
>
> No, he did not have so very much to feel proud about… (Grossman 2011, 28–30)

The moot question now is what judgement to pass when the political circumstances become so dire that one needs to be a hero, perhaps even a suicidal hero, to stand up to be counted. Boris Pasternak was, out of the blue, telephoned by Stalin, who asked him for his opinion of his friend the great poet Osip Mandelstam, who had been arrested for sedition. Pasternak was so terrified that he merely stuttered and stammered, too frightened to stand up for his friend. Stalin had Mandelstam shot. It seems to me that in such cases, *we* have no right to criticize Pasternak—but Pasternak could never forgive himself. Had Mandelstam been sentenced to decades in the Gulag, *he* might have forgiven Pasternak on his release. But would that have allowed Pasternak to forgive himself?

From Soul to Soul: Trisecting an Angle with Compass and Rule

The idea of a secular notion of the soul is useful and fruitful. It enriches the ways we talk our moral life and its nature. It facilitates clarity of thought about evil and evil doers, enabling us to draw distinctions and emphasize features that are deep and important, just as our talk of the mind *properly understood* enables us to emphasize distinctive aspects of the intellectual and volitional powers of mankind. I have emphasized 'properly understood', for the conception of the mind that I have advanced is very far removed from the notions of the mind that have dominated European philosophy from Descartes to Wittgenstein (for detailed discussion, see *HNCF* Chaps. 8–10) and benightedly continue to do so. The concept of a soul that has been deployed in this section is no less far removed from the received conception of the soul in philosophy. How are they related? How can one make the transition from the traditional idea of the soul as a simple, immaterial, spiritual,

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

immortal substance to the secular conception of the soul? Perhaps a Wittgensteinian analogy will help.

Mathematicians in ancient Greece raised a deceptively simple question concerning Euclidean plane geometry. It is very simple to show that there is a way of constructing a bisection of an arbitrary angle with a compass and rule. But is it possible to construct a trisection? Mathematicians struggled with the problem for centuries. The solution (which is that it is not possible) was discovered only in 1837 by Pierre Laurent Wantzel, who transformed the geometrical problem into a question in algebra and trigonometry. He showed that a certain cubic equation taking trigonometric values cannot be solved by any of the four basic arithmetical operations or by taking square roots (which are the limits of what can be represented by constructions with a compass and rule). This proof would not have been intelligible to ancient Greek mathematicians, ignorant as they were of algebra and co-ordinate geometry. But suppose we were patiently to explain to a pupil, who knew no more than a competent ancient Greek mathematician, the basic principles of algebra, the principles of co-ordinate geometry, and the methods of solving cubic equations, and then explained Wantzel's proof to him. He would accept it without ado (he is, after all, perfectly competent). And now we might say, we have changed his idea of what he was trying to do. Indeed, we should have changed his idea of trisection. We should have changed his way of looking at the problem. He might even say 'I see! *That* was what I was really trying to do', although to be sure, that was not what he was trying to do. But his way of looking at the problem has changed fundamentally.[6]

One might say something similar about the relation between the ancient Platonic, neo-Platonic, and Christian notions of the soul and the secular concept of the soul. For we might show someone who has the ancient conception that actually the notion of an immortal soul that is the locus of good and evil makes no sense. We might also prove to this person that the very notion of an immaterial substance that is the locus of good and evil makes no sense. We might go on to demonstrate to him that the very idea that there is such a soul that stands in a causal relation to the brain makes no sense. But we might then explain to him that, as he knows perfectly well, among the powers of a normal human being is knowledge of good and evil, possession of a conscience, the potentiality to feel compassion and selfless love, the susceptibility to shame, guilt and remorse. And we might show him that it is fruitful and illuminating to subsume such powers and their exercise under the concept of a soul, just as we have subsumed the intellectual and volitional powers of man under the concept of mind, *as long as it is understood* that neither concepts are concepts of 'things' of any kind, but rather elements of a fruitful form of representation. And, if we have displayed the requisite Socratic skills, our pupil might indeed say 'Ah, so that was really what I trying to say' or 'That was what I really had in mind'. For we should have led our pupil from one symbolism to another *with his consent*.

[6] See Wittgenstein (1980, 387–92, 1975, 87–90, 2009. §334, 1969, 41).

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Does this show that the concept of a soul is *necessary* or *unavoidable*? No, of course not. It is no more necessary and unavoidable that the concept of a mind. But it is an exceedingly useful concept for the purpose of talking about the lives of human beings and their engagement with each other, and it carries a weight that would be absent if we were to do without it. Were it to become obsolete that would betoken a gross impoverishment of our thought and of our nature.

References

Arendt, H. (1963). *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A report on the banality of evil*. New York: Viking Press.

Gellhorn, M. (1962). Eichmann and the private conscience. *The Atlantic Monthly, 209*(2), 52–59.

Grossman, V. (2006). *Life and faith*. London: Vintage Books.

Grossman, V. (2011). *Everything flows*. London: Vintage Books.

Hacker, P. M. S. (2007). *Human nature: The categorial framework*. MA, USA; Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing (Hereafter *HNCF*).

Hacker, P. M. S. (2013). *The intellectual powers : A study of human nature*. MA, USA, Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing. (Hereafter *IP*).

Hacker, P. M. S. (2018) *The passions: A study of human nature*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. (Hereafter *TP*).

Klemperer, V. (1998). *I shall bear witness: The diaries of Victor Klemperer 1933–41*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Wittgenstein, L. (1969) *The blue and brown books*. MA, USA, Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.

Wittgenstein, L. (1980) *Philosophical Grammar*. In R. Rhees (Ed.). MA, USA; Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.

Wittgenstein, L. (1975). *Lectures on the foundation of mathematics cambridge 1939*. In C. Diamond (Ed.). Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Wittgenstein, L. (2009). *Philosophical investigations*. In P. M. S. Hacker, & J. Schulte (Eds.), (4th Edn.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Commentary on the Contributions

Rom Harré

The first cognitive revolution was announced by Jerry Bruner and George Miller in the 1960s. It amounted to the giving of permission to psychologists to use words like 'thinking', 'remembering (as something a person does)' and so on in the planning and interpreting of psychological research into topics of significance. As Bruner ruefully remarked this was inadequate as a revolutionary declaration because it was quickly hi-jacked by computational modellers and neuropsychology, dead ends satisfying only to those who tried to develop a plausible psychology on an inadequate model of science. The second cognitive revolution was much more specific. Psychologists should be studying the meanings people give to their thoughts and action and those of other people, and the rules, conventions and story-lines that give order to human life. This rubric should have been most advantageously deployed in social psychology where its application should have been most obvious. However, it failed to do so.

Looming over the efforts of mostly American social psychologists to acquire virtue by presenting social psychology in the guise of a natural science by adopting the jargon and some of the methods of those sciences was the powerful presence of logical positivism. This was influential in the taking of the empirical basis of a science to be sensory observations and the theoretical paradigm to be the hypothetico-deductive format for theory. Patrick Baert's doctoral thesis, which I had the pleasure of supervising, on the social psychology of time, required attention to analogical reasoning to support its wholesale rejection of positivism as a scheme for interpreting scientific research and for the basis of a methodology. It took its most extreme form in Fred Skinner's radical behaviorism in which cultural contexts for people thinking, feeling and acting were deliberately neglected. The artificiality of positivistic psychology struck me during a conversation with Skinner in the 80s, I think at one of those hospitality 'suites', at the APA. I asked him what he was

R. Harré
e-mail: rom.harre@philosophy.ox.ac.uk

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

planning to do in retirement. 'I am going read the novels of Jane Austen again'!

I became interested in social psychology by chance. Stephen Toulmin asked me to accompany him as he addressed Michael Argyle's weekly seminar on the topic of 'Forms of Order' as he feared neither Argyle nor any of his students had the faintest idea what this might mean. He was right, but a seed was sown. I continued to attend the meetings and it soon became clear that Argyle's psychology was a project that purported to be about *people* interacting but reduced them to empty platforms on which stimulus-response correlations were to be found by a vague approximation to the diverse experimental methods of physics. However, the metaphysics and methods of chemistry was a significant omission. Chemistry is about structures and their transformations, not about correlations between types of events.

That summer I spent most afternoons in the Radcliffe Science Library reading up the classics of this new discipline. There was Leonard Berkovitz on aggression, Stanley Milgram on obedience, Leon Festinger on manipulating opinions, Robert Zajoncs on liking, Henri Tajfel on intergroup relations (prejudice automated!), and so on. Close readings of these and other texts revealed a minimal interest in meanings and situations and a metaphysics of automata responding to natural or induced tendencies to respond to stimuli, quite free of moral considerations. The fine grain of social life was neatly excised by the use of statistical analysis on minute populations, looking for a main effect. Ethical issues and moral orders and locations in diverse cultures had no place in this research program. The manipulation of artefacts can produce nothing but artefacts. Nevertheless Lenny Berkowitz and Henri Tajfel, as well as Michael Argyle became close personal friends, but not according to the alleged patterns revealed by Bob Zajoncs. A common interest trumped frequency of meeting.

I began lecturing on a possible social science that studied patterns of meanings, conventions and rules, instead of standardised behaviours and causal laws. This immediately opened the way for personal agency and ethical issues. I found myself drawn into discussions with clinical psychologists and psychiatrists, such as Dennis Gath (known as Michael Gelder's human being), and with Tony Hope and Bill Fulford on the possibilities for courses in philosophy of psychiatry. About this time I had the pleasure of supervising the doctoral studies of German Barrios who confirmed my thought that most people who talked and acted in a troubled way were not the victims of defective machinery but of inadequate interpretations and story-lines. Moral issues could hardly be ignored. About that time Jerry Bruner came to Oxford and we became close friends. Here was the missing element: story lines and narrative conventions, as researchable and explanatory devices. Amongst Michael Argyle's graduate students was an active and vociferous group who found these ideas much to their liking, in particular Peter Marsh. He had already set about a research topic that exemplified just what the second cognitive revolution demanded. What were the meanings, rules and conventions that shaped football hooliganism?

Bo is right to point out how much I was influenced by the writings of Ludwig Wittgenstein. My first essay as an Oxford student was for Peter Strawson on the logic of the *Tractatus*. I never met Wittgenstein, but I knew Frederick Waismann

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

well, attending as many of his lectures and classes as I could and finally editing the book he had written as an account of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*. For many years I gave a lecture course every year in Georgetown on the implications for the 'new' psychology of Wittgenstein's treatment of key words (as the realisation of concepts) which had both moral and psychological implications. Back in Oxford for the second half of the year I got to know Peter Hacker and Gordon Baker very well, and others like David Pears a little. I did not have the temerity to give a Wittgenstein lecture course myself. However, after many years in Georgetown, and with the collaboration of Michael Tissaw, one of my graduate students, we published a textbook which developed in detail the way aspects of the *Philosophical Investigations* supported the second cognitive revolution. About this time, I became a convert to the Third Wittgenstein, as proposed by Danièle Moyal-Sharrock, with its hints at a 'hinge philosophy'. This led me to work on a detailed account of a kind of synthetic a priori proposition linked with a human practice, with Jean-Pierre Llored, at the heart of an understanding of human practices from blood-letting to trial by jury to chemical experiments.

In 1967 an invitation to lead a graduate seminar at the University of Nevada arrived out of the blue, and there I met Paul Secord with whom I forged a long time working relationship. And there too I heard about Erving Goffman with whom I later struck up a friendship until his untimely death.

Throughout the years of these aspects of my life I was busy with the philosophy of physics, and philosophy of chemistry, and published a book of essays on quantum field theory with Harvey Brown. If someone interested in human behaviour wants the rigour, historical resources and dignity of physical science why use a philosophers' wildly implausible version of natural science when the real thing is there to follow? Logical positivism and its descendent, logicist empiricism, are distortions of the rigorous gathering of reliable knowledge by practitioners of the natural sciences. Chemistry is perhaps the most instructive source for models of human behaviour in its emphasis on hierarchies of structures and their transformations in the laboratory and in nature. But its moral character, just like that of nuclear physics, is an add-on. The natural sciences have their own morality, violated by such fraudsters as Trofim Lysenko.

A particular pleasure for me in recent years has been a debate with my old and valued friend, Peter Hacker, over Wittgenstein's conception of 'personhood'. For Hacker human beings are the highest animal, that has acquired a repertoire of dispositions, cognitive, moral with material skills. I have had the temerity to claim that in the famous discussion of the inert nature of a stone in contrast to the wriggling fly in Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*, a person emerges as a stable nexus of acts and actions whose body is like a building plot, whose name is an address which helps to locate that plot, but not like the being that resides there. The question of the ontology of social constructed beings, states and processes was greatly clarified by Luk van Langenhove, and it is still on the agenda as Bo Allesøe reminds us. Peter Hacker and I debate about how to interpret the second Wittgenstein, the author of the *Philosophical Investigations*. In recent years the social psychological significance of the hinges of the *Third Wittgenstein* have

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

become an important topic for discussion wandering some distance from the issues of propositions taken as having some kind of stronger epistemic status than mere contingency, but short of logical necessity, as recognised in *On Certainty.* Jack Martin was one of the earliest psychologists to realise the irreducibility of the agentic powers of human beings. These can be crippled or enhanced by the way their lives have unfolded. At the core of personhood is the moral significance of rights and duties. A person is a being who can acquire or lose rights, inherit or refuse duties.

A matter of great significance for the revision of psychology has been the cluster of errors routinely committed by neuropsychologists that have distorted the whole field of human science by giving neuropsychology priority in understanding what people think, do and feel.. Peter Hacker has clarified this important insight, with his usual astuteness, as a mereological fallacy. It is a fallacy to describe a part of a complex object by the use of a word which gets its meaning from its use for the whole object. For example, it is a fallacy to say that remembering is what the hippocampus does. Remembering is what whole people do, and they can be accountable for it. This fallacy was also spotted a while ago by Bede Rundle.

The tenets pf the second cognitive revolution demand close attention to meanings of acts and actions, to the rules and conventions which play a fundamental part in the constructed orderliness of life both as shaping and interpreting what people do, and so to attention to local moral orders. An action could be something someone does intentionally, while an act is the social meaning of that action in the local culture. Anthropology as practiced by Clifford Geertz, Catherine Lutz or Bruno Malinowski, brings to life a whole culture in which the thoughts and actions of human beings are both similar to and different from those of an antipodean country boy. There are emotions experienced by Japanese people which are quite unknown to me except by name. The skilful work of a social psychologist can bring them alive to me, not as isolated responses but as the life-blood of another world. Peter Marsh used just the right methods to open up the inner life of football hooliganism to scrutiny. Jerry Bruner and George Miller had founded the study of the first cognitive revolution but as Bruner ruefully remarked it was hi-jacked by the computational modellers and their diaphanous Turing machines, even when not committing mereological fallacies.

How does the hinge philosophy mesh with positioning theory? The point of positioning theory was to draw attention to the role of people's beliefs about rights and duties in shaping what they will do, whether as individuals taking care of the demented or as the willing cannon fodder of the First World War, and so much life between. As it has been developed the 'hinge philosophy' bids us to look for pairs of propositions and practices as presuppositions shaping forms of life which though matters of fact serve as seeming necessities. 'Animals cannot feel pain' as declared by Descartes, with its doppelganger practices of savage treatment of animals and birds, as a near ubiquitous hinge in Western culture has been replaced by a thrilling and expanding but carefully managed anthropomorphism of cognition and emotion. The brings with it a new *moral* sensibility. For the human sphere Ivana Markov has developed the ideas of rights, duties and dialogues to strengthen the claim that

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

positions and story-lines mutually subserve each other in defining social worlds. Nevertheless, material circumstances, as interpreted in the local folk vision of the world, do set outer limits, so to say, on what the power of interpretation can accomplish. Interestingly, these limits are currently under test in discussions of how far one can establish one's sex (not one's gender, that's easy) discursively. Policy realism expresses the idea that scientific progress is made by taking hypothetical mechanisms with good provenance seriously. Steen Brock has supported the idea that this idea can be found in Niels Bohr's Kantian stance in philosophy.

A clear example of the difference between moral psychology and neuro-reductionism is the case of emotions and moods. It would be idle to deny that in certain situations a human being or a group of human beings experiences a visceral reaction. The snarling dog's threatening approach or the affectionate maternal hug are felt. And sometimes a change of the state of the nervous system may not be experienced in any way. Looking closely at such situations unfolding it seemed clear that people used their vocabularies of emotion words to give or report interpretations of bodily feelings and actions in well-defined situations. These interpretations were based on local cultural systems of moral norms. A sinking feeling may not be interpreted as fear in a culture of machismo, while seeing one's beloved made much of by a rival, something for which he does not have a right, is felt. In real life there are two patterns: a corporeal reaction is interpreted according to situated meanings or a situated meaning is followed a corporeal reaction. These meanings are *moral* assessments. Cowardice is a fault, as is overweening pride. Jealousy and envy are matters of rights of possession. When Gerry Parrott joined us at Georgetown, I was pleased to find a colleague whose take on emotions was similar to mine. We began an active programme of studies that culminated in several publications.

I have been much inspired by Svend Brinkmann's enthusiasm for psychology as a moral science. How is this insight to be reconciled with my old friend Ken Gergen's insistence that it is not a science at all? We were all greatly taken with his famous paper 'Social Psychology as History'. But is history, practiced by, say Toynbee, some kind of science perhaps? This a key point in my efforts to promote psychology as a moral science. Here is how it goes. The natural sciences analyse the material world into units by various overlapping taxonomies. The processes by which nature changes are explained by natural causal laws, describing the working of causal mechanisms. Ken and I agree that this is not the way to understand human life. However, I believe that moral psychology follows a similar pattern. What are the meanings people give to the items in their worlds, and what are the ever changing rules, interpretations and conventions by which as active agents, they manage their lives, if permitted by the power structures of their societies to do so. Regrettably so many societies required adherence to given meanings and rules and conventions. These power structures are themselves created by manipulations of meanings and rules. Luk van Langenhove has developed this analogy between the structures of natural sciences and psychology, so we have meanings and mechanisms juxtaposed to meanings and rules and conventions. I was unwilling to follow Ken into a narratological interpretation of the epistemology of physics and

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

chemistry. In the end there was the pragmatic criterion of efficacy of applications, and the epistemology of microscopes and the like.

Any study of human beings in interaction must take account of 'personality', the aspects of oneself that are shown to other people. The attempts at a psychology of personality has ended up in the most awful mess. What passes for a psychology of personality is bedevilled by elementary statistical fallacies, pointed out by James Lamiell about 30 years ago, and confusions about the logic of dispositional concepts. It was supposed to be a complex of attitudes that were stable through a person's life—sometimes three such attitudes, more recently five. It starts with the publications of Hans Eysenck. Since displays of any of these attributes can easily be shown to depend on the situation this cannot possibly be right. A dramaturgical and idiographic account of 'personality' has been advocated for as long as the statistical fallacies have been revealed, to no avail. I worked for some years with Jean-Pierre de Waele in Brussels, and came to know and work closely with Luk van Langenhove in Bruges. Some people manage their 'personality display' adroitly, others adopt stereotypical performances. Idiographic studies, such as de Waele's, took individuals with regard to, say, parole decisions, one by one, eschewing generalisations from one murderer to another. Statistical generalisations, with their inevitable loss of data, were forbidden.

At the same time the ambiguity of the notion of 'position', first introduced in social psychology in Davies and Harré (1990), between 'socially significant personal attributes' and 'morally explicit judgements', for which the former might be cited as contestable grounds, was gradually resolved. However, most positioning studies were located among individuals. How did the moral significance of someone's personal attributes emerge and how was it expressed? This could be set out in a three way mutual defining of 'position', 'speech-act' (generalising Austin's categories of social actions as acts) 'story-lines', opening up links with narratology.

Dan Rothbart realised that the concept could be applied to large groups of people if there were a medium in which group actions were justified and interpreted by a single voice. The East African genocide was interpreted and to some extent managed by the common medium of radio.

How to achieve a persuasive public discourse was another linked application of agency and narratology. Advocates of environmental programmes are surrounded by indifference. How could this be changed? What if positioning theory could be elaborated to that the structure of persuasive discourses could be identified and then deliberately used to shape public discussions of such matters? One place to look for story-lines that are deeply embedded in forms of talk could be folk tales. With Jens Brockmeier and Peter Mühlhäusler we began to explore the idea that a story is persuasive in so far as it has the form of a common folk tale. We published a book of investigations along these lines. It was well received, but it provoked one savage response as if it was an attack on the environmental movement. I had noticed this before. If one laid bare the positions and narrative conventions that shaped the way people managed a strip of life this tended to be interpreted as an attack.

In a word, people are agents in so far as they can be. They reason analogically to expand their stores of knowledge or effective belief. Through many years of

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

cooperation in a great variety of studies Ali Moghaddam and I explored the insights that adopting a view of persons as agents, responsible for their actions, but acting always within the frameworks of local narratives was what made them intelligible to others in their culture.

My office at Georgetown was at the end of long corridor and I would hear a certain pattern of footfalls preceded round the door by a dish of chocolate items and an idea for another 'positioning' project. The largest of these projects involved inviting specialists in a wide variety of social and medical disciples to describe how each used the causal concepts appropriate to their discipline. This project established the irreducible importance of and priority of causality as agency over causality as mechanism. The former calls attention to real people leading real lives —the latter to forces that are often beyond our control: compare figure skating with slipping on the winter sidewalk.

I have been very fortunate in my life to work at two outstanding universities, Oxford and Georgetown, and to find so many students, colleagues and collaborators interested enough in what I tried to say to make good use of some of those insights and ignore various follies.

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

Index

A
Agency, 6, 7, 35–40, 63, 79, 87, 95, 146, 186, 190, 191
Arendt, Hannah, 178

C
Cognition, 3, 10, 36, 54, 101, 131, 141, 151, 188
Conflict analysis, 7, 89
Cultural critique, 61

D
Development of social constructionism
Development of social psychology, 6
Disciplinary control, 7, 90, 92
Discursive psychology, 1, 7, 141, 158

E
Ecolinguistics, 82–85, 87
Emotion, 10, 36, 74, 79, 81, 131–137, 151, 188, 189
Environmental discourse, 29, 43, 83, 85
Epistemology, 9, 28, 30, 63, 104, 107, 111, 114, 189, 190
Ethics, 9, 102, 104, 106–108, 121, 174
Ethogenic approach, 1, 10, 131–136
Ethogenics, 63, 89

G
Georgetown University, 2, 17, 20, 21, 131, 133, 135, 138
Governmental power, 89–92, 96
Greenspeak, 6, 43, 81–87

H
Harré, Rom, 1–12, 17, 21, 23, 24, 27–31, 35–48, 53–61, 63, 64, 66–70, 73–76, 78, 79, 81, 82, 89, 90, 101–107, 111, 121–128, 131–134, 136, 138, 141, 146, 151–158, 161, 171, 190
Hinge propositions, 151, 157
Hinges, 56, 61, 152, 153, 155–158, 187
Human agency, 35, 36
Human being, 5, 6, 43, 45–48, 54, 57, 59, 142, 173–177, 179, 183, 186, 189
Hybrid discipline, 111

I
Identity, 5, 6, 17–19, 23, 35–37, 43–48, 79, 103, 108, 145, 174
Individuality, 7, 44, 53, 54, 59–61
Intellectual history, 27, 30

L
Life positioning analysis, 40

M
Mind and body, 12, 173
Models and powers
Morality, 9, 79, 101, 102, 106, 107, 187
Moscovici, Serge, 9, 18, 101, 102, 105–108
Multidisciplinary, 28

N
Neural networks, 141, 143–146
Non-sense, 12, 162–164, 167, 169–171
Normativity, 4, 8–10, 55, 121, 128

© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2019

B. A. Christensen (ed.), *The Second Cognitive Revolution*, Theory and History in the Human and Social Sciences, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26680-6

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk

O
Ontology, 6, 63–65, 69, 70, 81, 82, 104, 125, 187
Oxford, 1, 2, 5, 17, 23, 24, 27–30, 43, 55, 81, 102, 111, 133–136, 138, 186, 187, 191

P
People, 2–11, 25, 35, 37, 39, 40, 43–47, 53–55, 57, 58, 61, 63–70, 73, 74, 76, 82, 84, 93–95, 103, 121–124, 126, 127, 136, 138, 141, 144, 146, 151, 156, 162, 163, 165, 167, 168, 171, 178, 180, 181, 185, 186, 188–191
Person, 4, 5, 18, 24, 35, 37–40, 43–47, 64–69, 82, 89–91, 96, 123–125, 141, 144–146, 157, 163, 165–168, 170, 174, 179, 183, 185, 187, 188, 190
Position exchange theory, 39, 40
Positioning theory, 1, 4, 6, 7, 9, 24, 25, 27, 31, 32, 35, 39, 40, 61, 69, 70, 73, 75–79, 89, 101–103, 106, 121, 124–126, 136, 151, 188, 190
Psychiatry, 9, 44, 111, 112, 114, 116, 117, 141, 186

R
Realism, 7–9, 30, 54, 73, 75, 76, 81, 141, 143, 189
Responsibility to the other, 121

S
Schizophrenese, 12, 161–171
Secular, 12, 173, 182, 183
Self, 5, 6, 9, 32, 35–40, 43–48, 53, 57–59, 74, 76, 78, 89, 91–94, 101, 102, 104, 105, 107, 108, 125, 141–146, 162, 167, 168, 173, 174, 176, 177, 179–181
Social constructionism, 38, 132, 134, 135, 137
Sociology, 10, 27, 29, 30, 74, 111, 132, 136
Sociology of intellectuals, 5, 27, 30
Social positioning, 35, 39, 75
Social psychology, 6, 9, 18–20, 23, 24, 28–30, 41, 58, 63, 73, 89, 101, 105, 106, 133, 135, 137, 151, 185, 186, 189, 190
Social sciences, 1, 2, 8, 9, 27, 29, 30, 43, 44, 63, 69, 73, 102, 111, 112
Social theory, 28, 30
Soul, 2, 12, 47, 48, 92, 96, 113, 143, 144, 173–184

T
Tajfel, Henri, 18, 19, 23, 186
Therapeutic reading, 154, 155, 158, 162, 164, 169
Third Wittgenstein, the, 151–154, 157, 158, 187

V
Vygotsky, Lev, 9, 35, 38, 41, 45, 101, 102, 104, 108, 133, 151

W
Wittgenstein, Ludwig, 1, 2, 4, 10–12, 28, 35, 38, 41, 44, 45, 54–56, 58, 59, 61, 74, 101, 102, 122, 126–128, 136, 138, 141, 142, 146, 151–155, 157, 158, 161–164, 167, 169–171, 182, 183, 186, 187

boallesoe@hum.aau.dk