Truth and interpretation in Social Science

With particular reference to case studies

Erik Maaloe

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1 Coming To Terms

TALKING, – BUT HOW TO KNOW?

I grew up at the Sugar Mill located in the outskirts of Saxkjøbing, a provincial town in Denmark. As everybody kept an eye on 'the engineer's son, "little Erik" was allowed to go wherever he pleased and I explored everything: the stables, the flumes, the scrap yard as well as I strolled along the 'sugar beet tracks', which stretc.hed for miles into the surrounding landscape.

At six I had to leave this paradise. My father had been promoted to a position at the head office in Copenhagen. We had to move to the city. What a shock I got when I suddenly saw myself planted in a concrete desert of 6-storied buildings and nobody but strangers!

1.1 A crucial event, a learning experience

In third grade, "Erik" learned a lesson for life. Guided by a textbook, we were to make drawings of how things are made! A subject I was very fond of! For pedagogical reasons, presumably, the production of e.g. flour, butter, beer, marmalade, etc., was presented as if it took place in a country kitchen. I was ready to accept the fact that berries were picked, rinsed and boiled with sugar, that soap was made by boiling the fat of a dead sow with ashes from the stove, etc. All processes I – as a country boy- knew off already. But when the teacher told us that sugar was made by wheeling beets in a barrow into the scullery to be chopped up with a knife and thrown into a pot, I raised my hand and protested: "Sugar is made in a factory."

The teacher did not give me room to speak. I was aghast. The class had been told something which was not true. I asked my father for help. In the late 1940s there were not many brochures around, but he gave me a small leaflet on the Danish Sugar Mills with a picture of the most beautiful of them all, Saxkjøbing Sugar Mill, on the cover.

A week later I went to the teacher's desk and handed him the leaflet. I was sure that now he would ask me to explain my mates how sugar was really made. But he sculled me furiously: "Return to your seat".

Back at my desk, I peeked at him, not shaken but full of wonder. Little by little it dawned to me what I had learned: "You cannot be sure that adults know what they are talking about". And worse "you cannot even expect them to want to know."

The incident might have turned me into a rebel, but it did not, at least not in a direct sense. In a way, I still trusted my father, my grandmother and, of course, my closest schoolmates. I already had reservations about my mother, but that is another story. But at school, when asked to present what I had been taught or read, I was well aware of answering like a parrot! A good one, certainly, at the top of my class! Yet I did not believe one iota of what I was told about geography, history and religion. It was a thrill to be told that Charlemagne had arranged his own funeral a year or two before his death in order to enjoy the procession on top of it all sitting in his coffin. But how was I to know whether this had actually happened? Who could?

But rebel? No! I clearly sensed that I should abstain from asking adults how they knew what they talked about could be true or whether they just repeated what they had read in books. Furthermore, some of the things we were taught were unmistakably absurd. For some reason I had no doubts that Jesus – blessed be his name – had actually lived. But he could hardly have been able to gain recognition among his fellow countrymen as suggested by the entry in Jerusalem, if he at the same time really had befriended tax collectors of the Roman occupying power! It would be as if "Jesus" had been on good terms with the Gestapo and the members of the German auxiliary police recruited among Danish collaborators during the recent German Occupation of Denmark. I could not believe it.

I also failed to comprehend what the Old Testament had to do with "Jesus". Jehovah stated a lot of rules, e.g. you shall not, lie and steal. But if Jesus was hungry, he and his entourage just – as if they were birds – picked the grain they needed from any field of wheat they passed. I was fascinated. Jesus apparently acted as if rules are only rules[1]. And it was also obvious that he did not care much for scribes, priests and others who based their claim to wisdom on something read in books. I adored him!

But, as mentioned earlier, I remained well behaved. I had a gut feeling it would not help me to follow the example of "Jesus" and just nick apples whenever I pleased. Nor would it help either of us if I bothered our various religious educators with my conversions of the old texts into the frame of contemporary life. I just watched them in wonder. It was not until later, in secondary school, that I began to see the light. Geometry was a revelation. Now I could prove a statement as true, just as the exercises in physics allowed me to check whether what the books said could be trusted

This feeling of unease at being told what to believe has never left me. At eighteen, as I stood at the rail of a steamer heading for Ceuta in Spanish Morocco I wondered, whether the "Africa" I had read about in school did in fact exist. It did not! Today, I might readily talk about the latest tax rates or discuss the situation in Russia. Yet I am very well aware that I have no idea whether it is true or just what some people want us to believe.

Play-acting

Being on the lookout I also realized that adults – whatever their shortcomings – did not deliberately lie. They were just victims of an inner desire to appear informed. The sheer ability to show themselves able to tell other people what goes on, is just stronger than any drive they might have towards exploring the depth of what they are using words about.

In a sense I was very naïve. Not until later did I realize that adults may pretend by choice, to cover up and, according to the audience, play the role that suited the occasion best, – the distinction between "backstage" and "front stage".[2] No, to me as a child adults appeared to be sincere. They just seemed to use their ability to convince others in order to prove to themselves that they know what they are talking about. Simply a matter of "if what I say convinces you, I might myself as well believe it too!"

We hear. We speak. We enjoy believing what we say. Generally we have no idea of "who" or perhaps "what" is speaking through our mouths. It is as if we surrender our voices to a prompter – whose existence we do not recognize nor want to acknowledge.

All this came back to me later as a fieldworker. As an experienced interviewer, I believe myself to be sensitive to the choice of words, images and metaphors used by the other, as well as what "the Other" may express by the tone of voice, rapidity of speech, posture, etc. Thus I believe I am able to distinguish between insincere professional make-believe, flashy self-promotion and authentic search for expression. However, it is a mission full of traps, some of which we lay out by ourselves. Academia tempts us all too well to theorize instead of evoking us to familiarize ourselves with what may be going on inside, among and around other people as well as ourselves, here and now. For this we have numerous tricks at hand, as we shall see.

Every perspective has a blind spot, so you better cover it up!

Or…?

1.2   Looking around for arguments to fit "your" case

"The way employee ownership was set up in the US is a 'rip-off'," *Joseph R. Blasi* again and again stated in his book *Employee Ownership*.[3] He enthusiastically supports the idea of employee ownership, but not how the ESOP[4]-laws supporting it was set up

"It is excellent that the government provides ownership to be put in the hands of people who could not otherwise afford it." Yet most ESOPs are constituted just to serve the interest of top management," Blasi stated. The base of his argument was the rather unfortunate fact that the managers as trustees for the loan behind a leveraged buyout could deprive the employees of the right to vote their shares. And did so.[5] Thus *the Blasi thesis*:

"EMPLOYEE-OWNERSHIP AS IT IS SET UP IN THE US IS A RIP-OFF."

Are we able to confirm his thesis? Yes, we are! Can I disprove it? Yes, I can! What then? Well, let us look at the arguments using my own research[6] as support.

Thesis confirmed

Having followed a number of employee owned companies over a five-year period, a first question is whether I have facts to document that management has used the creation of an ESOP to further its own interests? Yes I have!

Several top managers readily told me that one of their motives for letting the employees buy the company was to fend off outside buyers who might replace them with their own management team. And some had even – during the transaction – succeeded in acquiring additional benefits on behalf of the other owners to be.

…whereas other facts prove the thesis to be wrong

But be aware, I also have facts to document that ESOP managers perceived employee ownership not just as means to enrich them selves, but as a means to reconcile the traditional conflict between the employees as hired hands and management as the major decision makers. Some did their utmost to share and initiate participation, educate the employees and did in fact succeed in setting up effective joint problem-solving teams.

Some of such managers even made them selves vulnerable to the scrutiny of the employees, as they realized that the quality of their decision-making ought to be tested as much as the decisions taken on the floor.

Furthermore, my investigations should leave no one in doubt of the pain such a transition may inflict on the individual managers as the company goes from a traditional to an open social environment operated under mutual control.

Yet reality seems even more muddled!

Thus it seems that I have facts to both confirm and reject the initial thesis. Some readers may now say: "You can always find a company that validates either alternative". That may be true, and if taken at face value, the argument can very well tell us why hard core people look at case studies with suspicion.

Fortunately, I can do more than that. I can give you examples of companies where the best managers are driven by a desire to get as much out of the new situation, while at the same time being open and challenging the employees to participate and monitor their leadership! Just as I can give you examples of companies in which the CEO sincerely struggled to enhance employee influence while being undermined by middle managers. I can even name companies where some of the stewards, at least initially, fought participation.

So we are left with the question: Are we in a mess or is reality a mess?

1.3   Tactical tricks to use in order to circumvent conflicting facts

So let us look at five commonly used strategies for handling a mess of potentially conflicting samples and aggregations of facts:

1. *Stick to your guns*

Those who already know, have no choice – be it believers in the shady nature of people in management or those who are just sure that "management ought to and does know best". So you may be on the side of the employers, or you may – what is most likely for an organizational theorist – by implication be pro-management or if a socialist, anti management. Any way you go hunting for facts to confirm your position, – *theorampling* as this fallacy is called

2. *Bolster up*

Still better, you may try to guard your position against attack. Good management will always search for and implement the right solutions. So let us for the sake of argument side along with a fellow researcher who assumes that managers generally know best. – Because if they did not, they would not have been chosen for the job! This in turn explains why managers are entitled to benefits. And should they fail, it is "obviously" due to "employee resistance to change". "There are so many ways in which employees can make a solution not work".[7]

The rhetoric trick here is to avoid contact with the intricacies of reality and stick to generalities in order to defend your position.

3. *Talk your way out!*

However, let us acknowledge that facts matter. But so do the ways we present them too. So let us get away with the inconvenience of everyday richness of interests and perspectives by rhetoric: "Top-management in employee-owned companies may favour participation, as it may enhance individual prudence and efficiency as a mean better than most in order to benefit themselves". This formulation, while still carrying the flavour of the Blasi Thesis, eloquently absorbs the otherwise outright contradiction of facts.

4. *Embark on more intensive and explorative fieldwork!*

By appearance convoluted rhetoric may serve us well as a cover up for a muddled reality. But a poor solution for a realist! In the long run slick words cannot dampen the pressure of a multifaceted reality. Further in-depth studies of well-selected cases may be a more sustainable solution.

In the present case, extensive fieldwork revealed that the aforementioned managerial stratagem in ESOP companies is but one phase in a potential cultural transformation process – from being a traditionally owned company to being an employee-owned[8]. Which may last up to seven years.

So, yes, in the beginning, top managers of companies turning into ESOPs did have an eye on their own interest. The unimaginative self-interest of many a manager does not just evaporate as shared ownership is introduced. Yet participation, as it developed, ultimately made managers as well as workers more responsible to each other as owners. So in time caring may and in fact do seem to take over.

Thus the *second lesson concerning "truth"*:

> *Conflicting statements referring to the same entity may all be true,*
> *As they may refer to different stages in for example an organizational process.*

5. *Strive for enrichment*

The question is not whether fact A or fact B confirms or refutes a thesis, but how to reconcile what, due to a limited a priori theoretical thinking, may appear as a paradox. Here we did it by introducing an additional and certainly realistic dimension in the discussion: Time! In other cases we may have to search for an intermediate dimension, as we shall later illustrate with reference to *analytical generalization,* ref § 2.12–14

A confusing, muddled reality should be seen as a gift. It is an invitation to challenge a theoretical domain and let practice enrich it. Exploratory field-based inquiry could thus guide us to become aware of issues that will ultimately lead us to a more comprehensive insight. This is what we shall explore after having looked at the role of theory.

OUR AWARENESS OF THE REALITIES
WE ARE ENMESHED IN IS VERY FRAGILE
Believe nothing of what you hear and only half of what you see
English proverb

1.4   Words cover only a minute part of the potentially sensible

Most of the ideas and conceptions we rely on are given to us rather than grounded in our own first-hand experience. It is as if we cannot make sense out of what we experience without an all ready at hand language. According to "social constructivism" language alone provides us with the means for what we can talk about[9].

Such a claim can of course only be partially true, as some use other media, – be it music or painted images, to convey their, let us say, experiences. But to us such similes may be seen as second-hand information, just like descriptions of places we have never visited and which might not at all have been. If so, the "world to see" is already set for us through linguistic pointers and second-hand reports, please refer to Figure 1.4 #1:

Figure 1.4 #1:
SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM: WE SEE WHAT WE CAN NAME

LANGUAGE
words available

REALITY
AS OBSERVED

"Intellectual"
awareness filter

DOMAIN OF THE
POTENTIALLY OBSERVABLE
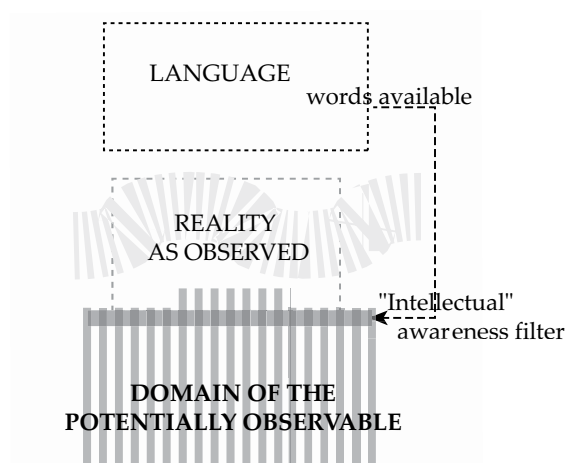
What we can talk and do talk about must depend on the languages we share. Thus some radical constructionists claim: What we can talk about depend entirely on language. An indeed fruitful thought as far as it may guide our attention to wonder about how differently language may and does shape our mind.

Thus, it seems as if there is an "intellectual" imposed filter between us and the domain of what we could as well observe, had we spoken some other language

Sensationalism: Just stick to making sense of what we see

Yet empiricists claim it is the other way around. *Sensationalism*, – an outlandish notion of the idea that all names and in consequence knowledge derives from sensations. Most eloquently expressed by Locke, who compares mind to a white piece of paper on which experience paints its information about external objects.[10] Thus, the mind is seen as passively organ for registration of facts. We have no ideas about anything before we perceive. We only observe. And here it stops, we are not able to transcend to the things themselves.

Distance as an ideal

A lot of confusion has risen as spokespersons within the empiricist tradition give priority to *vision* as the channel of information at the expense of touch, smell, taste and listening.

This had dire consequences. Seeing involves more than just observing, it implies distance, not the direct felt involvement in the world of the other nor of our own bodies. This led philosophers of science to formulate observations from afar as an ideal, for which they have reserved their version of the word "objective" – as it is reflected in the multitude of meanings of "seeing", cf. Figure 1.4 #2

Figure 1.4 #2: DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF SEEING, SOME LITERAL, OTHERS METAPHORICAL

To "see" may mean
- To *perceive* through the eye: Yes, I see the worm too
  - o to *meet* someone: I saw one of my old school pals the other day
  - o to *receive* a person: Doctor, I hope you have time to see me, because…
  - o to *attend* as a spectator: I saw a show on TV
  - o to *find out*, to detect: Suddenly I saw the whole picture, how it all fits together

- To investigate: I have to look into that, say in order
  - o *to examine:* Let me see if I can detect a meaning in this
  - o *to have or obtain knowledge or experience:* She has seen a lot of life
  - o *to form mental pictures:* According to my view…

- To *reflect*: Let us look at this in a new light
  - o to *imagine* oneself being able to create images of situations and/or possibilities: I can see you as an actress in a year or two

- To *"understand"*: I see your point of view
  - o to *make sense*: Oh yes, I see what you mean

Of the plurality of connotations for "seeing", most are more or less synonymous with obtaining insight, knowledge, imagine and making sense. It stresses the priority of vision in our lives. We do not say: Let us hear whether we can smell some sense in this.

No other sense gets the same positive press, metaphorically speaking, as sight. Smell is suspicious, "I smell a rat". Taste is a matter of opinion, which cannot be discussed. Nor should "we believe all what we hear". Thus by implication, only sight is to be trusted.

Only one other sense, feeling, shares a similar range of connotations. This is the most complex and varied set of the senses, – as well as the most socially related. So feelings are not easy to deal with. I may test whether what you claim to see is there, – or even be taught to see like you. But touch or being touched are far more exclusive and embedded within the private domain of the beholder. Thus emotions are generally looked at with suspicion as "mechanisms" for bias. Never the less they may carry weight as in the expression: "I feel there is something wrong in all this".

How far this may be true, remain to be seen in the last chapter! So far it is as if "seeing" is more related to an intellectualistic self-identification, whereas feeling is related to our emotional side as a less valued source of information.

Intellectuals, including philosophers of knowledge, apparently consider "the faculty of sight" to be more valuable or trustworthy as a source of information than what we hear, smell or feel. It is as if the passivity of being at a distance, and consequently less involved, is assumed to make one a better a witness.

This may seem fair enough. Seeing differ from feeling, although both activities have a cognitive as well as an evaluative dimension. At a glance it seems easier to see "what is" without feeling something for it, whereas evaluation is integrated in feeling.[11] This, though, will not do for the field researcher. Observing is fraught with unnoticed evaluations in terms of identification of significance. But yes, looking at what takes place in front of you may not motivate you to do something, unless what happens activates you to feel something. So distance matters. Emotions stir you to act, including searching for particulars, whereas mere looking seems not to.

This tough does not entail – as indicated – that observing can be neutral, because what you identify as worth looking at is as driven by your evaluative schemes as by the identifications you are able to make.

There is more to sense than what hits the eye

Furthermore, what we actually perceive in the sense of noticing is but a tiny part of what we could have – not only observed, – but used to create images of the real. It is as if there is an "attention filter" in or between our mind and the "Domain of the Manifest Observable". Far the greatest part is retained, as shown in Figure 1.4 #3. In this sense social constructivism has a point, without a high degree of self-awareness we will only takes note of what we expect to see.

Figure 1.4 #3: WHAT WE Notice IS BUT A FRACTION OF THE OBSERVABLE
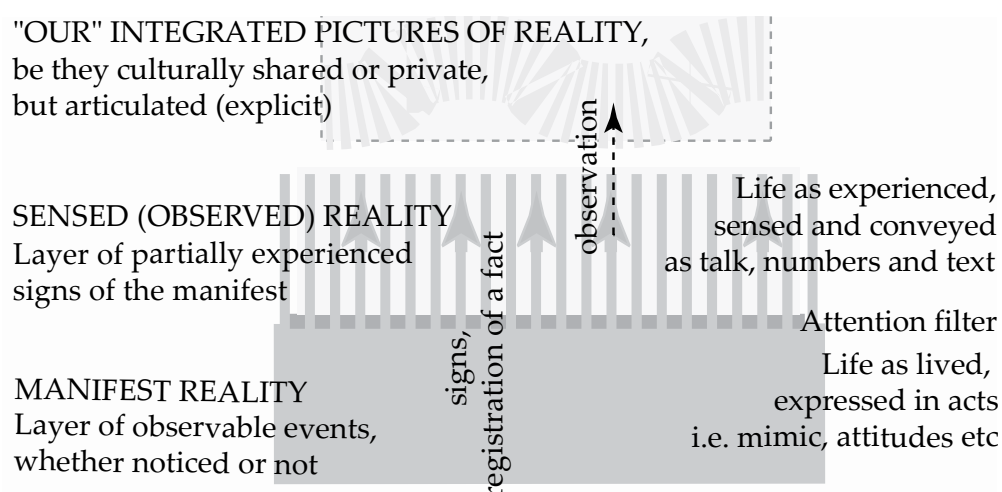
There is so much more to observe, sense and feel than we will ever be able to just get a notion of.

First, there is a limit to how much we can grasp here and now before overloading our information capacities. Secondly, our joy in pleasures, our interest and even sheer belief in what we need guides our lookout. Thus naming is only a part of the story of our aptitude for creating images of the supposedly real.

Word are always poor representations of the temporal and evocative life world, –

not the primary stuff of existential moments

- David Altheide & John Johnsom[12]

Noticing and hearing

This discussion shows how inadequate seeing is as a metaphor of coming to know. As it stands, "seeing as coming to know" is the epitome of *naïve realism*, – the idea that the world is – as you see it. Yet in reality we can only catch in parts. Just as people – even they hear – do not necessarily grasp, what their opponent in a discussion is saying – just as they may not even listen to themselves. Or you may as a figure of speech acknowledge you must have seen a friend as part of a crowd, even you did not spot him as you did not expect him to be there.

Hearing and noticing are active processes, while listening and seeing are rather passive, as illustrated by Figure 1.4 # 3.

Figure 1.4 #4:
LANGUAGES ONLY COVER SO MUCH OF REALITY

Imagined realities   Potential realities

Language
(witten and/or spoken)

Signs,
un-noticed

Perceived reality

What is noticed

What otherwise
could be noticed

REALITY AT LARGE
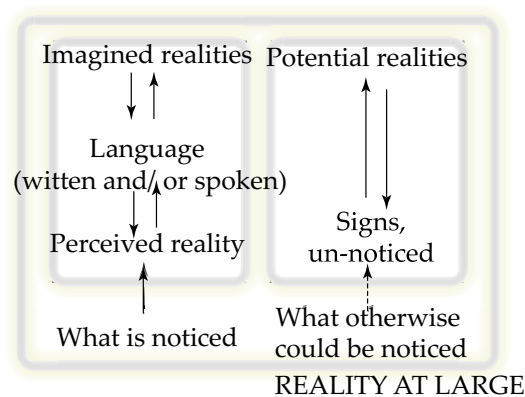
Just as there are words for what cannot be noticed, there is more to notice than we have words for. Thus, we have to distinguish between what we
o believe/imagine to be
o are aware of
o could notice or
o sense without being aware of it (subliminal consciousness[13])
As we are ingrained in a greater reality than we know of, we could train ourselves to try to sense what might be noticeable apart from what the language we master guides us to see. Understanding – as we shall see in § 6 - is the process of opening up to sense what we may not yet have been able to expect and thus to notice. Of course we ought then to test any such image of the real, to see whether they be more than just a fantasy.

Comparative analysis of field notes between ethnographers working within the same setting, indicates that we mainly notice "acts" that we forehand are able to make sense of, yet we may never the less be captivated by and ponder upon behaviours, that are truly alien to our own life world[14].

Thus "seeing" is an essential epistemological challenge to us all and in particular to field researchers. We can never be sure, if what we notice, corresponds with what is important for our informants on a job floor or in a supermarket. A challenge to which we will turn often enough in the pages to come – particularly in § 6, the chapter on Understanding. But for now, let us take the next step from accumulations of sensations as facts to the inference of rules according to the empiricists.

1.5   Induction: From facts to rules

However you define empirical research, identification and aggregation of facts, analysis based upon comparisons, explorative search for contingent conditions and determination of the range for and validity of empirical generalizations will be part of it. And so do we all, housewives, plumbers or songwriters. Thus one may ask what makes research special in relation to our daily ways of muddling through. In principle they do not differ. It is more a question of degrees of diligence. The researcher is just expected to be more

- o *conscientious* in the search for, generation and handling of facts
- o *watchful*, in terms of looking for alternative interpretations and/or explanations of any set of phenomena at hand as well as
- o *attentive* to how well any preferred theory fits in with the competing clusters of theories on the market
- o *self-aware* of oneself, both as a note-taking observer and as an actor under an obligation to be as explicit as possible about his aims and doings

Yet, the same challenges have to be met by a lot of people in industry and service sectors. And with a side-glance to the defensive moves social research makes against theories launched by others, I think there is a hell of a lot more depth and "honesty" going into the design, construction and maintenance of airplanes than in most "health books" by Ph.D.s on psychology or organizational design!

So let us assert that it is a combined systematic approach and level of theoretical and practical insight that constitute the difference. Thus, one is far more inclined to let a medical surgeon remove a bullet from inside one's head than any barber. We simply trust the medical doctor – due to his scientific training – to have greater foresight of the consequences of alternative ways of cutting through skull and tissue. Social and natural theories evolve after years of not just inspired speculation, but vigilant observation, comparisons and tested practices as well. So let us just throw a glance at these three sources.

Catching facts and turning them into data
Fact is derived from Latin, "facere", to produce as in manufacture, to make by hand. So per definition facts are something we generate. As we use the term "fact" we thus implicitly and positively acknowledge our responsibility for what we identify.

Data are derived from Latin "dare", to give, and are thus to be seen as referring to something given. Data purport to represent what exists, something to be picked, whether someone becomes aware of them or not. Accordingly, empiricists claim that observations – if to be ranked as scientific – must be measurable by everybody, if looked at in the same "right disengaged non-emotional way". Unlike facts, data are thus perceived as representing the "real" in a form uncontaminated by the human personality behind the eye lens.

So what is to be seen as "being there" depends on a theory of measuring! Let us take a tough example from Physics: The expansion of metals when heated. According to the prevailing language of physics, the data to hunt for would be "kind of metal", "temperature" and "coefficients for extension". All measurable, but not in any way independents! Nor are they "observables" in the common sense! What kind of metal, its exact temperature or increase in length, cannot at all just be identified solely by observation. It requires instruments, designed according to the prevailing language and technological level of physics. So the data of physics are not just given to us. They too are generated and detected through "lenses" designed by us according to what a given language – in this case a vocabulary of science – tells us is worth looking for. And for a good realistic reason too, as demonstrated by countless valuable bi-metal instruments for measuring temperature.

But there is another problem of which many may not even be aware: What we observe may not in a scientific sense be true at all and thus acceptable as data. Children learn that blue is the colour of the sky or that the sky is blue. And so it is according to a phenomenologist, who will claim that anything is, as it appears to be. Yet, the outer space is black, night and day. It only appears to be blue during the day due to the refraction of sunlight in the atmosphere. And – as we all know – appearance is not everything. Hills, townscapes and other sceneries appear in a vague greyish colour from a distance, yet they will have more clear and distinct colours as we approach them. It all depends on distance. Just as personal psychology has another sense of concreteness than classical sociology!

Another example: Walking along the road in a minor village in France you may sense the perspective. Nevertheless, we are not able to perceive depth beyond six meters, although many of us certainly do sense we experience it. To "see the world in perspective" is an acquired ability! And if you do not believe so, take a look at nineteenth-century Japanese or European pre-renaissance paintings! And, if still in doubt, recall the impression on your mind of an open landscape covered in haze!

So we do not merely see. Noticing implies "knowledge". A stool is seen as a device for sitting and so may a stone occasionally. A throne is a sitting place too, but it is far more than that. It is also an expression of power! And if you do not know you will not be able to make the distinction and just see a fancy chair. Thus "seeing" relies on what we – from our position – think is the case.

It thus seems as if things and relations "exist" so long as we – you and I – identify them as such. A view that has led philosophers to wonder whether what we cannot see, or even just do not look at, may exist. Pure nonsense, my wife certainly exists even she may be in her own world of shopping! Nevertheless, such a claim may make sense in at least two ways:

- o Something may exist and be sensed as such, but may not be identifiable as we have no words to name them;
- o we cannot be certain that something could be there, if it is not brought to our attention by someone.

Let us take a short look at these:
First, if we cannot talk or identify anything without naming it, existence seems to depend on language. Yet, all sorts of, say, feelings may make themselves felt in our body. And while we do know of them, we may still be at a loss to name them. And indeed, without a proper vocabulary it is difficult for us to make others get a sense of what we feel. Just as we our selves may be at a loss to sense what another person may be trying to express. We are even more at odds as the English, German and French languages do not share the same range of however limited a vocabularies for different aspects of tools, self-awareness and not the least identification of emotions. Here German is far richer variety of terms of which some were the source for specific English terms[15]. Nevertheless, the feelings are there.

So naming is the mean for us to talk about what exists – or at least what we believe to be – there may be more to notice than we can make sense of/assign meaning to. Thus *third lesson on Truth* – is inevitable:

> *Existence does not entirely depend on naming.*

Certainly chimpanzees can feel anger as a dog may feel joy, even though they have no words for it. But even worse:

> *what is observable exhausts the power of languages.*

It is just a tiny part of what can be observed and could have been given a name, which actually has one, as already referred to in Figure 1.4 #2. – Be it different cross-breeds of dogs or facial expressions, different situations that release specified emotions in certain types of persons. Nor do we have names for all the different types of snow, for all the different shapes of the crown of trees or kinds of "understanding", ref § 6.2 to come.

This leads us to the second point: Epistemology may thrive on the metaphor of seeing as a common indicator for observation. Yet, the world does not disappear when we turn our back to it or close our eyes. As far as sensing, we do not just rely on seeing, but also on sound, smell and touch.

Thirdly, "existence" is in itself "just" a concept. If we did not employ the term, who would care? Existence just is and as such it embraces us.

So it would implicate us in lesser difficulties should we stop talking about data and just stick to facts. Still I think we could benefit from employing the two terms as they express two different ontological positions: Data – as the empiricist like to state – are collected; facts – as I would say – are generated.

Fourthly. Facts as chosen references should be dealt with cautious awareness. Not the least as facts in the hands of analysers often achieve thing-like character or even may be treated as things in themselves.

Finally and worse, we may assign names to something that cannot be, ref figure 1.5 #1

Figure 1.5 #1: SEEING SOMETHING THAT CANNOT BE
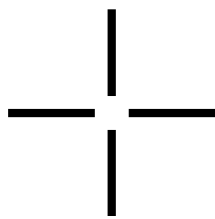
There is a lot of so called optical illusions: You cannot help but see something that you rationally have to realize cannot be, for instance the white circle at the intersection where the four lines closes in[16].

Likewise we may by the drive to make sense of what we see, notice something we alter may realize was not there.

Induction – a tribute to if not speculation then engaged sense for the real

Thus we come to our second issue: The scientific drive towards aggregation of facts, comparisons and generalization. Surely some social researchers, especially caseworkers, may claim they could not care less, because they study the unique. But there really is no trapdoor: In order to be accepted, the presentation of any case has to rely on fitting words and concepts into wholes that make at least some sense. Thus we cannot avoid the issue, we have to deal with generalities.

Generalizations, whatever their kind and span across incidents are not definitively provable, but made at the risk that, in time, new evidence may undermine them. Let us assume you have cooled down a number of liquids and measured how they all shrank after solidifying. Now you may be tempted *to conclude* that any liquid – including those you have not tested – will shrink when cooled and expand when heated. Oh, that cannot be universally true! Organic materials may not expand, but decompose when heated. So you limit your claim to be valid just for inorganic materials.

This example may serve as an illustration of one of the claims of a prominent philosophy of science, Logical Empiricism: Science is built on *induction*: expanding what has been observed for a number of repeated instances to be taken as generally true or as the great empiricist logician Mill said: "The operation of discovering and forming general propositions[17].

Induction, more than any principle of science, builds upon the common sense of everyday life. Situations that repeat themselves are taken as signs of what we can expect to happen. Being observant we soon learn to accept "swallows flying low" as a forecast for rain, even though we may not know why.

Habitually it only takes six incidents of "x following y", before we expect if "y" is observed, then "x" will follow. Say the white billiard ball will move when hit by the red. But that is too crude an observation. Because to get the white ball to move in the direction we want, takes skill[18]. The billiard player has to have an incorporate sense for the real, a flow of body control, which goes beyond what he can express in words. And only the skilled player may show us how!

Figure 1.5 #1: INDUCTION ACCORDING TO THE EMPIRICiST: A PROCESS OF CLASSSIFICATION AND INFERENCE

"OUR" INTEGRATED PICTURES OF REALITY,
be they culturally shared or private,
but articulated (explicit)

SENSED (OBSERVED) REALITY
Layer of partially experienced
signs of the manifest

observation   induction   inference

Life as experienced,
sensed and conveyed
as talk, numbers and text

Reality – according to the empiricist tradition – comes to us as observations, singular incidents, which we, by creative, self-confident inference, may a) arrange into classes of aggregate statements, which we further may decide b) to integrate/condense into an empirical law. A law, which when first stated can be used to infer what could happen later under similar circumstances, named opus operandi.

Induction is thus more than sheer accumulation: It is the establishment of a rule you are inspired to and dare ground in the evidence available.

Furthermore in order to be rules generated by induction we have to do our utmost to classify and define y and x, as well as to identify under what circumstances, named *opus operandi*, we can expect the occurrence of "y to be followed by x".[19] Without such a precision induction may be as incorrect, as the "law of expansion" mentioned above. H_2O does not shrink but expands when frozen. If it did not, we would have been deprived of the almost weightless joy of ice-skating!

But worse, we have no ground for proving "that instances of which we have no experience resemble those of which we have experienced", as Hume taught[20]. But sure induction leads us to believe we can. Thus the ultimate justification of for induction is not scientific, but grounded in nature, – a matter of *psychology*! For an illustration please refer to Figure 1.5 #1

Hume[21] reminds us – there nothing to ensure us that what happened in the past must recur in the future. There is no logical justification for induction, nor any empirical guarantee! Beyond God of course! – as the good jester, Bishop Berkley, assured us[22].

Philosophy apart, experience, nevertheless, ensures us to trust induction. Believe me, the sun will rise once more and shine for us, and should the day come when she does not, we will be faced with a far more severe question than whether induction can be trusted or not.

Induction is a way of making order, to make us believe what occurs is something more than just incidental: It is to decide to make a series of observations to an exemplar of what may not merely have happened but will happen again, given the specified opus operandi. It is not logical, but rather *like a bet* where I place my sense for the real as a temporary guarantor. So in everyday life the "Problem of Induction" has a pragmatic solution: "It works, but only as far as we know. Thus what we should always be prepared to be on the outlook for the unexpected"!

Classification

Induction makes classification a challenge. Should we take those we are taught to believe in for granted, be it concepts like metals, mammals, working class or the Renaissance? No; classifications are done by choice! "Mammal" i.e. is just a modern replacement of the former division of animals into: a) tame animals, like chicken, cows, donkeys and b) wild animals, like mosquitoes, fish, snakes, tigers, etc.[23] Mammals do not exist apart from being a classification. What exists is that what I call my aunt; that seal on the reef; the pair of porcupines hibernating in our shed, etc.

Words like wild, good and true, as well as concepts like love, working class and Fatherland, are human inventions. They do not refer to "any "things", that exists independently of the human mind as it was formulated by the Greek Sophist movement. To day we may better know the version of Ockam from the Middle Age under the name of Nominalism.[24] In opposition to the Platonic[25] vision of ideas as the real, *Nominalism* [26] states that classifications are just names[27] for ideas without any real existence beyond our language. Designations are products of the imaginative human mind that, generation after generation; may take on a life of their own!

Thus not all classifications are given to us with the same ease. Some – like "metal", "mammal" or "tame" – seem more concrete and subject to uniform rules of application, as they appear as indisputable. And certainly, if you do not use them properly at exams you will certainly fail. Others, like "nation", "values" or "empathy", have far wider *span of significance* or as some say *semantic breath* just as different schools offer each their own definition for these concepts. Yet this very vagueness is an advantage for common conversations. We just plunge into talk, assuming the other person shares our conception of these words.

So, looking closer, we may even have to acknowledge that concepts like "free will" indeed are somewhat abstruse. And probably linked more to some often repeated patterns of word use, than to a reference to the "domain of thing-like entities in change".

Thus, in order to grasp the meaning of concepts like "goodness", "free will", democracy, etc., the best first strategy may not be to discuss "what it is" at all, nor how the concept originated, but to explore: Who uses the phrase, when and how.[28] Thus, the meaning of a classification is nothing absolute in itself. It all depends on the context.

The ethos of Nominalism is thus twofold:

o   to remind us *not to confuse the name with what it may refer to*, or, in more catching terms, not to confuse "the signifier with the signified".

Love is a relation between people, not an entity that should be treated as if it might exist in isolation. And so is truthfulness, as we shall see illustrated in the next chapter! And secondly,

o   to warn us against the *fallacy of assumed concreteness*[29] or reification[30]: to believe and talk as if something exists just because a given language has a word for it.

Allow me to illustrate, what is at stake with an example of the life, constructs may achieve, after having once been formulated:

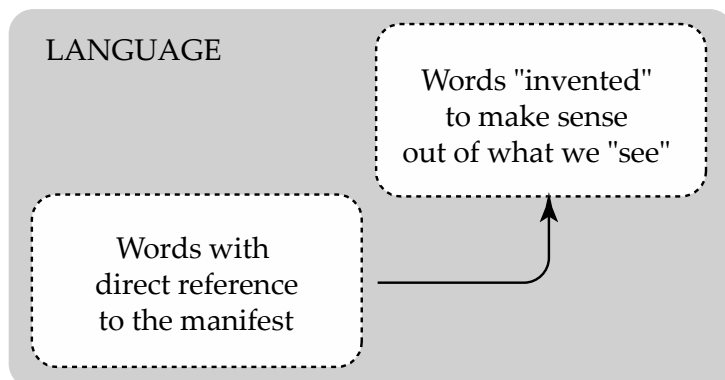*The construction of an "explanatory" concept: an example*
Looking at the living around a deathbed and at the deceased, the difference is obvious, yet it is not obvious what the difference is! You might say: "life has left him", but that is just to state the obvious, a tautology. So say we replace "life" with "soul". Now the statement makes sense – according to a trick conceived by our linguistically cunning ancestors: The *magical principle of conceptual cover up:* In case you cannot explain, you could at least infer an alleged intermediary reality that will make it appear as if you know what is going on. In case you do not know, you may at least – as a cover for your ignorance – give "the unknown" a name.

So we have hit upon what moves man and beast: our soul. And without it, man will be – oh yes – dead matter[31]. From being an inferred "explanatory" variable, "soul" became an alleged empirical reality, which were to acquire a life of its own in man's mind. Some argue "we" should expand the concept to include – even vegetable life for instance – others that it should be reserved just for humans.[32]

Myriads of other constructs, e.g. schemata, motives, Id-Ego-Super-ego, have an alike chimerical existence as they ruminate around the social sciences as *fictums*[33], see Figure 1.5 #2.

Please observe that I hereby have not stated that the soul does or cannot exist. It would certainly please me if you could demonstrate that it has a reality beyond its place in language. And while you may state what you believe it to be, it will not be sufficient. It is as with socialism or gnomes: You may believe in the former, whereas it takes some one with very good eyes to see the latter.

Figure 1.5 #2: TO MAKE SENSE MAN USE LANGUAGE TO CREATE FICTUMS AS "EXPLANATORY" CONCEPTS

LANGUAGE

Words "invented" to make sense out of what we "see"

Words with direct reference to the manifest

To be enable man to "explain what we "feel" and "see" "we" have introduced a myriad of concepts. Thus en-acting the magical principle of conceptual cover up! Thus a link is established between the tangible or touchable and unseen fictums.

This gives us amble opportunities to discuss whether the soul or gnomes exists outside their occurrences in language, – whether justice is something tangible or just an expression of power. Thus such making-sense invented concepts may open the door to a plurality of possible worlds.

To the naïve mind, though, conceptual cover-up may seem to establish what is and thus tempt us to fall into a trap of assumed concreteness.

To touch or being touched

Classifications saturate our perceptions of the world. Apparently it comes forward to us according to the classifications we are either led to use or choose to use. But only partly! We still have to distinguish between names and existence. To exist implies the ability to make a presence felt, preferably in more ways than just one, including at best to be "touchable" either a) directly as my wife's kisses assure me she is much more than the dream she is too, or b) indirectly, as we assume the stars of the sky would materialize as fiery entities, provided we were close enough.

Identification and thus *language and existence are partly independent*. A lot of names do not have any clear reference to the touchable. On the other hand, what exists may at times alert you to make its presence felt independently of whether you are able to identify it by name or not.

To explain
…is to answer the question "why" rather than only the question "what"
Carl Hempel and Paul Oppenheim[34]

From rules – derived from observations – to theoretical expressions

Laws of nature state what we expect to occur according to a given set of circumstances – rules we, despite Hume's scepticism, decide to put our faith in as good guides for us. It is debatable whether we should dare to rely on "laws" for the social. Yet as we do seem to distinguish between the unexpected and what usually happens, we seem to rely on what accordingly is called *nomothetic rules*[35] for the social. The next step we may take is to embark on explaining why the rules work, which is the task of theorists:

An example: The Greek Master Thinkers were haunted by a paradox: how to reconcile the fact that the visible world is in constant change, and what really is – as they assumed – must be ever persistent and unchanged.

The dilemma was – at least by appearance – solved when Democritus suggested that everything was composed of a small number of minute particles with hooks so they could lock themselves together in lumps as well as forming new configurations.[36] And he used, he believed, a semantically convincing analogy to back his theory: The world is composed of atoms just like myriads of words can be composed of the same limited number of letters.

2nd example: Apples fall, when the stem breaks. Sure, as do most things. But how to make it into law and explain it was to be a tricky affair. The first we know to have tried is Aristotle. He explained: "Falling to the ground is the natural thing for heavy things like stones, apples etc."[37] This, of course, is just a language game of using "natural" as a conceptual cover-up. Not many would rank it as a theory today!

3rd example: That metals and gasses expand when heated is generally accepted as a law of nature. But to state that they expand due to increased internal atomic motion is a *theory*, whether "atoms" is an imaginative invention or an idea founded by reference to experiments with reference to other theories.

A law is a rule for what we can expect to happen, while a theory purports to explain how and why the rule works. That is why practitioners and academics may not see eye to eye. People may live an entire life relying on practical laws of increasing sophistication without any need for any supportive theory. Why bother about theory if a rule works? Academics, on the contrary, want to delve not so much on how things behave, but why. Why? Well, that is a good question in itself, isn't it?

- o At best the hunt for "why's" in social research may lead us to reflect on whether other ways of structuring society and organizations are possible, and what might be the consequences.
- o At worst it may furnish us with a vain sense of the power of knowing.
- o Or even tempt us to explain what we really do not know, like journalists who are expected to make yesterday's events intelligible to their readers. Imagine: to be able to explain everything that has happened, yet still be unable to predict what will happen tomorrow!

Research-based theory must be grounded in records of what has happened as well as the idea that the same phenomena still can be expected to happen under a given set of circumstances, – opus operandi. But to theorize requires more than the sheer accumulation of observations. You add a supposition of why it is so, based on concepts borrowed from other theories, analogy, imagination, or what you wish to see as the operating reality of the apparent reality.

Yet theories – particularly in social research – may also, at a loss for any other ways, opt for the use of analogies or just metaphors.

Analogies suggest that something, we want to explain, works like something we are familiar with. As a student of philosophy I attended a presentation by a guest lecturer from Finland. He had noticed that when adults, after years of absence, revisit the place where they had grown up, the trees and the garden appeared to be smaller than they were remembered. Because, he explained: Information is stored in the brain and accumulates as raisins in a sack: the first settles at the bottom, the latest at the top. Thus the first pieces of information – soft as they are – are squashed under the weight of the newest pieces of information. So when recalled, things from the past will appear to be smaller. Well, this explanation stems from a time when the Logos of Mechanical Physics, including Hydraulics, was esteemed as the foremost science![38]

But in any case to explain by analogy is to transfer concepts and images already familiar to us into a new domain. Thus they may later in time be seen as misleading. In this case the reference for the shrinking of the external images of our childhood is off cause the increased size of our body.[39]

To sum up, a law is not a theory in itself. A law is a description of "what may happen to Y under given circumstances (opus operandi), C_1, C_2,…, if subject to an influence X". In order to make sense and get a firmer grip on existence, man has an inclination to try to integrate laws into a greater structure of sentences, as if the same patterns are operative across domains. Like some see "the hands of Gods", a "procreation drive" or "class struggle" or behind natural, biological and/or social phenomena.

To seek for patterns has indeed brought far as the gadgets in our homes show. The problem is just that we at times seem obsessed with a drive for explaining far beyond our actual powers. Thus allow me to suggest the following definitions:

- *Nomothetic rules*: Statements about what behavioural reactions *may* be expected within a given culture: if "x" occurs "y" will.

Example: People may commit suicide for all sorts of reasons, but under some circumstances it may be more prevalent within certain groups. We may tentatively make it a rule of thumb that people with a frail self-image are more likely to commit suicide if hit by a more or less self-inflicted social strain – being mobbed for instance. Or, based upon other incidents, we may further conclude that people with a strong self-image are more likely to commit suicide if hit by a self-inflicted social disaster – bankruptcy for instance. Obviously nomothetic rules have a certain vagueness as opus operandi is rather unspecified. In contrast:

- *Empirical law:* Social statements about what must be expected: If, given a set of *well-specified* opus operandi, "x" occurs "y" *will* follow.

So while both rules and laws outline what to expect, laws has to be far more specific in regard to how and when and even better supported as well by a theory of why it is so.

One crucial question remains, however: It is hardly possible to list the entire set of opus operandi for an alleged social theory to be applicable?

Necessary and sufficient conditions
Given our drive towards making sense, it is important to discipline ourselves and bolster us against the fallacies of assumed concreteness, for instance

o *the fallacy of elevating* a necessary prerequisite for a given change to be the sufficient condition for its occurrence.

Examples are plentiful. The first known Western philosopher, Thales, held water to be the foundation for life, the sufficient cause! Certainly plants and animals require water, but it takes more than that. Recently a survey on entrepreneurship could not identify any shared personality traits, nor any circumstantial evidence that could identify why some people became entrepreneurs. However, they found one shared characteristic: People had to be good at networking in order to become successful as founders of new firms. Probably a needed but hardly a sufficient ability! Lots of people are good at networking without being or even aiming at becoming entrepreneurs. It is certainly a skill any integrator needs to have too. Competent networking may be a necessary, but not in itself a sufficient,[40] prerequisite for entrepreneurship. Thus the following definition of an operational clarification:

o *Sufficient condition:* The one and only requisite (opus operandi) for something to occur the way it does and not otherwise.
o *A necessary condition:* A state of affairs that – amongst other things – has to be present for a certain state to follow.

1.6 Deduction of the singular from a given rule or a set of rules

Creating your own universe by means of deduction

Given the aforementioned law of expansion, we must conclude that any stick of metal in my hand should expand if heated. Or stated logically: "If you have a law claiming to be valid for all cases of A, you should by *deduction* – as it is called – conclude how any x, if an A, would behave".

However trivial, this is what deduction is all about. Obviously three claims are activated:

o a law

o an identification of which items are to be included

o an outcome, which in this case even is an observable.

Such operations, *syllogisms*, were first expounded by Aristotle, see Figure 1.6 #1.

Figure 1.6 #1: A SINGLE DEDUCTION OR SYLLOGISM BY EXAMPLES

	Example 1:	*Example 2:*
Law	• All metals expand when heated	• Whatever has the power to cause motion, has a soul
Singularity	• X is a metal	• Magnets[41] have power to cause motion
Expected behaviour	X will expand if heated	Magnets posess souls[42, 43]

However banal example #1 and curious #2 above may be, we may recall how backwards reading of the deductive scheme is often the cause of two of the most common fallacies of assumed concreteness in social research, see Figure 1.6 #1.1.[41]

Figure 1.6 #1.1: PUTTING THE CART BEFORE THE HORSE OR AFFIRM OR DISCONFIRM THE ANTECEDENT BY THE CONSEQUENCE

	FALLACY OF AFFIRMATION BY THE CONSEQUENT	FALLACY OF DENIAL BY THE CONSEQUENT
Supposed rule	If A (antecedent), then C (consequence)	
Fact	C is established)	C is disconfirmed
Alleged conclusion	A is established	A is rejected

Particularly the first of these two fallacies are common in journalism as well as the Social Sciences: Manager Woo gets upset, if object to criticism -> Woo is upset. So: Someone must have criticised her!

Or: When workers get too frustrated, they strike -> Workers at plant Z, have stopped work. Obviously they must be annoyed about something!

What is wrong? Outcome may be due to other circumstances than just the one we are acquainted with. So what is given above are just an interpretation of what may have proceeded an outcome!

In general reasoning becomes even more complicated as use and misuse of deductions generally draw on a stepwise combination of rules or laws. For instance a calculation of how much a bi-metal stick will bend if heated from 20 to 36°C will be based upon an intricate mathematical expression.

Another, more relevant example for social research is shown in Figure 1.6 #2.

Figure 1.6 #2: ASSUMED DEDUCTION BY THEORY COMBINATION

Authoritarian persons are afraid of listening to the ideas of others. They want to be confirmed in the belief they already adhere to! [44, 45].

When threatened from the environment, management of firms will often approach people and ask them to help – for evidence, see e.g.[46]

In times of crisis authoritarian managers will hurt their company while attentive managers may not.

Please note that the first sentence is a combined statement assuming that acting as an authoritarian is due to being fearful. If so "authoritarian" must be defined independently of "not listening". If not, the sentence may be a tautology. Thus we have to modify it, stating "Some authoritarian persons are…." and specify who they are.

Likewise "crisis" has to be defined by degree and magnitude. The relevant degree in the above statement refers to companies having to face changes of unforeseen magnitude in their environment or due to their pursuit of new technology. Regarding the conclusion, one might by implication infer that authoritarian leadership may be preferable in other cases, e.g. when things run smoothly or for other types of crisis. Please note this is not stated.[47]

The comments in Figure 1.6 #1.1 implicitly indicate that deduction in social research must be supported by strings of qualifying, statements that can be validated. The rules mentioned might not even cover all authoritarian managers but only include some. Limited span of inclusion is certainly often the case for even the most popular assumptions of organizational life, as an expansion of the just mentioned example will indicate:[44]

High *absenteeism* is generally taken as a sign of dissatisfaction at the workplace. Or rephrased in more common terms: If the situation at work makes people feel dissatisfied, they will be reluctant to go there. Hardly surprising! Yet may a theorem of social science is built on such fallacies that just of *rephrase the obvious*.

And the statement above is not even true! Workers all around the world endure and have to work under the most horrid conditions. Thus the propositions have to be guarded with an array of well-specified conditions to be valid. This is usually forgotten as social researchers implicitly take it for granted that the culture they live in is the only one worth our attention.

Apparently statements of *opus operandi* are vital as they mark the range of necessary conditions under which we can rely on a given proposed "law" to be valid. It is vital for practical guidance. Nor will the idea of unification of social theories ever get off the ground without the highest respect for opus operandi.

Let us take one more look at the challenge of finding out why people make themselves absent from work: Accepting the nearly tautological premise that people stay away because they do not want to come, I would, if asked, search for evidence to uncover

- o the circumstances under which people can be led to do something they would rather not do, as well as
- o the circumstances under which they can protest, as well as
- o the means and ways of protest that are open to them and at what cost.

In short, retort to case studies!

Fieldwork, though, takes time. Deductions are much easier to work with than induction, as you rely on ideas that people before you have hit upon. But as Mill stated: "All inferences are from particulars to particulars".[48] Therefore, we should always – before we use an established rule – be aware of the need to compare opus operandi of past and present – to search for the foundations, working backwards through the genesis of the theories chosen, exploring from which historical setting they emerged and what may have changed since.

If, in due time, we should achieve a good grasp of the laws for the social domain, we – just like engineers – should be able to forecast the behaviour of individuals, groups or members of cultures. As legislators, this was what the old Greek philosophers aimed at, as they formulated constitutions for new city states to be settled along the shores of the Mediterranean or the Black Sea. Swayed by their successes, including the establishment of appropriate religious cults – for instance the one to support the Ptolemaic conquerors of Egypt – they began to wonder whether nature – like organizations of men – could be subject to its own set of laws.[49]

The full circle

Induction and deduction may come full circle, as seen in Figure 1.6 #3. First collections of particular data are, by induction, summed up as laws, which may become building blocks in a theory. This may next be used to deduce what we can expect to happen. Whereas positive outcomes will be seen to confirm the law, negative ones will compel us to adjust the law and the theory that was supposed to contain it.

With these foundations laid, we should have a closer look at two terms we, so far, have used rather loosely, truth and generalization, before we can take a closer look at interpretation, explanation and understanding.

Figure 1.6 #3: THE FULL CIRCLE: FROM CONDENSATION OF FACTS AS DATA to deductioN OF THEORY
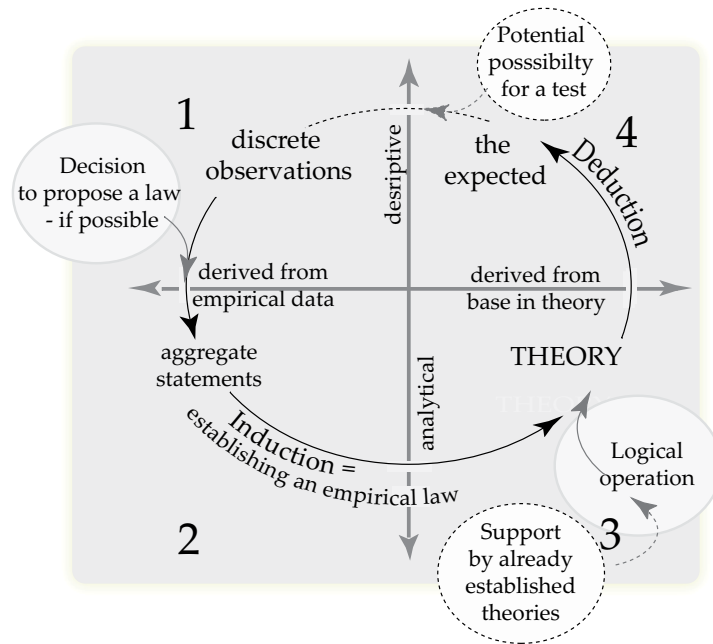
1: Induction requires facts as well as confidence. It is a decision relying on intuition[50] and the evidence chosen.

2: Such a rule may later, as an empirical law, be integrated into a theory, if what the law claims to be "true" can be expressed and made to fit with a greater, preferably pre-established, set of theories.

3: Having established a set of theories, we may in turn use them to *deduce* what will happen. Here after, experiments may be set up for a limited, well-defined area to explore to which degree derived expectations will fit new sets of data generated – a Theory Test.

Or, in case of a more exploratory approach into a greater, more uncertain field, we may start with a vision of the expected by integrating several theories into a whole, e.g., as a scenario.

2 Truth

– a concept of imagination with many faces

2.1 The counterfactual as an inspiration

An apple fell. Why? Well, Aristotle explained – or, rather rephrased – the obvious by stating that heavy objects are drawn to their natural place, the ground. Just like you may presume that the man on the corner eating a doughnut must be hungry.

In contrast: One bright summer afternoon, Newton sat looking at an apple tree and wondered: "Say the stem broke! What would it take to make an apple move horizontally? Like the moon moves along a tangent around the earth! Well, the apple had to be kept in place by something like a string and swung. And this string however invisible Newton christened gravity.

Thus it was not just observation, but contra-factual imagination that led the religiously devoted Newton to develop the foundation for Mechanical Physics. A truly creative invention![51]

So the development of an significant theory to be does not necessarily hinge on accumulations of "data", nor an exquisite number of cases. And I am not going to commit the fallacy of a conceptual cover-up and state what matters is the ingenuity of the researcher. But whether such an intuition will stick and if so for how long is a matter for continued empirical research. And within Science "truths" do seem to stick for generations all though in Newton's case for hundreds of years[52].

Social research, though, has a long way to go before we can even imagine being on the move towards the same kind of universality as science. Certainly "truth" here too is a question of what seems to be the case, – at least for a certain period. As well as a question of what people want to believe, be it theorists relying on the power of words or pragmatics ready to respond to the pressure from matter-of-fact reality!

While induction rests on collections of incidental facts interpreted as alike by the researcher, deduction is a matter of rules and using them correctly. Thus some see deduction as unproblematic vis-à-vis induction. This is – as shown in the previous chapter – a misrepresentation. The foundation of any deduction, be it a law or theory will ultimately have to emerge either from induction or/and a speculative idea.

Experience is a great teacher as it often shows us how wrong we could be

Truth depends, as often said, on circumstance. And what was once believed may stand to fall. For one Richet tells us[53] he had never imagined that a substance, which at first did not harm an organism, could later become poisonous. He had believed it to be the other way round; that organisms could adapt themselves to tolerate stronger amounts of sensitive material, like alcohol. Yet, to his surprise, a laboratory animal actually died after accidentally have been given one tenth of an initial experimental dose. He concluded: "It was not due to me, but despite me, I discovered the phenomena of allergy."[54] Reality taught him.

For social phenomena what was once a reasonable rule may later become inadequate because the conditions for the former has changed. For instance, it is to miss a vital point to criticize the "management know best"- philosophy of Taylor[55]. The workers in his charge were rurally raised immigrants who could hardly speak English and had never even seen a factory before. Nowadays workers are amply educated and trough their upbringing acquainted with how to handle household machinery. Of course some managers seem not to have realized it yet, but then it should be them one should criticize, not Taylor!

Finally, what might be theoretically "true" may not be so in reality, ref the first lesson of truth. According to popular wisdom and the information in any textbook, water freezes at 0^0 C. And you may even add: "I can make an experiment and show it to you." If so, you will fail. If continuously cooled, pure liquid H_2O will not turn solid before at around minus 16^0 C.

THE CLASSICAL CRITERIA

**The worth of man does not consist in the truth…he believes he possesses,
but in the pains he has taken in order to attain it**

Lessing[56]

**It takes time and efforts to come to know, but even more to hide you do not, –
nor want to, – however much you need to!**

Truth?

2.2   Do not take it for granted that you know what it means!

Truth, – be it a question of

reference to a conception of reality or convenience

So we found out about allergy. Apparently the truth of any statement is contingent on whether what it expresses either corresponds with reality or is at least believed to do so. However, the term "*corresponds with reality*" does not say anything about what that reality is. It cannot.

Furthermore, if we look upon the amount of literature dealing with "what reality is and how we discover it," we must acknowledge that we cannot expect to get away with such a slipper dipper statement. "Truth" is a multi-facetted term, for an overview please refer to Figure 2.2 #1.s

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Figure 2.2 #1: The many faces of the concept of truth

Truth has been defined in several ways, primarily as:

- o *Personal willingness* to insist on what is the case – something "I" faithfully commit myself to live and work for. In English, in a weak form, called *performative* truth,[7] in a stronger German form *ideal* truth, while I prefer the French form: *existential* truth.
- o *Correspondence:* A sentence is true if what it expresses mirrors a reality independent of language! What a sentence expresses should be the case
- o *Coherence:* What a sentence expresses has to fit with a set of sentences I already believe to be true, or at least it should not contradict these other sentences: A sentence is true if it fits with what I otherwise have been led to believe.
- o *Pragmatic:* We will take any statement to be true in so far as it serves us as guidance on how to achieve our aims. Thus, "to know is to foresee" – without necessarily being able to explain why: What will or at least might happen if "Y" – under a given set of conditions – is exposed to "X".

We will later expand this list of rather traditional empirically based notions with others, ref § 2.6

The definitions given above may be called existential, realistic, idealistic and methodological conceptions of truth. Please notice how at least three of them refer to something beyond language itself.[57]

Existential truth – or ideal if you prefer

Before we deal with the classical criteria, allow me just to say a few words about ideal or existential truth.

Existential truth refers to what you believe to be the principles you have to come to live by. The issue is not whether there is a truth in Islam, Socialism or Christianity, nor which. The point is the relation "I" as an individual has to either, – whether I am prepared to guard what ever I state as existentially true, with my life, – or in less dramatic terms, with my personal conduct. Existential truth is thus related to a passion for life, not to rationality, nor convention. But of course we may very well try to defend our feelings and respect for an ultimate truth, like a belief in god or that one should not steal with rationalized arguments[58]. Thus any personal betrayal of an ideal truth of ours is a betrayal of One self

The cynical approach

As "truth" has social implications, cynics have taken a more sedate view and looked at how and when the word is used and by whom. If so, "truth" is:

- o *Inter-subjective*: True statements are what members of a group agree upon to be so, – a matter of consensus!
- o *A power game*: Truth is what a ruling elite – be it of scientists or political rulers – at a given time finds fit to define as correct and thus what the rest of us better accept. Or likewise, but with a slightly different twist:
- o *Justification for a practice* already established. "What I do must certainly be a better or even the best way to do e.g. research, so I encourage you to follow suit", or
- o *Conventional:* Each science is just a game with its own terms and rules for truth.

Sensitive readers may have detected that the cynical versions overlap as well as they are all parasitic, in the sense that they thrive on either the realist or the methodological conception.

The Redundancy Theory

Let us finish with a last, more rhetorically refined version:

Redundancy: "Truth", "exist" as term like them are rhetorical enforcers we use to pay a particular tribute to what we claim is the case.

In terms of transfer of information is should be enough just to state, "x is b". Thus no additional information is added,[59] if I say: "It is certainly true that x is b". It just sound more convincing if I underline what say with "it is certainly true" or "I will be damned if x is not b".

In the following we shall touch upon all of these conceptions of truth, although most space will be devoted to the first four referred to in Figure 2.2 #1.

…there is not a single word which has not a diversity of meanings.

Quintilian[60]

2.3   Correspondence

Speech serves many functions, one of which is to draw attention to something by referring to an event in the past, your untied shoes or the tenseness aroused in my stomach as I picked up a rumour about budget cuts.

This is called the ostensive[61] or instrumental use of language. "Words are ultimately derived as to signify the sensible," as we may paraphrase the great empiricist John Locke.[62] Thus some say children learn the meaning of words by being told what they refer to: A good person is one who, e.g., helps small girls or pleases us.[63]

Yet, not all references are equally unequivocal, nor does every noun necessarily refer to something. Yet, according to this criterion they should if to be classified as scientific.

A great idea: Correspondence between reality and language
Wittgenstein, a young engineer of aero-dynamics, founded his first reputation as a philosopher on the claim that a language, in order to be scientific, should picture[64] reality in a one-to-one correspondence, "like the gramophone record, the score, the waves of sound all stand one to one in that pictorial relation which holds between language and world"[65, 66].
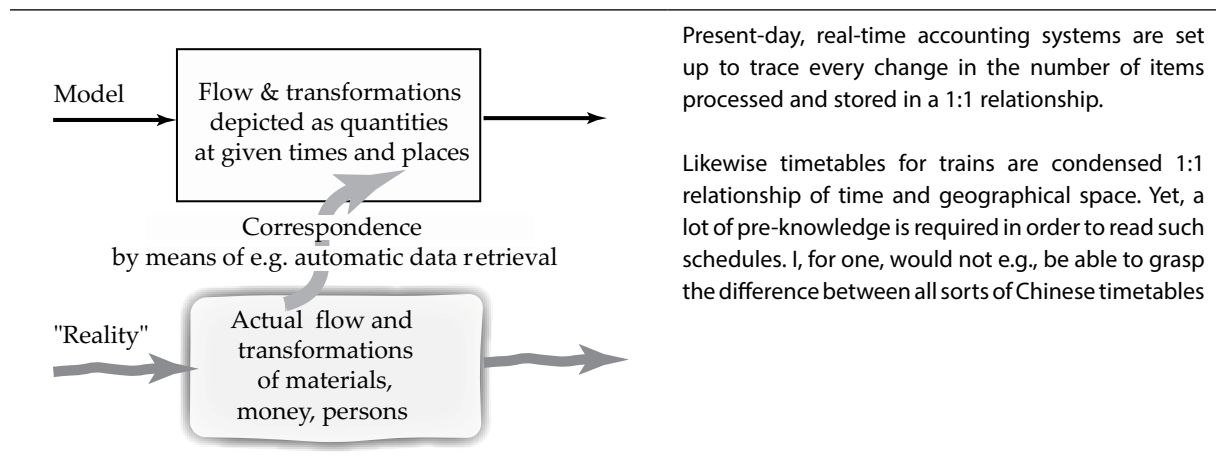
Such an *isomorphic* relationship applies, e.g., to accounting, which – if properly made – is a gross, aggregated re-rendering of the flow of material, goods and man-hours within the firm. A representation that may be illustrated in discrete sequences, as Jay W. Forrester demonstrated with his language: *Industrial Dynamics*.[67] Just as an IT-based tracking system of today trails and controls flows in actual time, see Figure 2.3 #1, or refer to how double bookkeeping was developed around year 1400 to help merchants in Northern Italy keep track of their stocks and shipments of spices.

This, the basic ethos of realism, – or more precisely *referential realism*[68] – has in abstract terms been formulated thus: "A statement (preposition, belief, etc.) is true, if and only if what the statement says to be the case is the case"[69] and/or or what it refers to is the case

Figure 2.3 #1: CORRESPONDENCE: THE IDEA OF AN 1 TO 1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REALITY AND HOW IT IS DESCRIBED

Model → Flow & transformations depicted as quantities at given times and places

Correspondence by means of e.g. automatic data retrieval

"Reality" → Actual flow and transformations of materials, money, persons

Present-day, real-time accounting systems are set up to trace every change in the number of items processed and stored in a 1:1 relationship.

Likewise timetables for trains are condensed 1:1 relationship of time and geographical space. Yet, a lot of pre-knowledge is required in order to read such schedules. I, for one, would not e.g., be able to grasp the difference between all sorts of Chinese timetables

However, structural likeness between text and reality – like the example of flows in Figure 2.3 #1 TS– is not generally achievable. *First,* in order to grasp anything, one needs to know beforehand what the issue is. Say, you want to learn a little Danish and I point and I say: "Se hunden". You would not have been able to grasp anything. Although – if Anglophonic you might guees that "se" means see and "hund", hound. If not, your attention may have been drawn to the sparrow picking seed in front of our feet. This goes too if we replace "true" with X in the statement just refereed too: A statement is X, if and only if, what the statement says to be the case is the case[70]. Indeed, people love to make fun of the lack of correspondence between languages and the realities they claim to represent as this anecdote shows:

Ackoff[71] tells a story about a young American priest who worked for half a year in Africa as a substitute for the resident minister. Wanting to be of use he pointed towards pots, pans and dogs, calling them by their English term. After his return the minister asked the congregation how things had been. "Oh, the young priest was wonderful", they said, "but why did he have so many names for his index finger?"

Apparently, not even pointing is sufficient in order to establish the intended connection between signalling sounds and realities.

Secondly, neither in ordinary languages nor in aggregated scientific expressions is there a structured one-to-one relationship between sentences and what they are believed to refer to. You might hear yourself saying: "Thou shall love thy neighbour". Fine, and you probably should! Yet, there is hardly a one-to-one relationship between the demand of any ethical rule and the scores of life situations in which it should be applicable. I, e.g., would steal from my fellow citizens in order to feed my family, violating one further generally accepted principle from Jewish law: "Thou shall not steal".

So, even though any statement may refer to some cases of applicability, an extended list of "if's" would be needed to establish the sufficient opus operandi for all cases.

Thirdly, the modelling capacity of language is strikingly inadequate. You cannot even describe the general face features of your spouse with the sufficient precision that would enable me to pick her out in a crowd. So, in order to make yourself recognizable to, e.g., a blind date, you will have to tell her that you will be sitting at a table outside that cafe, wearing, e.g., a red scarf. Apparently, one may have to state something absolutely inessential rather than actual appearance to be recognizable. Language is grossly inefficient as a conveyer of information, yet it may work through selective simplification.

Thus, *fourthly*, it is hardly surprising that we are often at a loss to just grasp what others might be talking about: "She stood behind her husband". What does that imply?

- o Did they stand in line in a queue?
- o Did they stand back to back, as if to defend each other's rear?
- o Did she support him, not literally but metaphorically through life?

Who knows? We have to know more. Words and signs like body postures are fuzzy or by a linguistic term: *poly-semical.*

Meaning grows out of a context, not just out of any individual sentence or face movement! We have to be sensitive to the whole, the setting, before we embark on any interpretation. The words themselves are not enough. Let us look at one further example of this: Say, you are told:
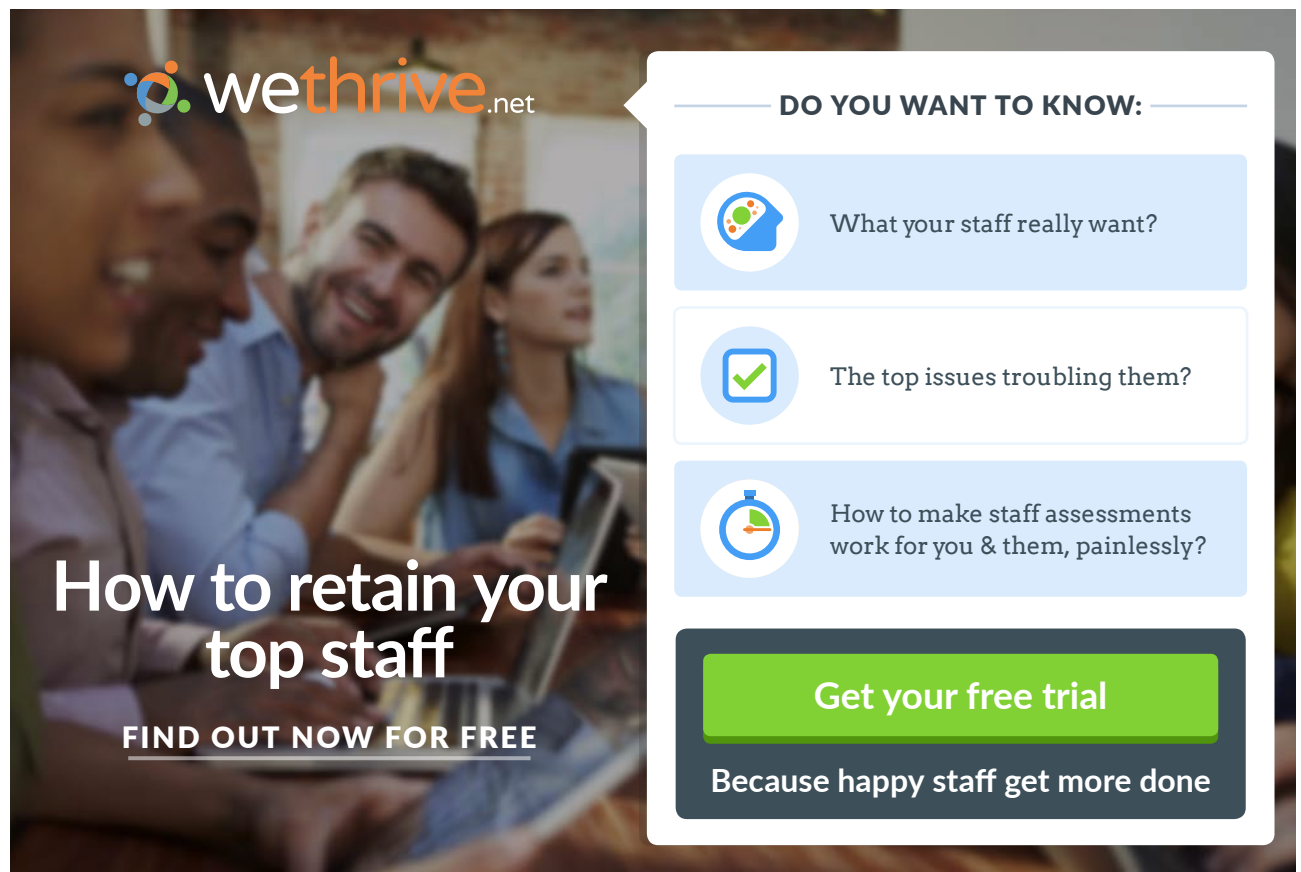
"THERE IS A HOUSE IN BARCELONA"

44

Obviously, it has to be so; literally it is a tautology. Towns are defined as assemblies of buildings. Thus, in order for the sentence to be meaningful – to refer to something – "we" have to, imaginatively, set it in an other context. Could the speaker want to stress that one house is still standing after a war or an earthquake? Maybe! If so, the conversation must already have dealt with destruction. If not, the sentence may be a poetical reference to a particular house. Maybe the home where the informer grew up and where her parents still live. Or a house may not be a dwelling at all. The sentence may refer to a princely dynasty.

Sentences may have a meaning beyond what they literally state; amongst scores of other possibilities they may be ironical, humorous, metaphorical or poetical expressions. Only context can give you a clue.

And, *last but not least*, "false statements are not formally different from true ones"![72] That is exactly why they, even though they are false, might convince.

The same applies to meaningless statements: Thus, an utterance like "the will is free" has currency amongst theologians, albeit it literally cannot make sense. People might be free or constrained; concepts cannot. Ideas cannot be treated as if they could and do exist as actors in themselves except in a metaphorical sense.[73] Yet you may have an idea about the intended meaning of "the will is free". This just once more stresses whatever the relationship between sentences and what they refer to may be, it cannot be expected to be "one-to-one".

There is no likeness or structural relationship between sentences and reality. Sentences allude to but are not – as some paintings – like pictures of dreams or reality. All we can appeal to is a sense for the real, and thus put our faith in the *fourth principle of truth*, the *reality principle*:

Relax and trust circumstance at some point to make it self heard without regard for what ever preferences we otherwise might have for particular views.[74]

Intuitive cognition does not necessarily require something existent

Nicholas de Autrecourt, around 1335[75]

Language as a visionary tool
Even though we cannot expect a one-to-one relationship between a signifying text and the signified, most people will be ill prepared to discard the idea that "the truth of any statement is contingent on whether what it expresses corresponds with reality". And for a perfectly good reason: We normally expect people to be honest. Language would be meaningless, even impossible if we could not count on the rapports and the directions we receive from others.[76]

The emergence of "new speak" therefore threatens to turn language into a mere mean for influencing people, rather than telling them something they can count on. Yet "new speak" still thrives on the belief that what is stated should be believable. It is parasitic.

If not otherwise alerted – we also implicitly take it for granted that people know what the words and sentences they use, mean. That they attempt to say something when they talk! And if not, we should – as our forefathers told us – ask for clarification.

Acquiring a good knowledge of a language is not just a question of learning words and combining them, but simultaneously to get a feel for the significance our instructors as well as others assign to them. Thus, there is a lot of *tacit knowledge* involved in learning languages, ranging from:

o   pronunciation of words like the "i" in mind or mint;
o   using and combining words as we talk

True, there are rules for grammar and pronunciation, but we did learn our mother tongue without knowing any.

Furthermore, some words are very specific with a small area of a) *semantic breadth*. "Television" is a word with a very fixed meaning. For other words, including the most common ones, problems of breadth may occur. You and I know what a house is, but what construction is exactly the dividing line between "house" and "hut"? Surely a cave is not a house, yet caves can be and have been used for housing for centuries. House is a word with too great a span of references to denote something precisely, like, say, "broom" may.

Other words, especially more abstract words, have an even greater span of semantic breadth. We may all share some common notion of what "love" is. Yet we may not agree on what love is, or even whether it refers to something that exists. And certainly without having experienced it from within, how could one have more than just a longing sense for it? And what about a concept like knowledge? Is anyone knowledgeable enough to define it?

It is indeed a wonder that we – despite the haziness of terms – believe ourselves able to recognize what descriptions imply in terms of identifying items, incidents and relations around and within us.

In addition, b) a lot of items, situations, facial contractions, emotions rumbling around in our body, different varieties of wind, bends of branches, etc. *do not have any name* in English. This sets obvious limits to what we can talk about.

In addition, many words c) seem to have *no specific reference*[77] to the reality they appear to be relating to. Not only may the reference be dubious but also rooted more in ideology[78] than in pointing

"Free will" is one such term that refers to something quite different from what they appear to. Presumably the expression aims to state something about a quality of man or some men. Yet, as I see it, it points to a semantic solution to an awkward situation created by early Christian theologians, as they first had defined i) God as an universally good and omnipotent entity. Only next, having to their embarrassment to face up to and "explain" ii) why there is so much suffering, wickedness and human disease around! If God is a good and omnipotent entity, how could Eve and Adam have reached out for and taken a bite of the forbidden fruit of wisdom[79]? Because man has a free will, as St Augustin "explained"[80] using the magical principle of cover up. Semantic ingenuity may certainly serve us well as an intellectual cover up!

Today, and despite the fact that the learned members of our faculties no longer indulge in debates about the essence of God, the notion of "free will" is still commonly used as an argument for the individuality and freedom of man. However sound this notion is as a political manifest, empirically it is fraught with difficulties.
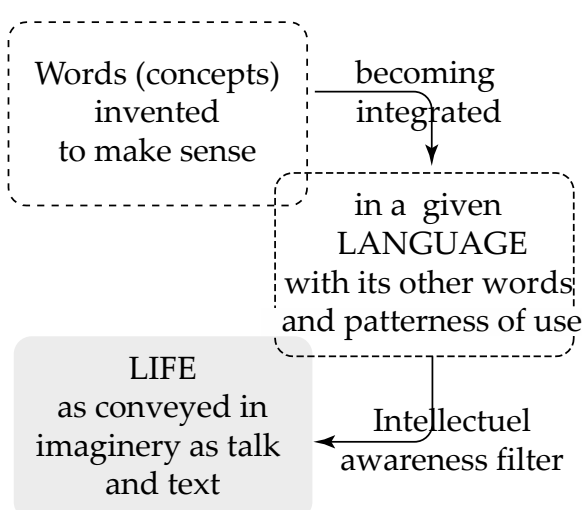
How can we claim to have a free will when many of us intend to but cannot stop smoking nor slim down? "Oh, it is because we do not really want to", the counter-argument goes. If so, the notion of a "free will" must just mean we can state whatever we want to do, regardless of whether we will do it or not.

Or take ghosts, some non-beings, we all know well enough to talk about. But what are they? Some claim they do not exist, and yet they claim they are too scary just to think about? Or may be "sensing spirits" is a question of one's own sensitivity? If so, how can those who do not want to or cannot feel their presence allow themselves to deprive the more sensitive of their right to name what they are aware of?

Whatever the answer, language apparently has enough sufficient inner coherence to allow us to create images that may have no, or at best just a dubious reference to a domain outside language itself and not necessarily to the one explicitly referred to, as hinted at by figure 2.3 #2. Thus around half the Danish population – despite being church members – are not really sure that Christ ever lived. Just as I even "I" once earned my living as an operations researcher – never believed in profit maximization! Yet we can all talk about either – as well other terms like "self", like "your self" – what ever it may be apart from a reference to you.

Finally, let us reckon how the very ambiguity of language is at times cultivated as a source of delight in itself. Certainly, not everyone is equally sensitive to the layers of meaning, e.g. sarcasm, which may be hidden in the outwardly apparent meaning of speech and writing. That "x is y" might actually have to be read: "x is not y". E.g. talking about the present, "this is a wonderful paragraph", may be read as an irony by some people.[81]

Figure 2.3 #2: LANGUAGE, AS A VISIONARY TOOL:

Words (concepts) invented to make sense → becoming integrated → in a given LANGUAGE with its other words and patterness of use

LIFE as conveyed in imaginery as talk and text ← Intellectuel awareness filter

Languages have – as Structuralism[82] teaches – an internal consistency of its own. It is thus loaded with sense-making terms, which could be conceived as imaginary, refer to Figure 1.4 #1. A lot of nouns and certainly concepts may not have any sensible counterpart in reality; as they are relics from now, out dated schemes of thought, which have been their own new forms, or a substantiation of qualities like the forms of Plato.
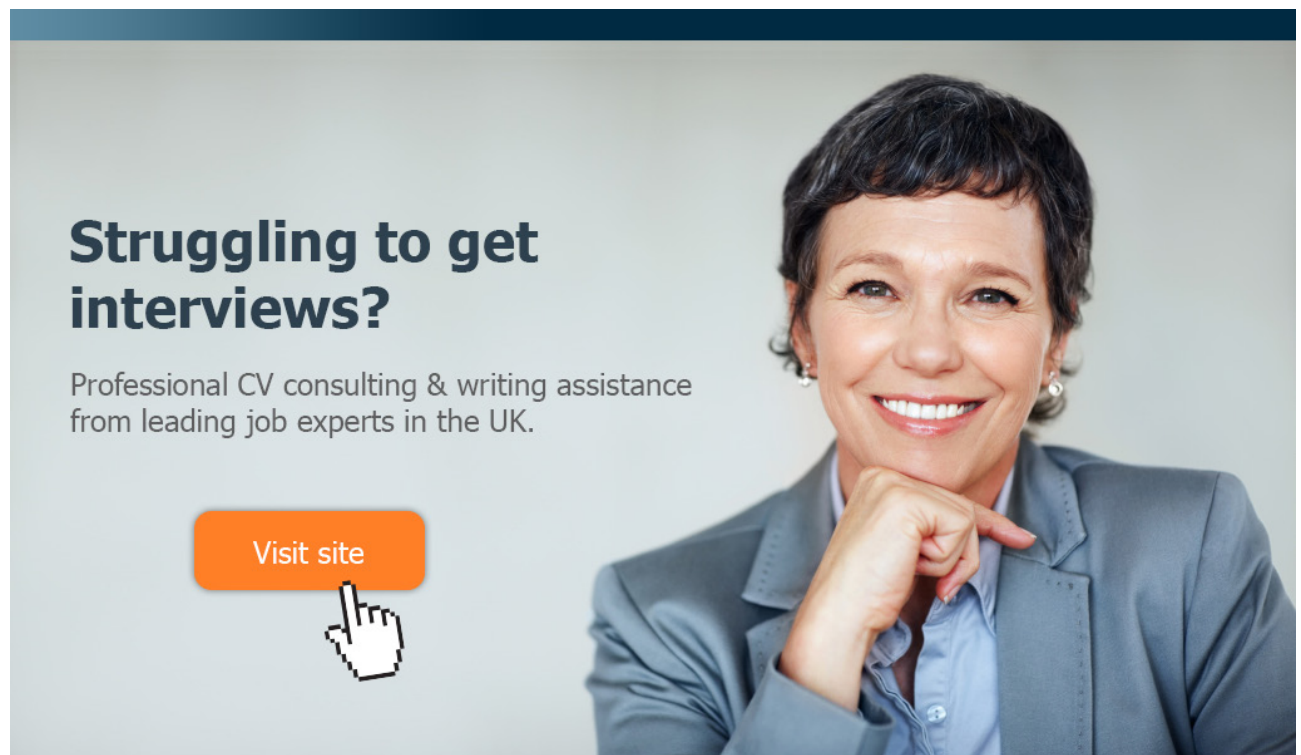
It is indeed a wonder how we are able to speak and read – because we do not know why. Some say it is due to linguistic cunning or tacit knowled'ge.[83] Yet, such a short, highly aggregated notion does not honour the intricate mesh of neurological capabilities that carries our linguistic competences. Nor is the "cunning" expression more than a conceptual cover up to hide our ignorance under the appearance of an expert statement. A linguistic trick in itself!

Summing up: Lack of correspondence is a challenge

Words, nouns in particular, are taken as signs that point towards something. This "something" may be identifiable as a part of a reality – real or imagined – linked to images or just other words. The problem, though, is that you must, beforehand, have a sense of what it is that is pointed at – a conception of what the meaning might be or at least be able to guess at it at the risk of being wrong! Thus, Socrates, time after time, was able to make fun of the people around him as they tried to define, let us say, "courage" by pointing to acts they characterized as such. To him the concrete may exemplify, yet cannot define the general.

Thus, correspondence between text and the social domain can never be established with certainty. There will always be something more to state. *Correspondence in itself is not a criterion of truth*. It is rather the other way round. What is important is not whether correspondence can be established, but when it cannot. *Lack of correspondence is the challenge*. Correspondence is a necessary, but not a sufficient criterion of trustworthiness.

The haziness about abstract words for ideas, sentiments and feelings is a great challenge to social research and a breeding ground for multiple sets of interpretations and subsequent misunderstandings. Thus the ideal of propelling us to use as well-defined concepts as possible! Yet this ideal may result in a technical jargon that does not solve the problem, but adds to it, as people outside now may know even less about what is talked about.

Thus the precision of technical expressions for emotions, social relations, etc. is often obtained by emptying them of the rich range of connotations of the everyday words they should replace. If so, precision is obtained by impoverishment. Yet, if the challenge is not to simplify but to enrich the language of social science, a vast vocabulary is the solution. But even though more words are needed, too many are not. Thus, the dilemma remains. Yet, social research will never be a science without an adequate, richer and more precise vocabulary. Yet to strive for understanding may be another way out, as we shall explore in the latter chapter § 6.

Correspondence rules are like recipes for cooking. In order to make mayonnaise, you have oh ever so gently to pour oil into yolk and stir with great care. Yet, you probably do not have a clue as to whether the thickening process is a chemical or physical one. It just works if you are careful enough.

Correspondence is "always" possible
You may not be able to get away with everything, yet there is a lot of ways you can pursue, knowingly or not, in order to achieve an apparent correspondence between the sentences and what they seemingly refer to, ref. Figure 2.3 #3.

- Do not be too specific!
- Use vague, basic concepts with a plurality of connotations.
- Skip, gloss over or even suppress alternative evidence.

or

- Use simplified theories. For instance by reducing human passions, e.g. "love for the other", into calculated self-interest or to a biological drive to reproduce, etc.

Correspondence, a necessary but not a sufficient criterion of truth
So summing up, correspondence is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition of truth. And for all we know, what we see may not really be there when looked at a second time. Or paraphrasing a popular saying: "Our senses have shown us, they may deceive us".

So *correspondence in itself cannot be the criterion of truth*. It is rather the other way round. What is important is not whether correspondence can be established, but when it cannot. *The challenge is the lack of correspondence.* So let us look at an alternative.

Figure 2.3 #3: CORRESPONDENCE AS "THIS IS"

O This is the letter O	O This is two ellipses	Adjoining to this text there are, as we all may be prepared to see: o a letter O, o two ellipses o a hole in the paper o symmetrical black curves that certainly is not a girl, even not the face of one Yet – referring to the 4th image – there is no other page in this book where you might enjoy what could be called the looks of a girl
O This is a picture of a hole in the paper	This is not a girl	

> **Every discourse makes truth claims.**
> **Powerful discourses…resonate in us and**
> **connects with other discourses, practices or experiences.**
> **In short discourses derive their power from their coherence relations**
> Linda Martin Alcoff[84]

2.4   Coherence

Creating coherence is the epitome of sense making. So "we" say the man died as his soul left the body. Or by reference to economic theory show how the falling prizes on stock is a "natural" outcome of a given market crisis. Creating coherence is a way of showing you know

The call for coherence, horizontal or vertical
The call for coherence includes, but goes beyond language itself. We may, for instance, have to balance different calls for correspondence with opus operandi as shown in the following example:

Whether we will grant that the Jewish King Herod let thousands of Palestine babies be killed around year 6 BC may depend on what you want to believe. Or, one might search for and compare the claim in the New Testament with other contemporary sources, should they exist. In this case there are none. That would be *horizontal* comparison! Horizontal comparison is weighting evidence of what we assume must be of a similar character, i.e. different reports about the same incident or at least align the claim with happenings of the same kind within a given space and/or time frame.

Or one could explore *vertically* how well the claim for such an atrocious act fits with what we otherwise know of the general practice of rulers and their administration then and in particular the personality of King Herod[84].

The idea of coherence is often perceived as an analogue to mathematical reasoning. Whether "the sum of squares of the two smaller sides of a right-angled triangle equals the square of the third" could be statistically documented by measuring thousands of one-plane triangles. But it is far easier to prove by the axiomatic Geometry of Euclid. Coherence is the very stuff that makes deduction possible.

Thus some social researchers insist on formulating their – as they see it – justified beliefs about reality in mathematical-alike terms. Thus, a proposed economic relation can only be accepted if it can be deduced from or combined as an addition to the system of "laws" of the Economy one subscribes to.

Coherence is a question of "fit by comparison", either horizontally, by weighing different sources of empirical evidence against each other, or vertically within a theoretical structure. I will in 10 pages time produce such a structure after having made some further distinctions, please see Figure 2.4 #2, page 52.

Horizontal coherence

– be it logical or as sweeping statements across cases

Comparing data from different sources is a great challenge for social research, as we shall explore in more detail from § 5.3 and forwards. This calls for awareness of circumstance. Unfortunately social science in general it is not as methodological as historians who do ground their narratives on source critique of historical evidence. And sure it is virtually impossible to present opus operandi across culture and even across institutions in contemporary society. En miniature this is why surveys have to be based upon questionnaires from hundreds of respondents. It is assumed that the sheer number of responses will outbalance all the individual differences amongst the people asked. The drawback is off course that whereas surveys in principle might tell something in general about a situation, they will never be able to make any valid, concrete claims.

One way out is to keep circumstance fixed as done in the controlled experiment, – the classical example of horizontal coherence, based on logical reasoning: The behavioural reactions of e.g. a social group, G_E, which has been subject to some treatment, T, are compared to an otherwise similar group, G_O, which has not. If there is a difference in outcomes, O_{GE} & O_{GO}, this will, with all due respect, be seen as the result of the treatment.[85] Based on this we may claim: Under the specified conditions – the given opus operandi – T may as an efficient cause[86] be the sufficient reason for the occurrence of O_{GE}.

Vertical coherence

Vertical coherence demands that a claim I make must be shown logically to fit into an already established hierarchy of systemized thought. It so "we" try to justify it by showing how it is consistent with the basic notions we have about reality, or if in a debate with notions we share.

If not, it is quite a task to try to convince others that a claim, which runs counter to a comprehensive system of thought they live by, is verifiable! Try, e.g., to persuade a materialistic atheist that holy men can materialize objects out of the blue in violation of the Laws of Physics. It would be miraculous if we could!

It is hard to accept something that runs counter to our chosen basic belief about the nature of the world (ontology) or how true knowledge is acquired (epistemology). Basic beliefs tempt us to limit our attention to incidents that might confirm what we already believe – *theorampling* that is.[87]

Materialists might believe that cosmos started with a Big Bang, but not that the exploding "Light" was from God. They may even claim that nothing was before, despite this flagrantly violates the basic laws of Thermo Dynamics.

Going backwards on an explicating trail is fraught with danger. Neither causes nor structure can be deduced from the manifest.[88] This is a point with grave implications for interpretation, as we shall see. What we notice may have many causes. But this is also exactly why it is worth trying to trace how and when phenomena may occur. Tracking assumptions may not tell us much about the world, but it will at least tell us something about ourselves. And even better, we may become all the wiser if we search for the clues others ground their systems of thought in, particularly when we do not believe in them.

Backwards coherence and the search for unity
Backwards searching trails for coherence may be as dangerously speculative as mind opening, nurtured as it often is by a search for unity.

First a trivial example: Empiricists may be right: what we know of is what we sense. Yet there is more to the world than what just hits the eyes! What we sense is the outer surface of other bodies as well as what is going on in our own, as already illustrated by Figure 1.4 #2, page 11. Yet this does not in itself exclude the idea that there is a family likeness between what I express and feel, and what is going on within others when they radiate expressions I accordingly read as signals of the inner states I know from myself.

But let us take a step further backwards. Our embryological development seems to bear traces of a progress we share with other mammals, so maybe we too share behavioural traits with other animals. This cannot be observed directly by phenomenological introspection, but only indirectly through cross-comparative studies. I regret it may offend some, yet I am deeply fascinated by the thought that we share many of our most basic emotional patterns with the other mammals. At least it is touching to see the diligence with which a cow with her eyes follows the playful jumping around of her young calf and easy to admire the methodological curiosity with which hunting dogs scan a terrain.

Thus backwards search for coherence may have its potential rewards of creating a sense of shared existence with others. Surely, this may not be much more than a poetic vision. Yet backwards searching for unity has always had its spokespersons, as we shall see:

Reductionism and the call for the unity of science
A search for the essential principles governing nature, life and social behaviour has hunted man for ages. Originally, Gods were seen as behind everything such as rain, love and death. Yet, the Greek designers of city-colonies – like Heraclites – had a vision: If laws can make city-states work, might there not be laws for nature too. Thus our Greek ancestors began to look for "natural" causes.

The first to establish a material cause as the root for everything, in this case water, was *Thales* (around 600 BC). A moist soil is necessary for plants to grow, just like we die if awe re bled for our "internal water". Furthermore, when cooled – as could be seen to happen in the Northern part of the Black Sea – water became solid; when heated, it evaporated as air. Thus water was in principle contained in everything. Since then, scores of scientists, the Mechanics of the seventeenth century, romanticists of the nineteenth century and later Darwinists, Marxists and Structuralist's have each sought to establish their own more or less all-encompassing principle.

In the twentieth century Logical Empiricists took over: Any science worth its name should be grounded in and built up as inductions from a basis of elementary sentences – referring to primary sense data. These should further through more and more elaborate logical chains lead us to ever-higher levels of laws.[89] A nice ideal indeed! But hardly achievable on a larger scale! We may now be able deduce why water is transparent from what we know about the hydro- and oxygen atoms, but not why it expand as it freezes. So we are back where we started. We believe we know what we sense, not necessarily why it is so.

Yet the idea is as breath taking as it is simple: The higher aggregated sciences should be derivable from the lower. Ideally, one should start at the elementary level of the hydrogen atom and then from there deduce what worlds might be. This seems impossible. So it is easier to start from the world we know. If so, the social domain should be based on psychology, which in turn should be derived from biology, then chemistry. Such a *reductionist* programme sets on a backwards working trail – step by step – for deriving the more aggregate or complex systems of thought from a simpler structure.

There is just one draw back to Reductionism: Structure cannot, as already stated, be derived from behaviour. Absence from work may have many causes other than discontent. And worse any reductionist program may be dangerous if it becomes a path towards simplifications, rather than wholeness. We are moved by other inclinations, than just ungratified sexual lust as the vulgar Freudians believed!

Yet such drawbacks should not prevent, but rather encourage us, to search backwards in order to uncover the otherwise hidden assumptions in one's own thinking.

The call for coherence as a weapon
in the struggle for simplification – or against it
Coherence implicitly claims that the world has to be if not rational then at least structured in a way that a chosen language can express. Indeed a strong claim and dangerous, too, as it may tempt us to opt for one-dimensional rather than multi-faceted clarifications.

The Kis-dictum, "Keep it simple", might serve one well as a hands-on rule, yet it is often more a projective excuse for not exploring issues sufficiently in concrete detail. Here we recall "Ockam's Razor", formulated as "It is a loss of time to employ a number of principles when it is possible to use a few"[90] – was not directed at simplifying reality, but as an invitation not to muddle one's thinking by using elevated concepts like the essence of things, etc.[91]

Thus, it is important to recognize that the call for coherence should not be used as a weapon to erase unwelcome details, nor to make sense through simplifications. Quite the contrary:

The call for coherence should be seen as an *opportunity* to identify holes among the data from a field study, explore lapses or conflicting streams in one's own tentative thoughts, tensions between feelings or beliefs. The call for coherence should ignite us into a creative adventure in order to find out whether we can gain the necessary knowledge to bridge gaps and holes.

Thus, it will serve one well as an *obligation to abstain from the ill practice of 'theorampling'*: To hunt for cases in support of what you may have set out to prove without having an eye for the potential disturbing evidence in your data files.

As with correspondence, the problem is not coherence per se, but when it is missing. Thus, the call for coherence should be taken as an impetus for creative exploration and *not* as a straightjacket or a call for simplification and, least of all, *not* as a temptation to get rid of riddles or annoying data. If life is full of contradictions, if different theories on motivation do not fit with each other, etc., you should not right a way expect your initial data to fit!

Coherence is an important yardstick for evaluating bits and pieces of texts, statistics, and images – our own as well as others – as well as an analytical challenge to make them fit. But always keep in mind that coherence in itself is no guarantee, nor proof of anything. Language has a quasi-independence of its own. It does not just mirror realities. Words refer to other words. Texts refer to other texts – just look at the footnotes in the present document!

To make a text more convincing by establishing a seemingly coherence is to fake it. Actually, it should work the other way round: Lack of coherence is a sign that something is left unfinished and should as such call us back to the drawing board.

Vertical coherence, the forwards trail

Forward integration reverses the backwards search for the "what", that made the manifest appear. By forward integration in contrast we put our knowledge to the test! Thus we leave it up to time[92] to show whether what we know are more than just beliefs. So a consultant may advise local management and union leaders on how to reduce absence: Promise a 10% wage increase to those who have had less than one week's sick leave during the past year. Whether it will work is of course circumstantial, but that is exactly what the consultant has to ensure.

The ability to forecast is often taken as the ultimate justification/proof of coherence within a body of knowledge. Mechanical Physics is of course the most beautiful example of a mathematically based Logos of vertical coherence by which we are able not only to describe but also forecast the movements of bodies as they are exposed to forces.

Forward integration is thus the way engineers, designers, therapists and managers work: Identification and integration of bits and pieces planned to act together in order to construct hydro-electric plants, well-organized office buildings or mutually helpful teams.

Facts as multi-purpose building blocks

As a final note we may remind ourselves how often the same facts as data can be used as "building blocks" to compose different wholes, as illustrated in principle by Figure 2.4 #1, as well as by an example Figure 2.4 #1,1

Figure 2.4 #1: THE CHALLENGE OF OVERLAPPING EVIDENCE

"OUR" INTEGRATED PICTURES OF REALITY,
be they culturally shared or private,
but articulated (explicit)

"Intellectual" awarenes filter

induction 1

induction 2

SENSED
(OBSERVED) REALITY
Layer of partially experienced
signs of the manifest

Attention filter

MANIFEST REALITY
Layer of observable events,
whether noticed or not
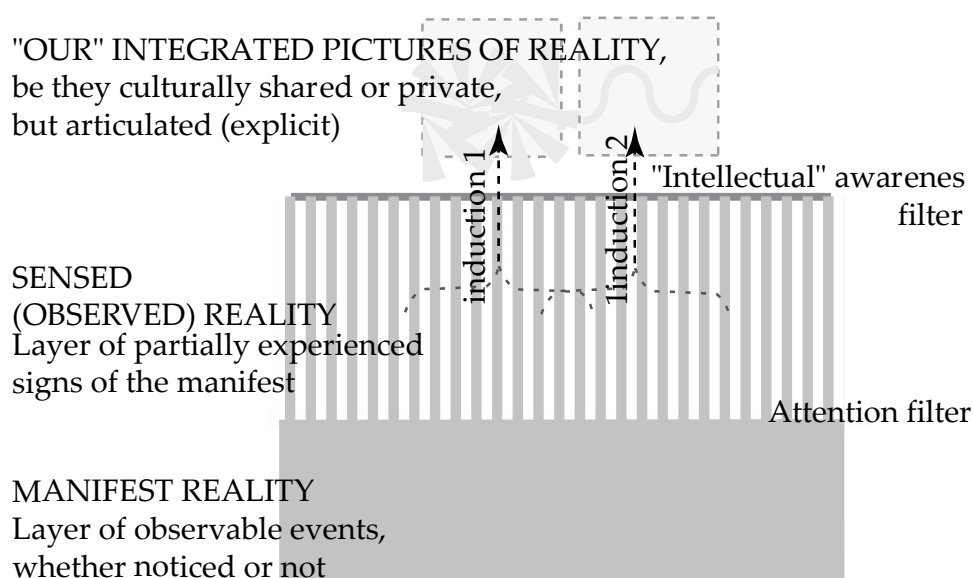
Amongst the facts we could observe, some are brought to our attention. Of these some are selected or, as we might say, slip trough our "intellectual awareness filter" to be combined in different configurations of inductions as illustrated as illustrated by the next figure 2.4 #1.1

Figure 2.4 #1.1: THE SAME FACTS MAY BE USED

AS BUILDING BLOCKS IN DIFFERENT CLASSIFICATIONS

STRESS

Withdrawal + Aggression
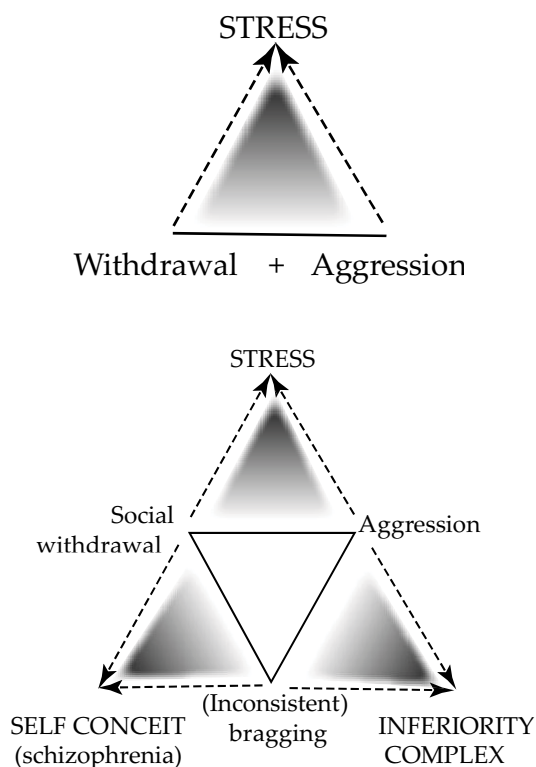
Two often-quoted signs of the internal state called stress are Aggression and Social Withdrawal.

I do not claim these two indicators are sufficient for the conclusion, sure there are other indicators for stress. I only claim that the presence of aggressive attitudes and social withdrawal may indicate stress.

STRESS

Social
withdrawal

Aggression

(Inconsistent)
bragging

SELF CONCEIT
(schizophrenia)

INFERIORITY
COMPLEX

Yet, aggression and social withdrawal may also each be building blocks in other conjectures about our internal realities. Aggression, alongside with inconsistent bragging, may indicate the presence of an inferiority complex. Next social withdrawal in combination with inconsistent bragging could indicate self-conceit, perhaps even schizophrenia.

These conjectures are of course gross simplifications. Certainly, we need more indicators in order to make the classifications hinted at. I just want to illustrate how the same single fact can be a building block for several aggregate combinations, as indicated by the dotted arrows

---

Adherents to the Darwinist Evolution Theory take the skeletons of dinosaurs as evidence for their point of view: "Dinosaurs vanished as they could not endure a change of climate". Yet, creationists use the same data to state that: "Some animals were to big to be included in the Ark of Noah. So they drowned".

Apparently single facts cannot prove a theory, although they may very well convince some of us.

Figure 2.4 #2 below shows how the building block theme adds clarity to a structure of coherence.

Figure 2.4 #2 INNER COHERENCE ILLUSTRATED BY A TREE STRUCTURE OF MEANS AND GOALS
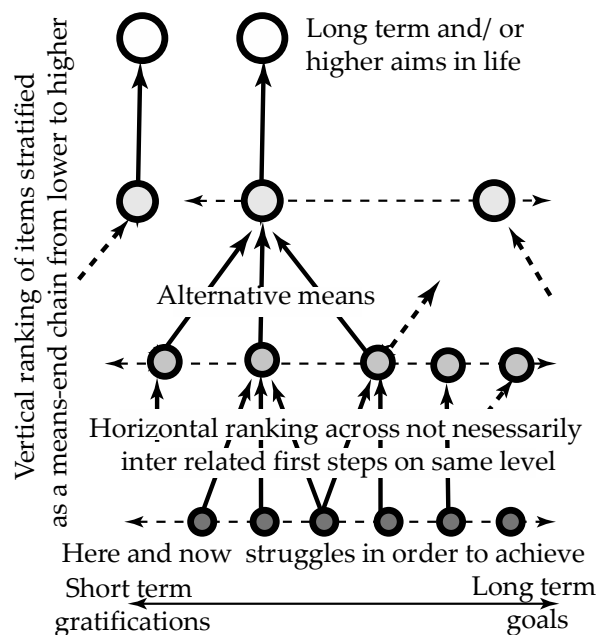
Some of our desires may be ranked horizontally, say, evaluate whether to spend our last $10 in an amusement park, or keep the last $10 in the pocket in order to buy a textbook later.

Or we may have to weigh an immediate short-term gratification horizontally towards something we need to do if we want to achieve a long-term – often classified as higher – desire. E.g. fast in order to experiment with and solidify one's "free will".

This potential to abstain from instant gratification in order to forgo later nuisance and/or obtain long terms goals, is what Freud referred to as his reality principle.

Just as the same aim may be achieved through several means; – so may the same mean – as indicated by the dotted arrow – serve more than one aim.

Coherence is "always" possible

As is the case for correspondence, there is a lot of ways through which you, knowingly or not, may achieve apparent coherence between statements, as illustrated in the opening paragraph of the essay. And first of all:

- Just because you have identified an antecedent condition for a phenomena to occur does not mean you have identified *the* cause. What you found just may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition.

To some – idealists in particular – the "drive" to establish some kind of coherence is all-important. This may even lead them to insist that all we know of is within our consciousness: "The distinguishing characteristic of reality cannot be in correspondence with things but coherence amongst representations".[93] Yet others – realists in particular – insist we do have to search for evidence outside the realm of languages.

As a curious afterthought we may finally remind ourselves of *Gödel's* second incompleteness theorem, ref Figure 2.4 #3.

Figure 2.4 #3 GÖDEL'S SECOND INCOMPLETENESS THEOREM

In pedestrian terms Gödel's second incompleteness theorem runs like this:

We are not able to prove an axiomatic system to be free of contradictions by its own methods.

Take the sentence, S_1: "This sentence is untrue". If true, S must be false. If false, true.

Or S_2: The general rule number 1 of qualitative research is: There is no general rules.

Or S_3, which I believe was the first known self-referring statement, given us by Epemenides, a Cretan himself, who said "All Cretans are liars"[94].

Bertrand Russell tried to get around the issue by banning self-referring sentences. A class of all items cannot be considered itself to be an item. This may – if we exaggerate[95] the statement – have dire consequences, as it would make a claim like: "I am" as questionable as "I am not" which indeed would be meaningless. Self-referring sentences do express[96] something

---

Thus, however coherent and formal, a theoretical structure is, coherence cannot compensate for slim or unsubstantiated evidence. Theories do have to be coherent, but coherence is not enough to ensure forward integration. Furthermore, as already alluded to, language is a unity in the sense that all words refer to and may be defined by others. Thus the call for meaning in general and coherence in particular is as comprehensible, necessary and demanding as it may be poisonous. The latter occurs if the fear of being inconsistent tempts us – consciously or not – to resort to rhetorical tricks as a defence against contradictory evidence or view-points.[97]

Glaring inconsistencies in
contemporary social research and the call for coherence as a challenge

If one of the roles of theory is to create coherence, a lot remains to be done. The body of social thought contains numerous examples of inconsistencies.

Let me just mention one: During the nineties, options to top management became a favourite medicine for exponents of "share-value" thinking in order to boost company performance in terms of return on investment. Yet, any western student of organizational behaviour has been told about a) "Maslow's pyramid" – claiming that when your basic needs have been met, more social and personal needs become important and b) the thinking of McGregor and Hertzberg – claiming that the challenges and the content of the job are more important than salary. Should this be true, it would be unnecessary to give options to those with the most challenging and meaningful jobs – top management. And should it in fact be efficient, the curricula on motivation within business schools ought to add some further distinctions in their training of students.

When tenets are different and the selection of data fields is based upon theorampling further empirical research has to supplement the theoretical work. This may then lead us to discover new dimensions and sharpen our sense of circumstantial conditionals.

Perhaps many of the flagrant theoretical discrepancies in social research, may due to the adherents of different schools do not read each other's texts, nor wonder about how the differences between each of their basic tenets did occur.

Coherence – a necessary but not a sufficient condition for truth

To sum up, coherence, like correspondence, is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for truth. However elaborate the formal structure of a set of theories might be, this in itself is no guarantee of anything but at best formal unity.

We need more than ever to distinguish
between how we talk and what we talk about

2.5   Correspondence versus coherence and vice versa

Adherents of correspondence or coherence have each over-expanded either position and claimed it to be the most essential. Some, and operationalists in particular, give priority to correspondence: qualities like red, empathy, institutional life and love are defined and thus acquire meaning solely by the means by which we measure them.[97]

While others carried their claim for coherence as the essential yardstick for truth to extremes, e.g. Hegel's famous dictum: "What is rational is real and what is real is rational".[98] Conservatives thought this meant that the ideas about the natural had to conform to present practices, while radicals, e.g. Marxists, took it to mean that theory – theirs, naturally – is true. Realities just had to adjust to the ideal. Yet, the world is neither logical nor chaotic. The world just *is*.

Nor does something necessarily exist in any other sense than as words in the English language, because you and I can talk intelligibly about values or "angels". One implicit lesson from our discussion of "free will" is that language apparently has an inner coherence of its own which may let us talk without knowing what we talk about.[99] Thus to be able to speak may at times be a question of the right use of words among peers rather than a search for correspondence. What is said to us has to have an internal logic that we recognize in order for us to grasp it.

On the other hand, correspondence is needed as a corrective to the often all too smooth self-propelling associations language allows us to make. Beliefs have better be justified by something other than relations to other beliefs. As coherence in itself is no guarantee of truth, conclusions derived from within language have to be put to a reality test.

Apparently, it is pointless to claim either correspondence or coherence to be *the* supreme principle of "scientific truth". Correspondence and coherence implicitly presuppose the other:

- o Correspondence is necessary to ensure realism and thus needed for practical reasons.
- o Coherence is necessary for constructive if not sheer persuasive reasons – be it logical, rhetoric, but primarily – as we see it – needed to ensure commitment to search for wholeness.
- o Yet, dependent as both principles are on language and customary ways of imagination, neither is sufficient. They have to be seen as supplementary.

Taking coherence as your departure point you set up a design to challenge a theory, you need just to identify one fact that does fit with an otherwise persuasively presented theory. For instance that offering stock options to top management seems right away to be a good idea for the shareholders, – despite what human psychologists like Maslow claimed. And please notice that any such identified discrepancy presumably challenges not only one tenet, but a coherent complex of statements.[100]

Otherwise, you may start with a set of empirical findings that – if not systemized – at best may be formulated as practical knowledge, e.g. "when swallows fly low, it will soon be rain". This may very well remain empirically true, however with out further ado the rule is just like an omen. To be explainable, observations have to be integrated into a coherent whole, which – in this case – combines meteorology, the lightness of insects, updraft of air when the ground heats up, etc.

However true, this does not mean that coherence and correspondence always go together. There are myriads of relations – between man and woman e.g. – which cannot be talked about because they have neither a name nor a place within our languages – just as a lot of the occurrences within our body, known as feelings, do not have names. Yet this does not mean that they do not exist, they are just not publicly recognizable – yet!

From correspondence and models of behavior to the call for coherence
"Cut-through pictures" of engines or plants might tempt us to believe that models of psychological and social behaviour likewise have a structural likeness with reality. This is certainly not the case. The "super ego-ego-id" structure of psychoanalysis has no physical location in the human body, nor do the similar concepts of transactional analysis: parent-ego-child[101]. They do not exist as anything else than, indeed, very practical interpretative schemes.

What we do have, is readings of the events, we identify as we notice them. Further, if we assume nothing occurs out of the blue, we are led to search for the process that may have generated them. Our drive to explain may tempt, yes even drive us to create images of the hidden. Thus, our ideas of the generating processes may be dim and stretc.h from.

A: the old anthropomorphist idea that "our" outer world could be governed by some or one "mighty powerful human" in the shape of God,[102] to inherent causality structures in life as proposed by Darwin or within societies as the later-day functionalists, i.e. Marxists, believe, too.

B: that the social world is not in principle governed by hidden structures. Relations between people and institution just change as they interchange. How this occurs in its totality is not in principle hidden, just impossible to trace and thus in practice hidden.

C: Or one might take a closer look at our epistemological awareness and bet on that it is subject to innate forces which structurally remain hidden from us while the consequences of their presence are traceable – as proposed by the sketc.h for a genetic epistemology of Piaget,[103] the psycho-social development model by Erik Erikson[104] or Chomsky's idea of innate schemata for structuring experience.[105, 106]

D: A fourth position, though, may state that it is exactly such conceptual images – if accepted – that shape our perceptions of the real in all its diversity. We may even let ourselves be seduced into adhering to the naïve assumption that just because something has been given a name, then "this something" must have some sort of existence outside language. And, indeed, they might be grounded in a relation to a by-gone reality, now hidden or even forgotten under layers of additional texts as referred to by Figure 2.3 #3, page 44. As long as we let such words determine what we look for and even imagine what to be, we will be engulfed by inexhaustible sources of confusion.

But confusion are bound to occur again and again due to *hypostazation*[107] of terms like "I" as if "I" am anything beyond a corporal body of inner and outward movements,

These grand-level visions, which I believe all contain a kernel of truth, at least share one facet: an implicit distinction between the manifest and what is due to be, be it natural, historical, innate or accidental "forces", as illustrated in Figure 2.5 #1.

Figure 2.5 #1: DIFFERENT LEVELS OF "REALITY"
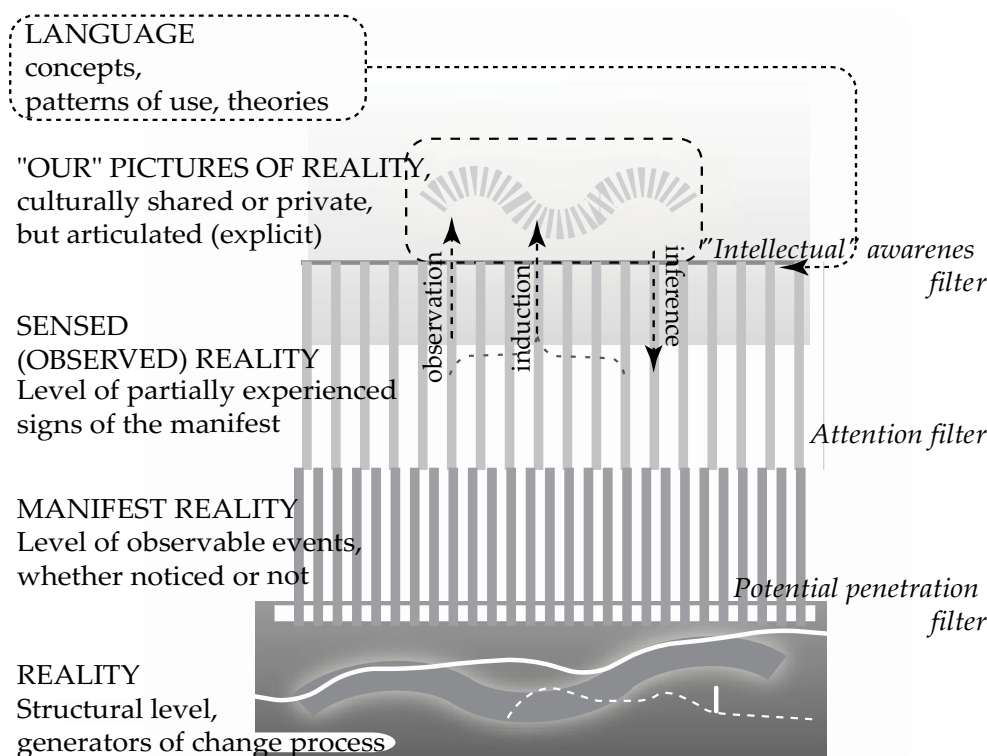
Our conceptions of the world are partly derived from our receptivity, the language we have learned to apply, our emotions and the pressure of the outside world on our senses, all enforced by inference.

We are embedded in several layers of reality. One of the most superficial, although the one we know best, is that of the apparent reality of what we notice, and of which we have words and images.

What we do not notice, though, is but a small part of what is noticeable in principle. There is far more to sense and "take in" from the manifest domain than we are alerted to.

Far the greater part of what is happening within and around us – be it the functions of our organs, our emotional scars or the decision-making of the upper offices – is either hidden from us or just pass us by without being consciously noticed. But we either know of or imagine the presence of some encompassing, underlying or deeper realms living within or around us.

Metaphorically, it is as if there are filters between the different levels, of which the "upper" is more easy to widen or close, – while the potential penetration filter at "lower" level is far more impassable in so far as most of us cannot directly sense the presence of our kidneys.

Our fifth lesson of truth

So we reach the *fifth lesson of truth*:

> *Correspondence and coherence are both relevant for a search for reliable knowledge.*
> *They not only presuppose each other, but both are needed as*
> *a necessary corrective of any application of the other.*
> *They are thus complementary*

So, we apparently need something more. However, before we continue this search we must take a cynical look at the social aspects not of what is true, but what we may let pass for being true:

THE MORE CYNICAL CONCEPTIONS OF "TRUTH"

"…the truth shall set you free"
St John, New Testament, 8.32
Might is right
English proverb, early 14th century

2.6 Socially related criteria of truth derived from human behaviour

We have just touched upon the two primarily epistemological criteria of truth, correspondence and coherence, and their methodological implications. I have the greatest respect for both approaches. Yet, there are often glaring inconsistencies between what researchers say they aim at, and what they actually do. The respect paid to correspondence and coherence may even serve as a cover-up for what is actually done. And if caught red-handed, we are all too ready to excuse ourselves with the mantra: Social research has – as everything else social – a political dimension.

"…men believe their reason governs words. Yet, in fact
words turn back and reflect their power upon the understanding…"
Francis Bacon [108]
Power defines what counts as knowledge and rationality
and ultimately what counts as reality
Bent Flyvbjerg[109]

Personal, inter-subjective, elitist and semantic notions about truth

So far truth is recognized as a valuable social asset, we must expect some to cheat in order to appear as if they uphold it, while others – the suspicious[110] – will be on the alert to show the world how others fake it.

Yet the struggle for recognition as a guardian of truth is more than a question of persuading others. It should be seen as a caution to us not to search for evidence for what we want to believe, but to be on the lookout for what might enrich us. Yet the temptation to defend an all ready taken position may at times get the upper hand.

Fundamental beliefs work on several levels:

- We are bound by the way we sense: "All our perceptions – both of our sense and our minds – are reflections of man, not of the universe. The human understanding is like an uneven mirror that cannot reflect truly the rays from objects, but distorts and corrupts the nature by mingling its own nature with it", as Francis Bacon wrote.[111]
- Our own enclosure: our personal world of emotional scars, vanities, aspirations and sense of social realities we have to recognize, be it authorities or people we admire or hate.[112]
- The social: the structures of language for exchange of commodities, favours, including gifts, definitions, including conceptions of what we or other people need and are able to name.[113]
- Cultural systems: transference of systems of thought and speculation.[114]

It is fair enough to say that anyone – on the personal level – is entitled to his own opinions for whatever reasons. But, certainly, in twilight mutual confirmation is an added comfort. So people – not least researchers – gather as peers in groups for shared support in order i.e. to convey their message through the creation of professional societies, magazines, textbooks, and not least to ensure positions within academia from which they, with the power achieved, try to exercise the control they want. Newcomers to the field thus have to acquiesce themselves to that particular conceptual framework and its supporting ideology in order to pass exams.

Within this frame, truth is no longer an epistemological issue but a plus word for bolstering a certain set of beliefs, exercise power and promulgating a tradition. This behavioural-based notion of truth is often called the *inter-subjectivist* position:

- Truth is what a group – or even better en elitist group of researchers which between themselves either take for granted or with humble boastfulness claim to be *justified true beliefs*. Or as social constructivists may state it: Truth is what we share by talking the same language, believing the words we use mean the same to us.

In cases where political awareness is needed, the elite may even maintain

- *double standards* of truth – one for us – the enlightened ones – and one for the population at large. E.g. conflict sociologists maintain that they themselves – as university researchers – are truthful, while other managers, particular those in industry, cannot be. Just like managers may distinguish between, what they have to know and what the employees just need to know.

Likewise, with a slightly different twist, "truth" has been defined as an *ideology*:

- What those in power set as a standard for others to follow in order to keep their own positions intact, as e.g. reflected in systems of thought that at a glance may appear to be "just objective", e.g. curriculum, examinations, systems for ranking of universities, etc. "Truth is a thing of this world", as Foucault states, it is produced only in virtue of multiple forms of constraint.[115]

When several power groups are involved, truth may thus be due to *negotiation*:

- What is seen fit appears as facts and thus what is judged fit to print may be subject to *negotiation,* e.g.:
  o between a case researcher – representing academia – and a manager from the organization where she has done her fieldwork – as was the case for the infamous Hawthorn studies,[116]
  o or the editor of a printing house may ask the author to present her findings in a specific way, as e.g. the printing house associated with Cornell University was kind enough to consider printing my book, "The Employee Owner", but asked me to withdraw the more personal stuff such as accounts of my emotional reactions during fieldwork.[117]

- Some even claim that industrial *funding* may influence research.
  - o A study published on Medical Research showed that "for whatever reason" the reports of otherwise independent investigators are more favourable regarding the effects of the drugs examined, when the work is funded by the company producing them.[118]

Yet, whatever is said, it is still up to the audience at large to define who is going to be regarded as outstanding scientists like Darwin. Thus, we also have to consider the *role of the audience*.

- Some authors are just great for a certain period, because they state something a select audience loves to hear as, e.g., when Mead in her time was taken in by liberals, as her study on the people of Samoa was a great argument in favour of the role of education rather than heredity in shaping man's behaviour.[119]
- For an overview of these positions please refer to Figure 2.6 #1

Figure 2.6 #1: CRITERIA FOR TRUTHS GROUNDED IN THE SOCIAL DOMAIN
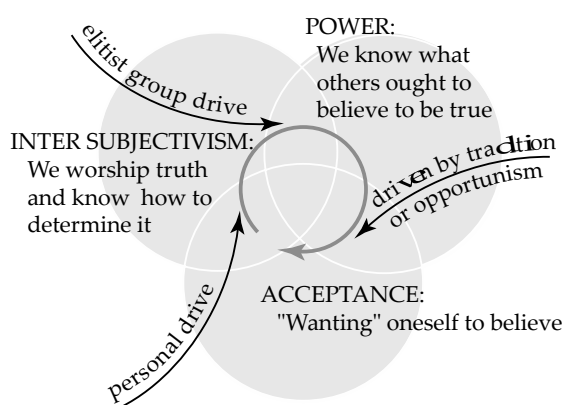
Albeit we might distinguish theoretically between fundamental beliefs by origin: private idiosyncrasies group thinking or culturally grounded – they are certainly interrelated. Most of – if not all – our personal ideas are chosen from the cultural repertoire.

Next, private or not, it is at least a comfort that others have or do share somewhat similar ideas. Ideas we thirdly, may want to present to a bigger audience. To know is nice, but it is even nicer to have the way one thinks approved by others.

- Thus, some – social constructivists in particular – claim that "truth" is not necessarily merely a matter of power. It is *institutionalized* as rules each school of social research promotes. Just like chess, boxing or the grammar of a language they each have their own rules for what should and can be considered as valid and thus granted to be potentially acceptable.

This cynical or even playful and "judged by appearance" view of "truth as a game" seems to have a lot going for it. Each science has its key concepts, focuses and thus standards for how its adherents are supposed to think. I am sure some may even take the validity schemes to be presented later in this essay as an example. Yet, to accept it would be a betrayal of any search for completeness as is the claim for conventional "truth":

Conventional "truth"

Say, I claim for "true", that WWII *began* 1939. Which would be an indeed debatable, if not outright false statement!

WWII was the outcome of a long series of earlier events and – if a date has to be chosen – I will say it began at the so called "negotiation table" after WWI, where Germany had to accept an – in terms of self-determination – unfair dictate.

To say that: WWII *broke out* the first of September 1939 seems closer to the truth, as this was the year 60 divisions of German tanks crossed the Polish border and France and UK declared her war. The war was now a fact according to the conventions that defines it.

Conventional truth is related primary what to an established scheme of thinking is a customary use of terms and thus only secondly by implication – on fact.

Truth as a search for completeness

Some people claim that truth will prevail in the long run. Thus, it may be useful to make a final distinction between what may *pass as true* for the moment and what will stick in the long run.

Truths for the natural and certainly for the social sciences may have their time. At any time different groups have vested interests in each their own established truth. Thus, it is an "uphill struggle" for every new perspective to establish itself. Thus Kuhn,[120] for one, was fond of quoting the rather bitter remark by the physicist Max Planck: "A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but because the opponents eventually die".[121] So new views may in time, if backed with evidence, be integrated alongside with former views.

Yet, social researchers do not – like the natural scientists – continuously integrate and absorb new insights into the past. A young physicist will hardly ever lay his hand on an original text by Maxwell. This is not the case within social research! Aristotle is still read, as deserve Durkheim, Weber and Merton to be. Social truths may change, yet the debate goes on whether they should or not, a subject we will return to as we open § 5. Some die only to re-emerge at a later stage.[122]

As an example, let me mention Darwin's work on the expression of the emotions in man and animals[123]. This text has been ignored for more than hundred years. However, I am sure it will soon be read again with care.

Thus one might wonder what place, if any, the idea of scientific progression – which is so dear to Natural Science – has within Social Research.

> **Science is not just a cluster of material and cognitive practises**
> **but a moral achievement as well…and…**
> **the moral order lies in the practice of science itself**
>
> Rom Harré[124]

Truth as virtue?

In passing it may be worth to recall how Socrates in opposition to the somewhat rethoric claims of the Sophists formulated truth as a virtue[125] one could posses. Yet to day truth is often just turned into just a power question. A degeneration, which I am afraid also relates back to the Medieval Church, with its insistence on monopolizing the truth and banning curiosity as a vice alongside with carnal pleasure and pride. And how often have we not heard a supposedly wiser person tell a child[126] or even a student: "That is not a subject worth pursuing".

The rhetorical approach to truth

Finally, let me briefly recall, ref § 2.2, page 35, the *redundancy theory of truth,* which draws our attention to the fact that stating: "It is true that aRb"[127] is no different than just stating "aRb". Nothing is added in terms of what is claimed to be. We will later in § 4.14, page 167 return and deal with this view in more detail. So let us return to the more scientific conceptions of truth.

2.7   Pragmatism as an antidote to our eagerness to explain

Of the two principles, search for correspondence and coherence, the latter is by far the most likely to foster bias: Confronted with deficient traits in their lines of thought, social scientists – as if they were guardians of a certain truth – may draw themselves into defensive reactions rather than opening themselves to any disturbing perspectives that others may have to offer. Thus we should continuously keep in mind:

o   Just because some data, {D}, support a theory, T, it may lead us into error if we extend T to cover all {D}s. The fact, that managers may be observed to make rational decisions does not entail all their decisions to be so – as supposed by economical model makers.[128]

o   As soon as a social theory has established itself, the academics supporting it may, by implication, induce the next generation of researchers to take this approach for granted and the only one worthy of further exploration. Thus a given perspective chosen determines the real. The interpretation of the real may even become so firmly honoured that methodology – the ways of identifying the determining concepts – becomes undisputed.

o   At last – as the semi-automatic refusal of others may give rise to some anxiety – the desire to present oneself as an expert may become more important than searching for exceptions and/ or in-depth explorations.

Post-fact "explanation"

In order to show your ability to "explain" something, it is safest to start from the outcome and then establish the reasons that might have caused it. A trick that Aristotle put to good use: Bodies do fall to the ground because it is their nature. And, of course, we have political experts who – after an election – have all the right explanations at hand to make it clear why the rest of us dumb heads voted the way we did.

Obviously, the human mind seems all too quick to make sense of occurrences by drumming up "explanations". After-fact explanations may – as any other type of rhetoric – convince some. But it does not suffice. It is nice that a treatment works, but why is quite another matter. Not all are satisfied with just words. "Why" calls for an exploratory approach that digs below the obvious:

How does a diligent case researcher decide how good a manager x is? Well, you might listen to how she sees her role or what her underlings have to say about her goals. Yet, it may be safer to look at her achievements and not just her intentions. Consequently, evaluation has to depend on a clarification of opus operandi, a "before" as well as an "after-fact" analysis of facts.

Pragmatism

The rhetoric of "post fact explanation" has led some people to claim that the proof of "real science" ought to be the ability to forecast what will happen to A under a given set of circumstances, C_1, C_2,…, C_n.[129] If so, we should expect any genuine organizational consultant – like a doctor – to be able to

- identify the situation of a failing company, including the type of market, technology, amount of financial resources, type of organizational culture and the personalities of the people involved, and thus
- recommend a treatment based upon the ability to foresee the result of different alternative treatments, be it a
    o Top-Down approach as a Business Re-engineering Expert or a
    o Bottom-Up approach by a consultant, or an
    o Actions Research initiative based on participation and/or activism.

Thus *the pragmatic stand*: The ability to forecast is the only true sign of knowing that is not just rhetoric. So, correspondence and coherence matter but *competence* to act even more so.

The real has no logic, it just is. We cannot expect any language to be able to catch the real in all its diversity. Yet, without retraceable references to the real and a coherent language, we would not be able to ponder on consequence and discuss what might be. Competence may be for the gifted ones, yet without a sense for correspondence and coherence, prediction would be virtually impossible. It is a trinity; see Figure 2.7 #1:

Of course we fail to foresee. Pipes do break, but plumbers do succeed in recommending practical cures. And so do hospital doctors, therapists and organizational advisers. They may even outline when one cure rather than another should be followed, because the interwoven collections of theories that they rely on are conditioned by an overall sense for minutely discerning sets of opus operandi.

Figure 2.7 #1: TRINITY OF CORRESPONDENCE, COHERENCE & PREDICTION
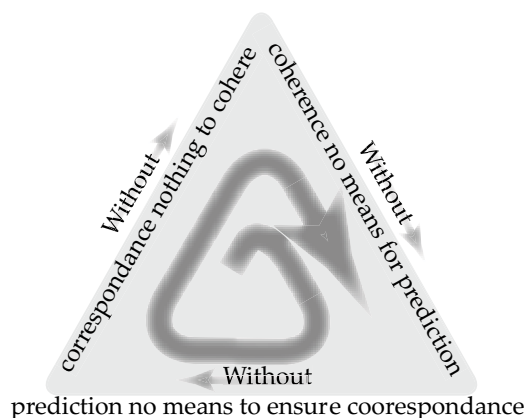
One of the claims of the realist ethos for social research is to combine

  o Vigilant observation assumed to some way correspond to a reality beyond language with
  o a search for consistent patterns, that may later be checked against additional research and most likely will be enriched as later to be shown in figure 2.12.

Thus, it is the practical implications of a given intertwined set of correspondence and coherence rules that for the time being is the best guarantee of their validity – provided we pay the outmost attention to opus operandi.

The meaning of concepts may (but ought not just) be derived from a coherent system of texts. They may also – according to the criteria of correspondence – be established from outside in terms of recognizable consequences for what may happen to us or others if and when we let them guide us to action.[130]

THE PRIMARY VALIDITY SCHEME

2.8 Validity claims

It is easy to observe how others just give themselves away to glib after–the-fact inventiveness, however well intended or conceited they may be. Thus we all for our own sake have to be concerned with the validity. It is a question of being trustworthy and move beyond our inner mere emotional based convictions. Thus, the call for "validity rules" to be imposed on everybody in order to reduce bias, defined as an emotional inclination to accept or reject views for personal reasons.

- *Validity.* In accordance with a set standard for measurement and/or methodological approach. Being correct is here the mantra.
- Or with a little different twist:
- *Reliability.* Professionally established security that it is safe for anyone to base one's own work on a given claim, because anyone following the same procedure should arrive at the same conclusions.[131]

Concern for validity enters any stage of social research, thus several sets of criteria have been suggested. Although they differ in depth and scope across different scientific domains, they nevertheless all have to deal with issues relating to

- o what you intend to establish as your basic facts, what some call data;
- o how you identify these, be it by sense of awareness (gefühl), direct observation, measurement, etc.;
- o how you draw them together to a synthesis,[132] e.g. logically, statistically or by pattern identification, etc.;
- o whether you can transfer any synthesis achieved in one domain to other domains of reality and if so, how, (generalization).

Please refer to Figure 2.8 #1 for an overview, which we will use as the basic reference.

Figure 2.8 #1: THE BASIC SCHEME FOR VALIDITY OF EMPIRICALLY BASED RESEARCH

STAGES IN RESEARCH	ORIENTATION related to	
	THEORETICAL DOMAIN	OTHER DOMAINS
CREATING DISCRETE IMPRESSIONS OF WHAT IS	#1,1 *Identification of what:* Deciding what is going to be considered as fact	#1,2 *Generation of facts:* Detection and consolidation of facts
SYNTHESIZING, SEARCHING FOR WHOLES AND/OR CREATING MEANING	#2.1 *Compilation of facts:* (crystallization): Creating logical or semantic patterns between ensembles of fact	#2.2 *Application of results:* Extending or relating results to other areas, be it theories, perspectives and/or practices

Please note that

a. definitions and compilations are confined as a domain *within* the theoretical universe of a science.
b. facts, even they by appearance refer to an *outside* reality, also reflects what a certain school of thought defines as worth to look for.
c. compilation, as defined above, implicitly states that what you come to weave together as patterns depends on what you did identify as facts as well as on the theories and integration rules you apply.

Coherence may be established in many ways, for natural sciences ultimately in the form of what some call casual chains. Yet in our case it must also include *interpretative* studies that "demonstrate how acts and events can be read as signs that indicate the existence of something more important for those who can see them beyond their sheer occurrence," aiming to make the world intelligible to us.

Some researches feel the call for validity as a harness that prevents a more free expression of thought. This is not the way I see it. Quite the contrary! The call for validity is rather to be seen as a means to help us to expose our own one-sidedness and thus guide us to more encompassing pictures of prevailing as well as potential realities.

But we have to recognize that different branches of the social sciences give each their own names to the different criteria and stress some at the expense of others.

Historians invest great effort in #1.1 under the name of *Source Critique* and in #2.1 as Inter-Subjective Control amongst peers, whereas #2.2 may be considered irrelevant for studies, which are believed never to reoccur – the *ideographic* claim.[133]

Economists, on the other hand, despite they so heavily lean on statistics collected by others, hardly ever bother to estimate the accuracy of the numbers they use,# 1.2, as for instance engineers have to do. Instead they devote a lot of ingenuity to developing compilation schemes, #2.1.

Experimental researchers are probably amongst those who are most committed to adopting at least the first three. Their problem, though, is whether the results of laboratory studies can be transferred to real-life situations, # 2.2. Should we really believe the results of experiments with a small band of strangers, using different problem-solving techniques, can be transferred to companies where people have known each other for a long time?

After a more thorough look at generalization strategies, we will in the following chapters show how the schemes change with different kinds of research.

Truth and validity
Validity criteria have to build, in one way or another, on the criteria of truth already referred to. And they do, as shown in Figure 2.8 #2.

Figure 2.8 #2: VALIDITY SCHEME RELATED TO PREVALENT NOTIONS OF TRUTH

STAGES In research	ORIENTATION	
	THEORETICAL	RELATED TO OTHER DOMAINS
DISCRETE IMPRESSIONS OF WHAT IS	1.1 *Identification of what* PERSONAL DECISION TO BELIEVE "WHAT" IS[134]	1.2 *Generation of facts* CORRESPONDENCE Creating evidence
SYNTHESIZING, SEARCHING FOR WHOLES AND/OR CREATING MEANING	1.2 *Compilation of facts* COHERENCE Creating some form of internal logic	2.2 *Application of results* PRAGMATICS Transfer of results to and check with outcomes elsewhere

Figure 2.8 #2 sums up the chapter. Yet, we may have to elaborate just a little on 1.1:[134]

To state, what matters is ideally up to the researcher, – an existentialist choice. Prevalent theory will of course serve as a guide and perhaps for some even be a sufficient reason in itself. If so, one should consider whether one wants to be a technician or a researcher? If you commit yourself to a theory just because it is, e.g., socially convenient, this will be your way of telling others who you are.

As we have seen, truth is as much a question of reference as a question of how people reason about what they see happening around and within themselves. Thus we have to consider what people aim at by attempting to explain, interpret or understand.

> **The call towards truth is all right!**
> **But what about the sheer joy lying and self-delusion may give us?**

Truth! Why a problem and of what kind?
Finally, we may ask ourselves why "we" in general are so occupied with truth.

Could it be that the real problem is that people cheat?[135] – That we, as researchers cut corners? That we over-expand our generalizations and forgo facts that could challenge the theories we are known to purport?

Pragmatically, lying may of course have its own immediate rewards, as long as you do not see yourself caught in the act. Yet, the cost of deception is also one of self-betrayal! Working to uncover one's own personal and professional biases is, I ensure you, personally distressing here and now. Yet in the end more profitable, than bolster your claims with layers of protection. Ultimately it is liberating.

So what ever the defensive nonsense people resort to in order to cover up for their blind spots and justify their way of thinking, we should always expect a kernel of productive guidance to be buried somewhere in the rubble of arguments![136]

And so far empirical outcomes are generalized and used by others, they better be reliable. A challenge we now have to turn.

THE QUEST FOR GENERALIZATION

2.9   The quest for generalized statements

We have heard it often enough: Within the social domain one cannot generalize. Say you state, "I am stupid". OK, I may confirm it by denying it vehemently, or I may disconfirm it smilingly with gleaming eyes of appreciation as "I" look towards, what you may say next. So the "world" changes according to how we react.

Yet, whatever the philosophical intricacies, we do build our life on generalizations, – be it by personal intuition, personal experience or common sense notions. We manage by principles, rules of thumb, as well as we resort to proverbs[137] in order to make sense. And so for social research, where generalizations occur within in at least six different positions:

- *Denial* of the very idea that generalizations are possible, as stated by many historians, although not univocally[138].
- Generalization by *induction*, based on first-hand self-made observations of realities. In "general" just 6 repeated incidents are enough for us to condense them into an everyday rule.
- Generalization from *statistical* analysis based on sampling, either
    - o co-variance between accumulated sets, as exemplified by thousands of surveys – a principally bottom-up inspired approach; or
    - o statistical modelling on the basis of theoretical pre-conceived models, an explicit, top-down-inspired approach
- Generalization by a *constructive integration* of theories, say working out a scenario of expected findings.
- Generalization by *logical* argument based on
    - o comparing the reactions of groups, one is exposed to an induced influence, the other one is not – the classical experiment more or less convoluted arguments or converted deductions based on Theory of Sets and/or syllogisms

And on top of it all:

- *Analytical* generalization: Extension of interwoven statements of observations/facts, theories and interpretations to a greater domain than the one observed. A combinatory, integrated approach that builds on tentative imagination, continuous test of preconceived theory, respect for and closeness to what has been noticed as empirical facts.

And beyond that

- Dialectical reasoning, an issue outside our concern here.[139]

Reference to circumstance, opus operandi, is integrated in each of these schemes for generalizations in different ways:

- Induction is based on what has noticed as observations drawn from a supposedly fixed, specifically out lined universe.
- S*tatistical generalizations* based on samples from a greater population. Advocates for this approach do know that lower level circumstances do matter. Yet they feel they are better ignored as a principle. They assume, that the multitude of minute range variations will neutralize each other as they are lumped together in one up level sweeping "add it all together" calculation. Thus, regard for opus operandi is generally reduced to an error factor, generally named as ε.
- *For Experimental groups*, opus operandi is not only ignored, but assumed to be irrelevant as the people involved are expected to be of the same kind and like any other persons with the characteristics identified by "us". The results from social experiments are thus supposed to carry the same claim for universality as a report of what happens when a sphere of 10 grams of pure iron is dropped into a 200-gram 45% solution of nitrogen acid at 20 degrees Celsius.
- *Deductions*: Opus operandi must be stated. Circumstance is seen as important as the rules for how key terms are transformed to operational scales of measurement.
- *Analytical generalization*: Opus operandi have to be stated as precisely as possible.

Let us take turns with these.

Unique and narrow as a contrast to shared and broad

WWI was the result of a unique situation in which the battle for colonies, the French-German War a generation before, the fight for national independence of the Balkan states – Croatia in particular – and a lot of other factors, including the financial interest of the dominant powers of the day as well as details like the personalities of the rulers of the day. This all came together in a situation that most likely never will occur again. Thus, historian*s* have all the best reasons to refrain from using the outbreak of WWI as a base for formulating a "theory for crisis build-up" that could allow others later to forecast the imminence of new wars.

In all modesty most historians do not consider themselves able to a) state the necessary conditions for a change and b) even if they could, the same condition hardly ever reoccurs. However, historians do rely on the small-level, everyday common-sense generalizations about human behavior in order to make the central acts of their chosen historical figures intelligible to themselves and, in turn, to us.[140]

Thus we have to distinguish between

- "truths" about social life as it unfolds across ages – if any such patterns exist, as for instance claimed by Eisenstadt in his study of what has made empires crumble, grow or prosper[141] and
- "rules" of inference, interpretation and make-believe from the present that we apply in order to make the world intelligible to ourselves and hopefully to others as well.

This leads us to realize a need to *distinguish between generalizations by level*[142]. In principle at least between:

- *Grand level:* sweeping, all-encompassing statements about the social behaviors and hidden realities lurking beneath the obvious.
- *Mid-level*: Statements about the behavior of socially organized bodies of limited magnitude and extension, like firms and distinct social groups of temporary validity.
- *Minute level:* Statements like proverbs, easy-to-use psychological rules of thumb for interpreting the behavior of people we meet or read about.

And while historians, with their sense for the concrete, firmly reject the first possibility, some, like Marx, may create a lot of disturbance by armouring others not only to believe in, but to act out of grand-scale, emotionally tainted imagery. While sociologists within the classical tradition make a living out of creating mid-level generalizations, just as most of us get through everyday life guided by minute level considerations.

2.10   Generalization by enumeration based on sampling

The essence of induction is the dare to believe what has been the case for a limited set of observed coincidences will hold in the future too. It rests on the idea that language – properly applied – can express reality and thus be used as the medium for predicting or even planning for the future, – provided a presentation of the appropriate opus operandi.

So let us now turn to statistical generalizations for which opus operandi has not been or even cannot be stated in operative detail.

Generalizations based on sampling and statistical analysis
Hume taught us that no reason of logic ensures us that the future will be like the past. Never the less, sociologists do generalize – some times even without much in-depth specification of the preconditions, as demonstrated in thousands of surveys.

What concern such sociologists are neither the history of concrete societies nor the individual person, but the behavior of stereotypes. Thus the grand sociologist, Durkheim[143], was interested in whether the modernization/industrialization of western society 100 years ago might escalate the suicide rate, and if so, "who" would be most likely to physically destroy themselves. "Who" being characterized by sociological relevant facts such as sex, age, family background, education, occupation, income, etc.

In such a scheme "I" as a person are of no interest. In short, the multitude of opus operandi are ignored but for a few sociologically defined, relevant features. It would be impossible to adjust for the theoretical myriad of conceivable combinations of embedded situations and personal agonies that could lead some to commit suicide! They are simply countless. But – the argument runs – if you rely on a sufficiently large, properly composed sample, all these individual variations should outbalance each other. The statistical variation around the mean will reveal how well composed the sample was.

Leaving the probability of spurious relationships aside, this has a dire consequence: The more we simplify opus operandi, the less able we will be to predict what may happen in any concrete case. You may thus not be aware of the circumstances under which an identified relationship might break. Nor will you know when the results found may be applicable and to whom. Thus you will be unable to prepare yourself to help. And this situation is not just due to the reasons Hume stated, but to the methodological approach chosen as well!

This lack of realism is the very reason why scientists – in medicine and biology – only use statistics as an indicator of potential relations, not as an argument for cause-effect-relationships. Identification of concrete relations on a more minute level is the only genuine ideal for the sciences. To science, statistics are only, and indeed often, a most useful first step, the next being the detailed, close-up studies of individual cases.

If so, the exclusive use of statistics is an obstacle for social research ever to become a Science.

Searching for truth by plane or in the jungle?
Let us look at a case. Employee ownership based on possession of stock is catching on the US: A total sample of ESOP[144] companies in Ohio[145] amply illustrates that employee-owned companies have a far more sound financial growth, compared to traditionally-owned companies within the same sectors. Now, is it employee ownership alone that makes all the difference? No, it is only part of the story! Employee ownership only prospers in conjunction with employee participation schemes.

Thus, employee ownership is not in itself a sufficient condition for growth, but may be a necessary one, and even more so in the time to come. And so may participation depending on the level of general education of the workforce, the stand of the labour unions and the types of personalities involved, etc. The list of opus operandi may seem overwhelming, yet searching to uncover the contingent issues them would add realism to any issue at stake.

Thus we conclude:
Statistical studies are indeed helpful as

- they may help us achieve a good overview of the general state of affairs at certain times and places.

Yet we need case studies too in order to

- obtain insight into why something works, in order to
- uncover under which conditions, opus operandi, identified statistical correlations may still hold.

Case studies are simply needed to provide circumstantial evidence for the range within which aggregated statistical data from selected samples may be generalized across historical time, degree of technological and social development, etc.

Generalization by logical argument based on
comparison of outcome from alike groups that have been treated differently
Work in a scientific laboratory is done with meticulous control for disturbing side effects of humidity, dust, etc. Likewise, social experiments – done with experimental and control groups respectively – are conducted in ways that exclude the participant from any interference with the outer world as well as undue interference from each other.

Even such experiments are called social, people who know each other has to be excluded. It could unintentionally disturb performance if members – in a working-together-experiment – are able to convey information about his/her own inner reactions to others who know how to interpret their shrugs, certain glances, smiles, etc. The researcher wants to be the only one in control[146]. This is ensured by a random choice selection of participants. Yet in practice, experimenters generally tend to choose young males for their lab studies.[147]

Thus the question arises: How can we allow ourselves to generalize from experiments with people who are unknown to each other to real-life situations? We are hardly ever called to solve problems with a person chosen at random, nor without knowing what interests the other persons around the table might represent.

Sure, you may learn a lot from experimental literature. And I for one certainly did my reading on experiments with participation, before embarking on my first round of field-work in employee owned companies. But the irrelevance of using people unknown to each other in experiments hit me the very first day I stepped in on the floor at my first company, Reuther Mold. A company that just the day before had become partially employee-owned. And what did the workers talk about? Making managers change! Just as management expected workers to.

What could and would happen was intimately linked to the real-life experiences of the individual employees. Their inclination or even inner drive to cooperate depended on what they each had shared with any other in the past, – whether they have joyful memories or had been slighted and thus felt wounded.

2.11   Generalization by a constructive integration of theories

Generalization by convoluted arguments
Apart from the strict logic of experimentation based on comparisons of the outcome of limited sets, logical reasoning is sometimes used in a myriad of convoluted ways as neither the premises nor the operational steps are specified but taken for granted. Let us just look at a sample:

Argument: If Danish economists find it difficult to calculate their income tax, then it must be impossible for most Danes.

This appears to be a generalized statement, but it is really a deduction based on a) an assumption: Economists are best qualified to explicate economic schemes like the complicated Danish tax laws. And b) an alleged fact: Most Danish economists cannot calculate their own tax.[148] And this may very well be the case. We have even had a Minister of Finance who was unable to do his own income tax return! How should the rest of us be able to do it then?

Abstract generalization
Although we here limit ourselves to reflecting on generalizations with an explicit empirical grounding, we should mention that generalizations may indeed be very effective, even without any precise reference.

Let me recall Riesman's 50-year-old idea that people may be either inner or outer-directed,[149] that is, either bound by inner restraint and goal direction, or open to letting themselves be directed by colleagues, friends and/or superiors.

Riesman did not ground this dichotomy in any reference to empirical work of his own. Indeed it just emerges as a very successful condensation of everyday beliefs with slight reference to research concepts developed by others. – And so may many of the everyday generalizations we, too, resort to in everyday conversation.

Now convoluted and abstract generalization has to have their limits. So let us turn to a more thorough partially evidence based integration.

Constructive integration

Figure 1.6 #2, page 28 illustrated how a "new" theory may be developed by combination of others, in that case seemingly be deduction, – a move occasionally called *theoretical generalization*,[150]. It is a theoretical constructive approach which induction as its practical counterpart.

Example: When I returned to Reuther Mold, now an ESOP of one year's standing, one of the informants, *Pam Schegel*, mentioned that she separated her co-employee-owners into three categories: Those who were active, those who waited to see what might happen, and those who more or less "threw grit into the machinery".

This kindled some vaguely conceived ideas of mine. So I combined Pam's comments with my own sense of what I had noticed, as well as with my theoretical awareness of Riesman's concepts (mentioned above) – Festinger's work[151] on complacency (which in turn builds on an event recorded by Bill Whyte[152] in his case study of street-corner societies) – the common notion of the political activist worker, known from Marxist literature and a personal, long-time, emotional annoyance with organizational literature which makes an – as I see it – unbecoming distinction between worker and manager: Organizational literature are apt to characterize managers by a lot of subtle distinctions of "personalities", "styles" or how to fit to the task at hand", while the workers are just lumped together in one overall category.

This led me – still in the field – to classify employee owners as: Technical Activists, Complaisant and Tedious. This ACT classification covers operators and managers alike. Recently established employee-owned companies may even have an over-representation of managers in the "tedious" group, who directly or indirectly try to fend off the activist operators[153] politically.

Whether the ACT classification will stick is another story, which only more extensive cross-comparative fieldwork may eventually confirm, enrich, expand or reject.

ANALYTICAL GENERALIZATION

At last we come to "analytical generalization". A principle by which case researchers – even though they may never thought about it – may take social research in the direction of science. As a humble believer in the fundamental divide between science and social research, you can imagine how amusing this outcome of my reasoning was to me.

Exceptions do not ever prove a rule, quite to the contrary!

2.12   Analytical generalization

The base for analytical generalization is first any kind of theory, be it based on statistical generalization, experiments, constructive integration or even enlightened guesswork. Next the chosen theory has to be applied to cases chosen from within the domain the theory purports to cover. If the ensuing field-work confirm the theory is we will hardly have learned as much as when "reality" shows the presumption to be in-adequate, ref the Blasi case § 1.3. And really, it takes *only one negative* incident to refute a theory[154].

Before we go into further detail let us first let us look at three previously proposed definitions. "Analytical generalization" has been described as "The expansion of a particular set of results to some broader theory"[155] or "An exhaustive examination of cases in order to prove universal, casual generalizations"[156] or "the combination of observations from (a few) individual cases with theory in order to either enrich or partially reject the theory".[157] This may give you an idea of what is at stake. In the present context though we should try to be more precise!

We have just referred to the ACT distinction, which may be valid not just for employee-owned companies, but be a by-product of the increasingly better general education of the workforce, the liberal culture thriving on entrepreneurship, constant industrial reconstructions and a drive for democracy, etc. Yet whether when and where it may stick calls for additional research both within the domain is claims to cover as well neighbouring domains, like private hold firms.

Analytical generalization is thus *a synthesis created by a combination of discrete findings with an on going revision of theories*. So practitioners live by the fact that no claim – and certainly no social assertion – can ever be confirmed in a sense that it could be valid beyond contemporary time and alike places!

More precisely, we may define analytic generalization as a tentative conjoining of

- a theory of what to expect, partially based on previously identified connections which assume could be relevant to the present case (deduction) with
- fresh observations, in order to create new and more comprehensive theoretical wholes (induction)
- presuming that the derived results may very well show that
  o previously expressed theories may have lost validity due to a change in operational conditions or
  o previously identified connections have been too crude and thus have to be differentiated into sub-categories in order to be useful,
  o the way we tried to formulate and integrate what we call our observations with the chosen set of theories may be inadequate, due to lack of concern for opus operandi or sloppy definitions of key concepts

Thus, analytical generalization may very well result in

  o a differentiation of the categories into more distinctive units or additional supplementary categories as a hunt for a better theoretical foundation, now that we have a better sense of the given, which we feel a need to conceptualize. Please refer to Figure 2.12 #1.

Figure 2.12: #1 ANALYTICAL GENERALIZATION

Opportunity for application

THEORETICAL BASE
including
personal experiences and expectations

Reformulation of theoretical base

Maintained theoretical base

CONJECTURE
hypothetical formulation of a theoretical set
of conceptual links
by deduction and/ or imagination and induction

FIELD WORK AND INITIAL ANALYSIS

DEVIANCE
theoretical frame
appears to be inadequate

CONFIRMATION
data and theoretical frame
appears to fit

FINER GRADUATION
of theoretical frame,
by differentiation

EXPLORE
whether
opus operandi
has changed

SEARCH
for additional
dimensions

ENRICHED THEORETICAL FRAME

Analytical generalization is based on a combination of unique data with a supposed set of relation-ships selected among theories at hand. At the outset it must be a tentative formulation that has to stand the trial through more extended research that might lead to either

- a confirmation of the stated relationships or
- a deviance

In case of deviance at least three avenues are open

o   Reformulation of the theoretical frame by e.g. differentiation: try to integrate findings by splitting key concepts into more discernible units.
o   Investigation of whether opus operandi for the subject chosen has changed since the initial formulation.
o   Discard the theories chosen and start afresh looking for new ones.

Analytical generalization is thus the high road to more accurate sets of theories. By implication, analytical generalization would be characterized by the emergence of increasingly more complete sets of theories and greater sensitivity regarding when to apply them and why.

Should your chosen facts and frame fit, then your research strategy may on the face of it give you credit, even though you learned nothing new from the effort. And indeed many scientist – even some of the more creative – show a high degree of reluctance to give up their "favourite hypotheses in the face of or in spite of data" brought forward, – as documented by Ian I Mitroff of the Psychology of the Apollo Moon Scientists.[158]

The best remedy to any over-identification of your self with a pet-theory is to maintain a playful stand and recognize, how often theories within the social domain are over expanded. We cannot just expect them to fit all cases within the domain they claim to cover. So should even by enlightened theoretical sampling strive to look for cases where they may not. And thus in consequence become all the better advisors to people in practise!

Please note that this characterization is an expansion of most presentations of analytical generalizations or analytical intuition, as it is also called.[159] Also note the family likenesses between our concept and the concept of *reduction*, as termed by Peirce[160].

2.13   Be careful not to miss the most important point

Some identified facts may be damned disturbing, as they do not fit into an otherwise neat pattern. Such "misfits" may be discarded as "errors of measurement", "accidental circumstance", "respondent's being silly enough to misunderstand the wording of an item in a questionnaire", etc. So, what the heck, let's leave them out! The rest of the data look fine! Yet, if you do not take a closer look, you will never learn, and even worse, you may even undermine your own case. Let us look at an example:

"The data of Figure Figure 2.13 #1 was used as an powerful argument for the claim "Trust takes time".

Figure 2.13 #1: DO NOT CUT YOUR SELF OF FROM THE MOST IMPORTRANT POINT

To decide which data to include and which to discard is a major challenge to all types of social research. It is easy to state that all relevant material should be included. But it is still up to the researcher to decide what is relevant, and thus the most important point may be missing.
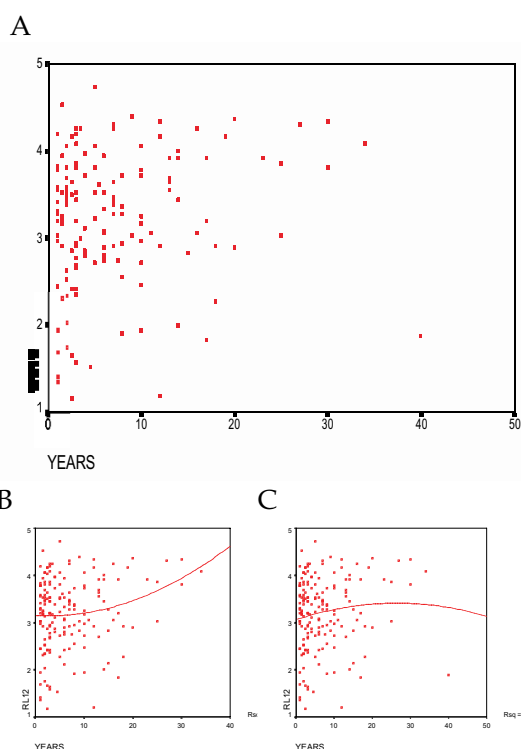
This was well illustrated in the adjoining graph from Phil Samuel's study of "Relationship Management"[161]. The points purport to state the expressed trust of public outlets in the delivering breweries over time. At a glance we can see that "Building trust takes time". Yet Phil in order to stress this conclusion threw the point in the southeast corner away. To include it would weaken the regression model. Or worse, complicate it beyond imagination, as he would have to outline the circumstances as to when and why trust may be broken. Inclusion of the point in question would only slightly have altered the slope of a straight regression line. Yet, it would have had a dramatic effect, – had the best fitting parable been chosen.

Omitting the south-east point (figure B) strengthened Phil's conclusion. Including it would (figure C) have led to a totally different inference[162].

And even worse, excluding that very point Phil missed one of the lessons from "The Employee Owner": Yes, "building trust takes time. Yet it must be maintained day after day, if not, it can be broken in a moment". In this case it happened when the brewery and its oldest customer failed to agree on a new lease.[163]

This may sound very critical, yet personally I do have to praise Phil for his honesty. Contrary to many case researchers, he did inform us as to which "data" he left out.

The inclusion dogma [161]

The case and example presented in Figure 2.13 #1 SAM may serve us well in reminding us of at least two issues:

- the pitfalls of *theorampling*. Picking the facts that suit your purpose, thus forego those, which look "odd" or inconvenient. Á sure way to cut oneself off from greater insight!
- Not all facts, although classified as being descriptions of a similar situation, may be contingent under the same headings nor opus operandi.

Thus the *inclusion dogma:* Do not ever ignore disconcerting data, but find ways to integrate them, for instance by grace of analytical generalization! And I am sure many a textbook says so too. Yet practice is another matter. Throwing away disturbing data does not seem to bother analysts of statistical data as much as I believe it ought to. Yet, what they leave out at least stares them in the face. So they should know!

Qualitative researchers are often far worse of. We may not even be aware of the potentially disquieting facts we merely skate past without throwing a glance at them.

The inclusion dogma is of paramount importance for the enrichment and enhancement of the utility of social research:

- The range of variation around what is generally expected as well as disturbing facts have to be valued as the high road to practice-related theoretical progress.

This has important implications for the execution of cases studies in general and theoretical sampling in particular: We must try to choose the fields for our case studies, not randomly, but with a conscious eye for how they may potentially enrich our grasp of the real and thus more comprehensive theoretical insight.

Apparently analytical generalizations differ profoundly from statistical generalizations, as they claim to be valid not just in general but concretely in any case they purport to cover. If not, the case opus operandi may have to be examined in greater detail. We will return to this line of thought in the chapter § 5, devoted to the search for explanation.

For the present we have to direct our attention to the other major issue of critical importance for case studies: The degree of researcher awareness and thus the reliability of the ensuing case studies.

2.14   Truth – not only of question of "either or", but of level

Whether a statement is to be granted to be trustworthy – or if you like true – apparently depends on perspective, distance, but as we shall se next on level as well.

From the thirties and forward Functionalism became an architectural ideal which later – after WWII with the need to rebuild Europe – fitted so nicely as an ideal for industrial construction of apartments. Yet the public loathed the monotonous rows of up 8 stores high buildings in line one after another. And so did my pregnant wife and I as we were looking for a place to live.

Now one could have imagined that the public critique would have been enough to re-orientate the ideal of most architects, but no. "People do move into modern constructions, do not they"? – I was told. So I – as then a teacher at the Royal Academy of Art – set out to see whether modern building complexes were perceived as monotonous because they were. And as my listening to reports from people could not convince the builders, I had to opt for a "scientific" approach, in case a physio-psychological experiment.

The experiment went well, but aroused additional uncertainties

I constructed a series of 8 patterned images raging from the monotonous to the chaotic. Degree of variation was measured in terms of entropy and ranged from 0 to around 50 bits. People were then asked to choose the picture they preferred to look at. Statistically they were some differences in preferences. Never the less the result was significant. People preferred images of a complexity of around 25 bits. Later I found out this number is just below our maximum ability to absorb complexity

To my delight the results were published in the Christmas number of the Danish journal *Arkitekten*[164]. Looking up after I had read it, I felt an ache in my stomach. Yes people preferred images of a variation of 25 bit? But was not it also true that we like *order* (entropy = 0). People do arrange most their furniture as well the images they place 0.

Secondly after half an hour I had to acknowledge how much I also liked to sit and look at sway of wind through a ripe cornfield as well as the ever-changing patterns of ripples on the surface of a stream. Apparently watching small scale *chaos* was delightful too. And I who had just proved we had a preference for a degree of *variation* around 25 bit!

This is not the place to refer to my subsequent research and the several articles published[165], nor to the final more thorough presentation.[166] Allow me just to present the solution:

Order, variation and chaos
First I realized how I had been victim of "either-or" thinking: Whether variation matter? Yes or No! But monotony, variation and chaotic impressions all seemed to matter. What a puzzle! Finally I realized what we may take for true is a question of not just right or wrong, but of level too:

We prefer order as it makes our world more manageable. Without a sense of order we would not be able to recognize something like a woman, a dog, a house. So order is linked to *naming* something as a kind.

And we like variation as it triggers our sense for *individuality*, seeing someone not just a girl, but as Jane, my beloved.

Lastly small-scale variation or texture facilitates our immediate sense of having a *surface* in front of us.

Sixth lesson
Thus *our sixth lesson*, which indeed is just specification of our first lesson of truth, ref page 7:

> *Truth is not just a question of yes or no or to which degree.*
> *Truth is also a question of level.*

Otherwise mutually exclusive statements may all be true, each on their level. For me this was to become a crucial discovery that was to help for me for the years to come and which you in the following pages will see many a reflection of.

2.15 The concern for reliability

While statisticians may mention the data they skip, readers of qualitative studies are at a loss. The collection of facts generated during my study of employee-owned companies runs several meters. This is both a blessing of richness and a threat to inclusiveness. Meters of densely packed texts are more than most people will care to control. With such an amount, it is all too easy for anyone both to forgo data that will disturb any line of argument of "your" preference. And worse, some case researchers even shield "their data" from scrutiny, in order – as they say – to "protect" their interviewees. Accordingly informers are wrapped and put away under a cloak of anonymity.[167]

But worst of all, we may in the mass of our mutual fitting facts just fail to notice small gems that could be potentially disturbing. So we have – as all field workers have done more than once, consider our position as researchers.

Roles of researchers
– the power of sight as a metaphor in epistemology, – once more

One of the major arenas of discord among social researchers is about our proper role. Different schools – working each on their specific level – claim "we" ought either to be

    a) distant, disinterested observers, as natural scientists are obliged to be,

    b) close to and involved in the subjects under study or even

    c) obliged to try to help them on their own terms to personally improve their situation.

As for a) and b) we thus have to return to the metaphor of seeing, ref subchapter 2.2.

Traditional epistemology leans on "what hits the eyes" as the paradigm for generation of data. Sound, smell, taste and touch have never explicitly been taken into account as a trustworthy foundation for science, as we saw, ref figure 1.4 #2.

It appears to be easier to distance ourselves from what we see than what we sense for instance by touch. Just as it is easier to share impressions and talk about what is in front of us than about what we hear. Nor does the sound of the wind have the same permanence as the temporary, solid image of the sea. The tree in our childhood garden is still there. In contrast, we rapidly loose track of the smell of a dog just passing by.

"Looking" seems more easily to be associated with permanence, distance and non-involvement, and has as such served man well as a metaphorical paradigm for a scientific ideal of being untouched by the subject.
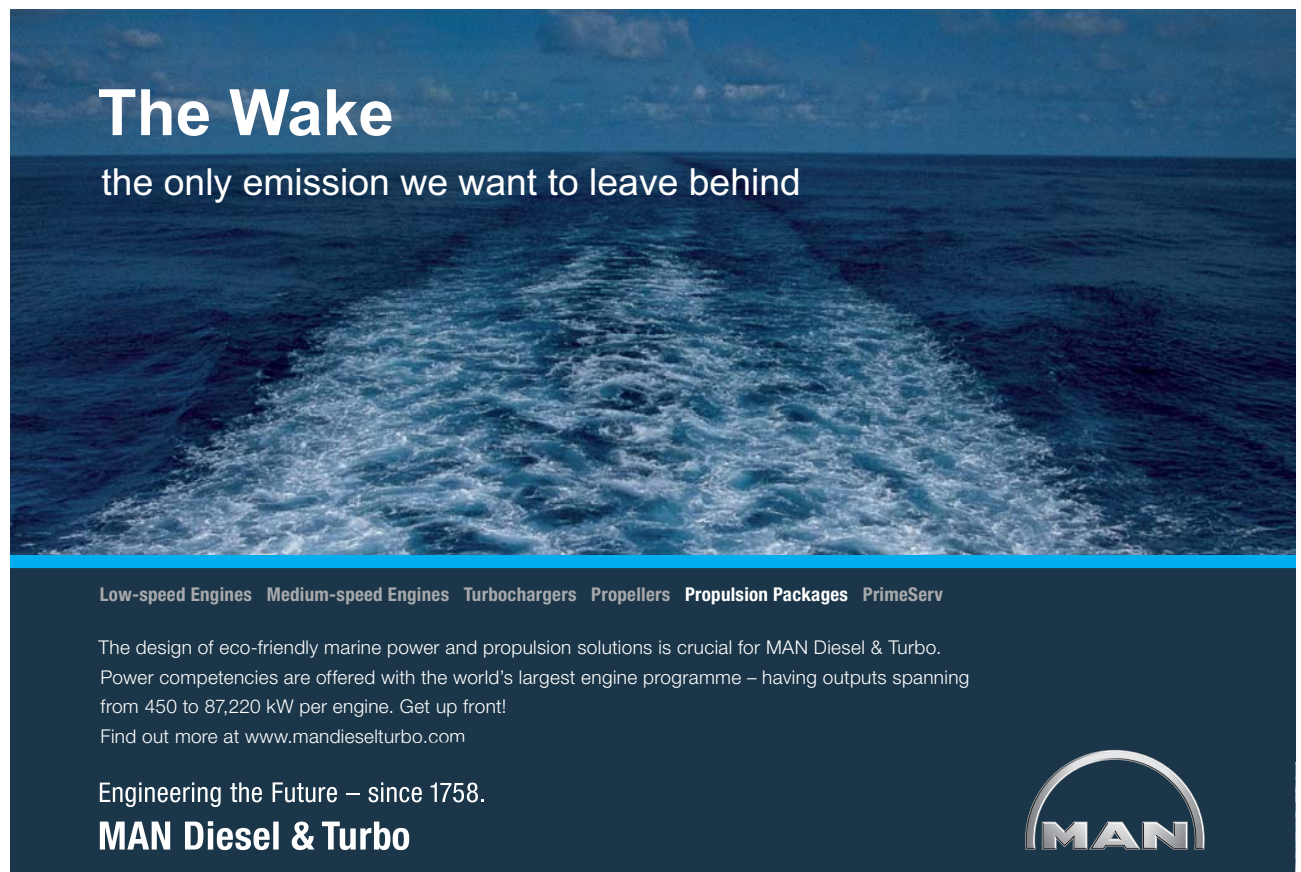
This ethos is enhanced by the artificial separation between mind and body. Metaphorically we see with the mind's eye, while emotions occur in the body, hidden from direct sight and the scrutiny of others

"Being in touch" as the carrying metaphor for social research
It is as if "what we see" and thus acknowledge as data is beyond discussion. While what we notice, facts that is, are disputable."

If so, we do not debate "what is", but what is worth to notice and the meanings we each assign to it. So we have to share experience? This not all that simple, because the more the social dimension dominates our thinking – and thus the greater the role we assign to language as a medium for explication – the less reliable we have to rank the information. So far we acknowledge, how language is infested with interest, hearing is to be discredited. Yet we should trust our inner feelings as well as others in order not to be entirely railed by language. But next – off course – retort to dialogue in order to check to which degree what "we" felt corresponded with the inner sense of the Other.

Writers who struggle every day to find the right words to express their intuitions know what is at stake. What they sense and are called to express may be a bodily feeling, a hunch, and the words are not just there, they have to be constructed as an approximating medium, which they hope may create some resonance in the Other.

You may close your eyes, and although there is nothing to be seen, touch will ensure you that the world still is. And not only can you feel it, your body is it! *Being in touch* inwardly as well as with others *is what carries existence*, not just sight nor mind! Thus touch would serve us well as a carrying metaphor for social research.

Neither distance nor closeness is a guarantee for completeness
Distance is not an assurance of anything in itself. How can you believe yourself able to grasp anything with a bird's eye view on the human condition? Nor is closeness. How can you believe yourself able to get a feel for others without a feel for the circumstances surrounding them, their language and cultures?

But, surely, distance has some advantages of its own: The closer you get to a subject, the more obvious the range of conditioning factors. Seen from outside, say in the perspective of an academic economist, any foreman is just a foreman if not just another blue collar. Seen from within the company each foreman, the caseworker encounters, stand out as a person, – just as every member of hir crew. And thus the range of opus operandi expands accordingly!

So the virtues of distance are won at a prize. The further away you get from the concrete reality, the easier it becomes to ignore the multitude of opus operandi. You may even cut yourself so far off that you cannot even sense how realities emerge as people shape and are shaped them. If so, the subjects in question are hardly given a chance to remedy what they may perceive as insensitive and superficial in your account of them. There are simply more truths hidden in the detail than in sweeping statements that ignore the multi-dimensional richness of lived life!

For a condensed overview of advantages and drawbacks for the different positions of the researcher, please refer to Figure 2.15 #1 SR.

No one should ignore the fruitfulness of an overall descriptive picture, e.g. *how* employee-owned companies perform within different industries, national cultures, how and which managers are exposed to stress, which companies are more burdened with absenteeism, etc. But if you want to know *why* you, case investigations are as necessary as they will be enlightening.

But, "why" calls for explanation, interpretation or understanding! Thus we have to turn to the three classical approaches to social research and the challenges they impose on us.

Figure 2.15 #1: SOCIAL ROLES OF FIELD/CASE WORKERS[168]

participant as observer

involvement with participants
engaged as well as reflective

contact with participants
with a detached attitude

observer as participant

complete observer

complete participant

NEUTRALITY

**INVOLVED
ENGAGEMENT**

POTENTIAL ADVANTAGES

PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTANCE
behavioristic approach/
pure what-then registrration

CLOSENESS
view from inside/
getting acquainted with how people act
and how they feel

POTENTIAL DANGERS

ANNIHILATION
looking at their world
through the eyes of a researcher
enmeshed in theoretical premsses

UNREFLECTED SUBJECTIVITY
looking at the world
thruogh the eyes of the Other
wholly taken in by their circumstancens

KIND OF APPROACH

EXPERIMENT

CASE STUDY

ACTION RESEARCH

TYPES OF RESEARCH AND PURPOSE

theory test   theory building   enlightenment   education   activism

done on behalf of

a decision maker   yourself or others   The informants
themselves

Erik Maaløe 2013

The continuum of roles for research range from an ideal of complete absence from the scene to the practice of working within and studying one's own organization.

At one end, the wholly detached student never sets foot in the world he studies, e.g. by working with second-hand statistical data, or if he does make his own observations, he will try to do his work unobserved by the people studied.

At the other end, we have the action researcher working within a group helping them to come to terms with their own lives. Case research will – as it is generally understood – be somewhere in between the extremes.

Truth and interpretation in Social Science
With particular reference to case studies
The Opener

3   The Opener

> One of the most extraordinary features of the literature
> on the methodology and philosophy of science
> is the extent to which it ignores practise…
> what scientist and lay people do.
>
> Andrew Sayer[169]

3.1   Introducing explanation, interpretation, rhetoric and understanding

The three terms interpretation, explanation and understanding are all too often used interchangeably. Thus we have hardly any shared idea about the precision they ought to be used with. Thus allow me present an overview of the stand "we" will arrive at.

The potential aim for social research in general and of case studies in particular is to get a grasp of the human condition, including our own. Thus may be done in at least three ways:

- Interpretation*: To make sense* of what is going on in the terms "I" know of. Be it of an event, a string of observations, a cluster of statistical data, or a poem. Or with a psychological catch phrase: By seeing "Me" in "You"!
- Explanation: – at least
  o To present *sets of rules* from which we can predict what will occur in a given the situation. Yet without we necessarily knowing what makes it occur

or better

  o To present a "clockwork-like" account of how the interchanges of inner related parts will result in a range of outward observable states. For instance how and why H_2 when ignited, burn and turn out as water, – or how and why bonuses will increase efficiency
- Understanding: To *touch and get a better feel* for others as well as One self by an interchange of each our different views and experiences. A way that may enrich our sense and respect for human plasticity, and thus tolerance. Or with a catch phrase: By searching for "You" in "Me"!

Three challenges to human consciousness

It is an often stated presumption that while explanation is derived from reasoning based on identified rules, interpretation is based on hunches, insight and what not. This is only partially true as many types of interpretation rely on rules as well. They rather differ in position:

- *Explanations* should refer to universal principles grounded in sets of well-specified logical analysis of outcomes of several empirical investigations combined into theories. The very strength of explanations is the claim that they are constructed in ways that are partly beyond the whims of the researcher and easy for others to check. They should persuade by data and logic alone!
- *Interpretations* are often structured like explanations, and may often be set up as to present generalized principles too. But even they may be partially based on observations, interpretations will bear a mark of our own personalities too.
  Thus we – as interpreters – have to persuade by words and emotional appeal (rhetoric) and hopefully some favourably selected illuminating cases.
- *Understanding* in the sense we intend to use the word is – the potential outcome of asking others to check whether we are able to "get under their skin". And not just – even this may be a place to start – skilled in paraphrasing their words and gestures.

Thus understanding – as based on dialogue and self-awareness – will move us towards recognizing what we do not have noticed yet.

Explanation and understanding as
forms of thinking that aim to harness the vices of interpretation.

Interpretation hinges on what we are able to contain. So if you cannot see gnomes, they cannot be – and you may feel tempted to characterize those of us who can, as superstitious. Or like communist see the rest of us as subject to false consciousness, if we cannot wholesale accept the evilness of capitalism.

Yet there is always more to know, than we are ready to contain, here and now. Understanding is to strive to come to terms with the schemes of perception and behaviors of others – however strange their habits and beliefs may appear at a first glance.

In ordinary life we, more often than not, assume, that what we see and feel is what there is. Yet in a relaxed mood of afterthought we know this may not be so. The world may not be, as we believe. Thus there are at least two reactions to interpretation as a potentially subjectivist endeavour:

One, *the cold more tough reaction*, calls for explanations: a) Reliance on inductive-deductive reasoning ultimately grounded on observation rather than beliefs. Thus a call for b) a neutral attitude accomplished by distance and apparent non-engagement, aiming at measuring c) how "it really is", by – as it is often expressed – "collecting data".

The idea of explanations in social research is obviously borrowed from the natural sciences as are the absolute discerning characteristic of the *positivist* idiom of social explanations: *Explanations are universal.* What we claim to be true must be true – not necessarily regardless of culture – but within the space specified by opus operandi. Real knowledge has to be independent of any human mind.

A the more *relaxed* pragmatic approach though will state that even explanatory schemes of social behavior do not share the "iron-firmness" as those for nature, they should as *regulative schemes* nevertheless be reliable enough for us to use as guides for goal-oriented decision-making

People who share a given interpretative stand are prone to seek shelter with peers who share their views, thus they may better present a united front against others. Yet one could instead open up and allow oneself to be fascinated by the sheer multitude of potential worldviews and explore them.

This leads us to a more *warm reaction*: A call for a mutual quest in the form of a dialogue to explore not only how each our beliefs and perceptions of the world have been formed and differ from other. As well as in hindsight to explore the genesis behind as well as the consequences they seem to have for us.

For an oversight please refer to Figure 3.1 #1: (TWIDIN)

Figure 3.1 #1: EXPLANATION AND UNDERSTANDING PRESENTED

AS A CURE FOR AN ALLEGED NARROWNESS OF INTERPRETATION (TWIDIN)

I N T E R P R E T A T I O N

Exclusion of the personal

Inclusion, sharing and exploring views

EXPLANATION   drives towards   UNDERSTANDING

Skip the nonsens, - just stick to data!

Let us explore how and why we differ!

We ought entirely to rely on the obvious, and stick to observables, called data by which we, by logical arguments (generalization) can infer laws for human behavior.

Thus for the sake of control we have to go beyond interpretations. Elimination of the personal thus becomes the ideal behind the explanatory effort.

The ways we interpret are due to our upbringing, – station in life, – theoretical, practical and/or religious training. Thus, our ingrained views may in the eyes of the Other be perceived as projections, wishful thinking, and/or superstitious beliefs – in short biases. This can either be corrected by non-involvement (explanatory stand) or an engaged stand (understanding)

Our ways of coping, reflect on and act are shaped by the circumstance we have lived through. So it is indeed an interesting challenge to explore and mutually help each other – in a sharing mode – to explore when and how each of our different views was formed. This could in turn even enrich our views of the Other as well as ourselves – perhaps even man.

PRIMARILY EMPHASIS

Order: Identifying the key characteristics which everyone within any well-specified group share	*Persuasion*: I stand for what I know and you better believe it, as these illuminating cases show…!	*Variation*: Everybody is different, so in order to learn, we have to come close enough to the Other to sense it!

Only by making our own subjectivity explicit

can we ever stand a chance of moving towards objectivity

Rhetoric of the confusing realities

The more abstract a concept the wider its semantic breath or if you like span of significance, ref § 1.5 page 19. And this goes for explanation, interpretation and understanding as well. Furthermore the three terms are often confusingly intermingled as we speak.

First: understanding may be used as a synonym to express the ability of an expert to handle explanatory systems. Thus, – the engineer feels he understands the laws of physics so long he handles them with creative success. So even though we might prefer to restrict understanding to the field of getting to terms with the human condition, we have to accept that scientists may state that they understand nature as a metaphorical analogy to understanding the human condition.
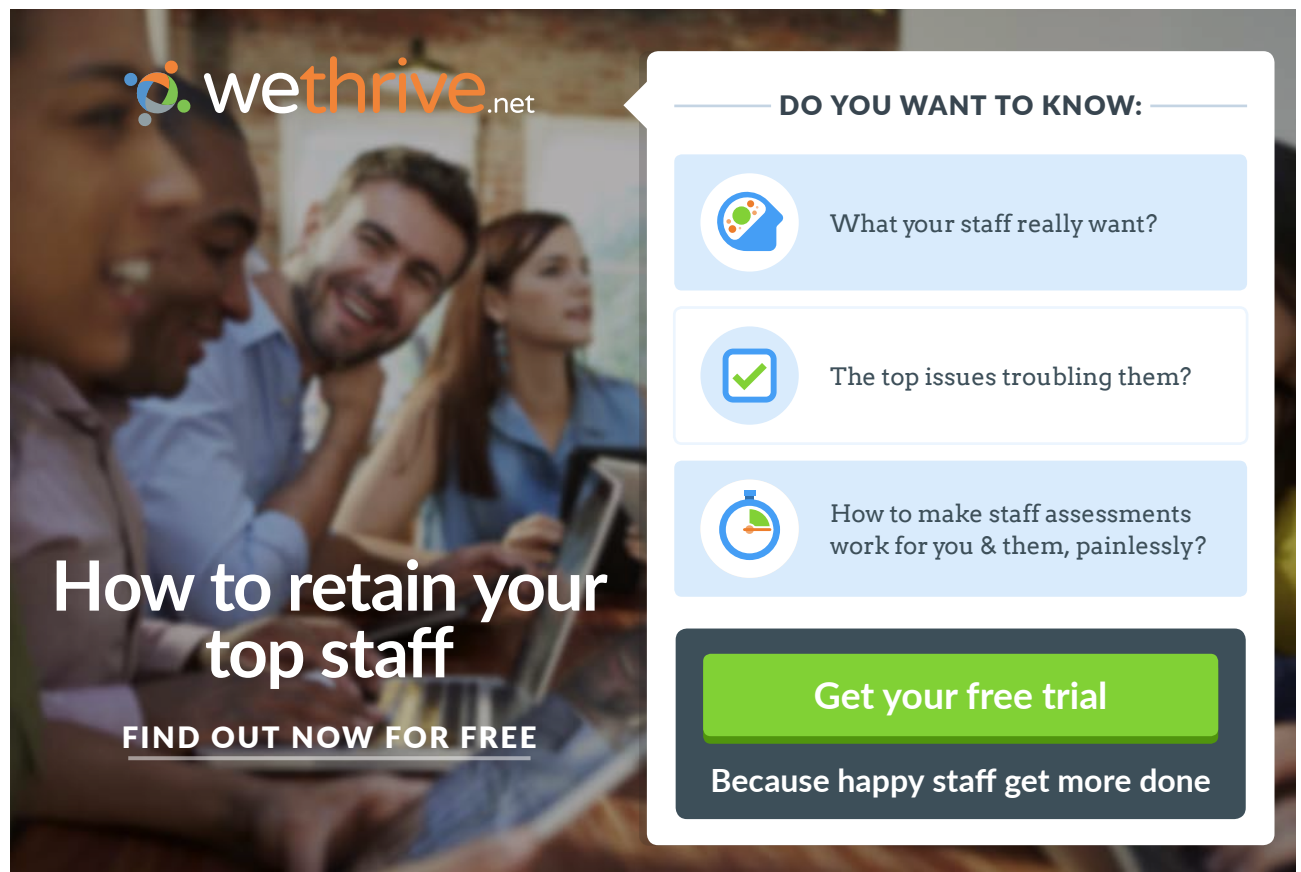
Secondly: analysts working in the interpreting mode often feel they know and thus state that "they understand" what is happening to or within others, – not the least those who posses an university degree are likely to believe they are cleverer than most.

If so, we may not see, whether we partly rely on ourselves as we state what drive others. So we give ourselves free reins to use the Other as a mean to recreate a universe of our own. We may even try to ground our convictions by raising hostile argumentation against those who brings alternative explanatory schemes into play. If so, we are really at loss and given away to emotions, where curiosity would be more appropriate.

Apparently there must be a third option: Subject our own our inclinations to investigation and compare them with those of others. Only by making our own subjectivity explicit can we ever stand a chance of acquiring a sense for – what some call – "objectivity" or as we rather should term it, professionalism[170].

If so, we move towards, what we in **§ 6** will call, understanding.[171] Thus I hope to demonstrate how the traditional accusation against qualitative studies for being subjective can be turned 180^0 degrees and illustrate how field work – if done as proposed – may not only reveal how we may rely on preconceptions unknown to ourselves – but even educate us to perceive at the social world in a greater perspective and respect for others.

So let us explore these challenges as practises en detail. Then in the very last chapter 7 we should try to demonstrate how the three approaches are intertwined, if conceived as a dynamic process.

4 Modes Of Interpretation

**A long-time story of making sense
either by simplifying over-expansions or
playful experimental search for coming to terms**

**…every object of knowledge is
known – not as a result of its own nature,
but of the nature of those who comprehend it…**
Boethius, c 525 AC[172]

As we are going to look at the different approaches to social science let us first reflect on the main, although not necessarily exclusive, characteristics of research within the human domain as opposed to natural sciences, namely: Historical Time and Meaning:

TIME AND MEANING

**It is within duration
that the meaning of persons experience is constituted…**
Alfred Schutz[173]

4.1 The historical dimension

We are entangled in time. We sense it, but can neither see nor point at it. It escapes us, ingrained as it is in our metabolism. It is therefore no surprise that time occurs to us in different ways.

- *Physical time,* astrological clock time, – the accumulated sequences of time defined as physical units.
- *Duration*, the experienced length of an occurrence, which hardly concurs with clock time and which we at times best remember by recall.
- *Historical time*, a frame of reference for aligning past events and changes into an identifiable, cross-comparative, yet often slipshod timely order.

Physical and chemical processes unfold themselves, as they have done since the dawn of the universe, independently of who, when or what initiates them.

But my reactions do change. Seemingly similar happenings around and within me, will release different responses as "I" age. – As do the behavior of our institutions as those in charge look at the outcomes of their mission as well as adapt to the pressures, they are subjected to.

Duration it the felt stretc.h of "time". To wait for a taxi without being able to do anything else in pouring rain feels like hours. Yet in recollection, the waiting it self seems just a trifle. On the other hand, being thrown into a dangerous situation few minutes is sensed, both here and now and later in recall as a period of intensity. In short, duration is linked to the amount of experienced impression of sense within a time slot.

Historical Time is a metaphorical mean of placing events along a line as if in space. If so, it is should not be seen as a straight line, but as a forward rolling one. Historians aggregate events into descriptions, which then form historical time. So we get the Middle Age, the Renaissance, etc. to which we relate myriads of occurrences as a mean to make them intelligible! Historical time is a way of condensing opus operandi into a frame for absorption of individual social occurrences.

Thus metaphors like culture, technological development, decay, "being out of synch", reaching maturity etc. are all driven along by the concept of historical time! As do some of the natural sciences, especially geology and developmental biology, in order to contain major developments within a phrame of *chronological order*.

4.2   Meaning

Meaning is an even more slippery a term. "Meaning" – like to "seeing" – occurs with a lot of different connotations, e.g. as in sentences like

    a) What does the word <mean> mean"?

    b) To ask: **"**What does the word <mean> mean**"**, means trouble!

    c) What is the meaning of asking: "What does the word <mean> mean"?

Other statements could be mentioned, but these must suffice. So what does the sentences above mean?

Re a) The question "What does the word <mean> mean" is an appeal for a clarification of an expression, a call for what it signifies, or a *translation* to uncover what a phrase like "to do the uglido" refers to.

Re b) "To ask "what does the word <mean> mean", means trouble" is a reminder that acts of speech may have, and often are meant to have *consequences*, in this case perhaps a rebuttal. Or it may just be a premonition of what may happen, as e.g. raising tides above 1 metre means (read: may lead to) flood.

Re c) Such a sentence refers to the two previous usages, but its span of significance is larger than either of the two sentences above. It calls for reference, the potential impact, as well as the *importance* various groups of people might, or once did, assign to a given listed string of deeds and/or texts.

The creation and endurance of meaning, a few examples

Meaning is interlocked in the social. I fell in love with Jane the split of a second I noticed her in a crowed room three tables away. Now a sceptic like an economist or a biologist – with hir bird's eye view on humans – may simplify such a statement and state that such an encounter is just an expression of a drive to procreate, so b) had we not met we would each have met someone else.

That may well be! But now, *after* 50 years of happy co-existence, the very moment I saw her means more to me than just "spotting" her. It was a turning point in my life, as it became a part of what I came to be. And so it is with myriads of other events in our lives. They acquire meaning as a result of their consequences.

Most, but not all our feelings make sense only within a social realm. Take shame: a feeling aroused in us as we sense we have overstepped the limits of some Other or as we our selves are subject to devaluation by another, rightfully – if caught steeling. Whereas anger in some cases may be reduced to an elementary level of self-defence, shame has no direct biological counterpart as "getting offspring" has for marriage.

While anger or flight may be seen as an expression of "biological survival", the way I cope with it is socially conditioned.[174] Likewise shame awakens and touches my self-awareness as a social being – as a subject, if you like. It is not related to me as a male mammal – or if you like an objectified biological entity.[175]

An example: Little John was seen throwing a stone at Vernon, another boy in the kindergarten. The trajectory of the stone is a physical phenomenon without any meaning tied to it. But the "throwing" has meaning. It expresses a social dimension behind the mere physical event

First throwing like other active verbs in general by implication states what we have noticed an act, a move done with – as we assume – a specific intent. In this case the throw could e.g. be perceived both due to i) John's jealousy of Vernon or/and ii) to the consequences it had *afterwards* when an overseer stepped in. Meaning is often as in this case expressed in terms of intent.

Meaning is a social construct embedded in lived life as a selective process of making sense out what will become experiences. Most of what happens to us we just during the day we just let pass like swallows, noticed but forgotten the very moment they vanish. It is first when an event fastens it self in our reflection that it may acquire meaning, – either as an idea of what to plan for or in hindsight what came out of it. This of course does not exclude people from assigning meaning to physical phenomena too, – like the shape of trees, birds flying in from the East,[176] earthquakes, comets, rain on a wedding day and/or the felt presence of ghosts.

Thus where as historical time sets a frame in terms of culture, past and present and across nations; meaning is embedded in language, our sense of what we have to do as well as the case may be our existential purpose of life.

Do not sell out meaning for words
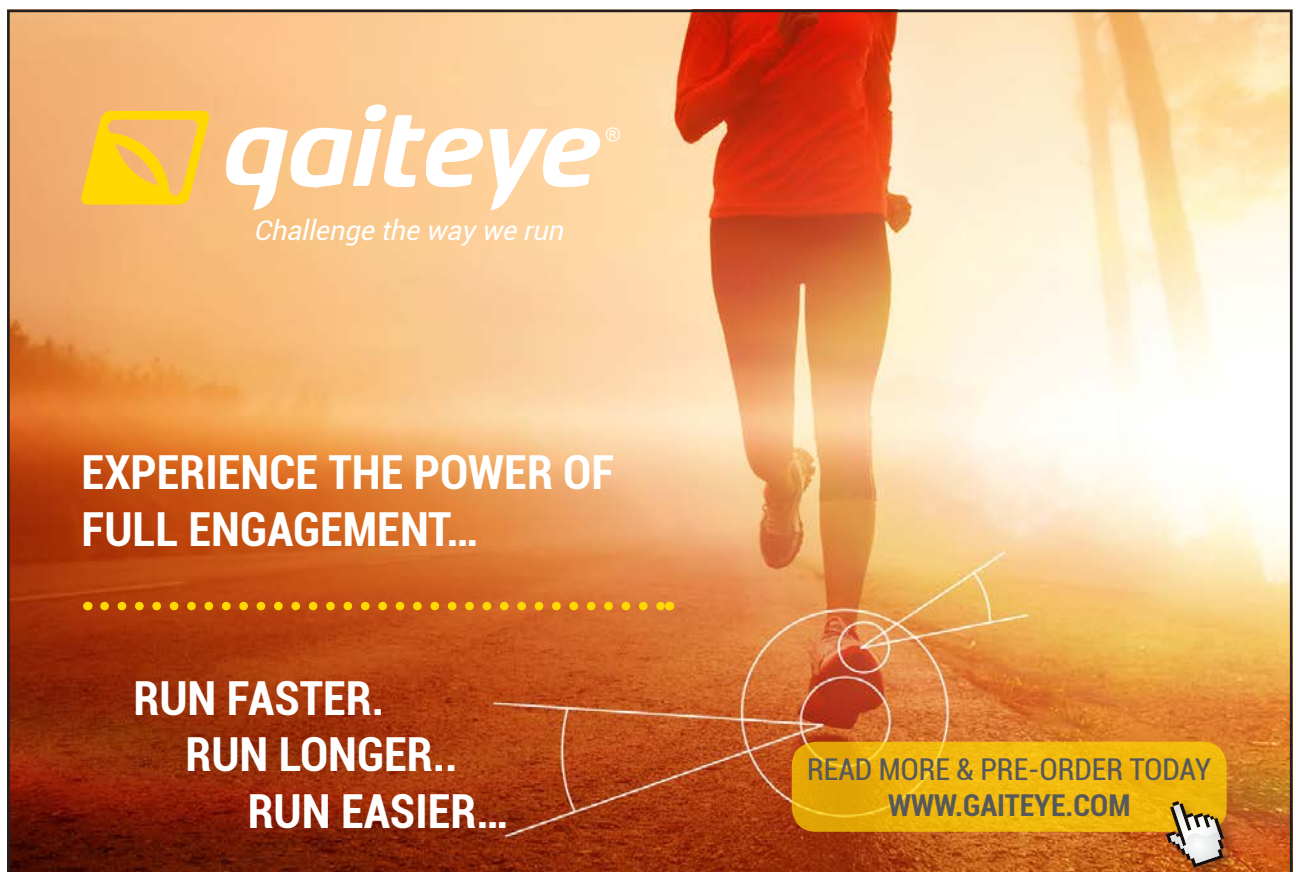
The three dimensions of "Meaning"
As "we" look for the meaning of gestures, utterances, speech and text at least three dimensions stand out.

First we assume that utterances or statements *refer* to something, that they contain an assumed correspondence to an inner or outer reality, past, present or to what may come. Yet reference it is not just neutral. Even terms like "water" and "H_2O" refer to the same stuff, the do not mean the same. You know of water, but not necessarily the meaning of "H_2O". Scientific terms belong to their own language systems, which do not have the same areas of significance as everyday language.

Sentences of ordinary language first of all refer to other sentences, thoughts, tales read or beliefs. Thus some terms may not directly refer be to a domain outside language. The alleged correspondence may be indirect, and often untraceable if not just imagined as fictums, – like the term "soul" according to some, as referred to in § 1.5. Yet statements with no obvious direct reference may still be meaningful as their sheer occurrence *expresses* something about the person. As do the way we dance, choose our music or sing.

Secondly we, as observers, may – apart from what a statement could refer to – perceive it as an expression through which the person airs parts of hir personality. Say, you tell me "Hanna is short-sighted", and I answer: "Oh yes, thoughtless indeed". Now you may have alluded to her eye condition, while my answer may reveal at least two things, a) that I have a low regard for Hanna or b) that I am ready to agree with you in order to please you.

Obviously the evaluation/interpretation of what utterances and pieces of text express cannot be unequivocal. Nor may the Other, whose outer signs of his inner state I interpret, agree with my labelling, particularly because expressions – like slips of tongue – more often than not, are unguarded! How expressions are "read" depends on context, including the interpreter, hir present mood, preference for some frames of reference as well hir own past.

And much to our amusement, there are even a potential for double-references to be used consciously as humour, irony and allegories. Or self-referential sentences, where what is expressed runs counter to what is said, as e.g. "I cannot tell you, how much love you"[177]. Which states "I cannot tell you what I am expressing", with the implicit meaning that, it is never the less what I am doing."

During the day we hardly pay attention to how others read what we express. Nor do spontaneously angry persons orchestrate their facial or bodily movements, nor do the lover. They just let go. Expressive movements is what we express un-attended. They are spontaneous, unguarded.

In contrast *effective acts* are chosen ways of expression, which we anticipate will create a desired effect within others. If so, the very choice and tone of words uttered and the gestures accompanying them are monitored with care. That is what any *communicator* has to master, – be it in the conference room, at the lectern, service desk, as a sales person, advertiser or novelist. Just as an actor has to be able to mimic angriness or as a seducer, try to fake devotion

Thus we have along with Schütz[178] to distinguish between expressive movements and expressive acts. In a later chapter all these aspects will be dealt with in regard to social research. For now Figure 4.2 #1 gives a brief overview of some of the aspects of interfaces between the three dimensions.[179, 180]

Figure 4.2 #1, TTMEAN THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF MEANING

Challenge of authenticity

REFERENCE (corespondance)

EXPRESSIVITY

Challenge of acting, incl showmanship and pretence

EFFECT

Challenge of

- unravelling the intentions of the Other

and/ or
- the background for and consequences of of one´s own acts and schemes of attribution

Images, deeds, talks and pieces of text allegedly

o *refer* to a correspon-ding outer or inner reality, something said or writ-ten and/or
o *express* something about the inner state of the speaker, which he either may be un-aware of or
o deliberately puts forward in order to create an intended *effect* within an audience.

Whether there is alignment between what is referred to and how it is expressed is the challenge of *authenticity*. The tone and speed of voice may here serve as indicators – unless of course the speaker consciously tries to express himself in order to create a certain effect.[181]

Thus reference and expressivity might have intended cognitive or emotional effects on an audience in mind. This is a challenge any politician; advertiser or presenter face as actors with a mission of their own. So, if in lack of reference, they may retort to *bull shit*![182]

But as we shall see later in the chapter on the subject of understanding, it is worthwhile to recall what you "heard" may not correspond to what some one tried to draw attention to and thus believed to express. Language is as much a medium of trying to come to terms with something as a medium for referential instruction.

Nevertheless we, as listeners, may feel tempted, if not obliged, to search for the more or less hidden intentions behind the examples and words chosen by the speaker. Just as we – as bystanders to our own behaviour – may ponder about what the background may be for our own, at times, dysfunctional outbursts of emotions.

In this sense, analysing a text and putting it into perspective will reveal as much about the text itself, the man and/or organization behind it, as it may reveal about any reader in general and a social researcher in particular.

The interchange and interdependence of the three dimensions may be illustrated like this: Say I tell you: "I am disappointed". OK, that may be what I feel. But the utterance – even it may convey what I might feel – is meaningless to you so long as I do not refer to the (social) circumstances that led to my feeling of disappointment, e.g. that I applied for a job but was turned down and hopefully you as the listener can recognize the potential for a similar reaction within you.

Apparently you can only assign a sense of meaning to what I express as a result of *recognition* or at least of imagining, you might react like me, if you found yourself in a similar situation. So expressivity may not be intelligible per se. "We" have implicitly to set a scene of situational reference for the Other in order to make the way we could make our own feelings in terms of expressivity meaningful.

Thus, if I or the Other try to modify the situational reference, my feelings might change accordingly:

Say you say: "Well, Erik, the job became vacant because Mrs Ash hated the long hours she had to devote to administration to maintain it." Thus my disappointment may be replaced with relief, yet also some frustration, because I did not take the time to explore what the job would entail.

Or I may, in order to save face, begin to "invent" reasons for "not really wanting the job" even though "I" did apply for it. Such a falsifying reference to what were not says as an expression a lot about me, which I may not see myself. It thus comes at a price: To deny and thus misinterpret my inner reality will undermine my grip on life. Thus "I" had better face up to reality and cope with my disappointment directly.

And make no mistake! People that think along the lines of cause and effect may reason backwards and say that the loss led me to be disappointed. This would put the cart in front of the horse.[183] No, it works the other way around! Events may appear in other shapes than anticipated. It is as I realize that "I" am disappointed I know "I" had a loss. And that is why I may be tempted to use language as a means to repair my damaged self-esteem.

Thus even we believe we are able to, – we should not expect we are readily able to "understand" all the emotional reactions that the Other as well as we, ourselves express through our outwards expressions and inner motions.

Our world has no meaning
beyond what we are led to assign to it.

Language as magic
Uncovering meaning, as well as "covering up" thrives on language. Thus one might claim: "behaviour acquires meaning only through language", which seem reasonable enough at first glance. If asked why you went to the beach yesterday, I expect you to tell me in words rather than mimic or make a drawing in order to convey a meaningful image of why.

Advertisers, politicians, educators all employ language hoping its magic will work: The magic[184] of creating not only meaning but new realities by enlightening or even seducing others or even oneself in turn!

Thus stating, that "behaviour acquires meaning through language" is not necessarily wrong, it is just too simplistic. It is more proper, – as our *seventh lesson of truth* – to state that

> *we use language as a sort of magic*
> *in order to come to terms with reality,*
> *to conjure or invoke worlds we wish for or even assume to be.*

In order to use language not only to depict or instruct or to invoke realities, we use whatever means available, – be it reference, coherence and/or pragmatic arguments, as well as concealment, slander or outright lies. With the Nominalist ethos – refer to § 1,5 – in mind it is hardly a surprise that reality does not necessarily follows up to what we tried to talk into it.

As the magic works, it also work against us

One thing is that we may be deceived by what we hear or worse – want to hear. Another, that language may captivate us to a degree where we are engulfed by what it allows us to talk about. To this though there are several antidotes, as we shall see in chapter § 6.

So, while meaning as reference make sense, it does not imply what is referred at is the case. For instance that I have an "I" just because I say so. I may just be an expression for pointing towards one self as an "here and now walking, talking and/or remembering body". Recall also the examples § 2.5.

For now it will suffice to state: The more languages you master, the easier it will be to distinguish between the span as well as specificity of any signifier and the signified. This is strikingly obvious for the rich vocabulary for emotions and of being "placed in the world" in German and how spares it is in English, as already referred to in § 1.5.

Language – as an arena for thought experiments

Realizing the profound magical properties of language as an instrument for creating meaning sets us on a track for seeing how easily we may deceive ourselves by face-saving schemes, after-the-fact rationalizations, boosting oneself to appear better, grander, etc.

But apart from using language to make sense of what has happened, we may also used it in a more powerful, forward looking way: Using words to evaluate the potential consequences of various imaginable alternatives.

So the magic and relative independence of language vis-à-vis reality is a gift for strategists to play with, as they explore the potential combinations of actions that could be open to us without they have to run any premature personal risk. It simply gives us an opportunity to play with the world by proxy. The imaginary world of novels may even appear more real than scores of surveys and classical experiments.

Using words as a search for meaning
Independently of what I mean to state it is up to the onlooker to decide, what "I" express. Thus others may nurture all sort of ideas what another expresses through mimicking, her tone of voice and unattended body gestures. Or try to make us believe, if he deliberately tries to express him self with an effect in mind.

Yet expressing one self has yet another meaning: When I wake up from a puzzling dream, I may first try to draw images of it, before "I" use words in order to try to clarify what the dream might mean. In short: We also use words in order to express a hunch, a feeling or come to grips with a situation, where I acted in a way that surprised me or which went against what I had planned to do, as we shall explore further in § 6 on understanding.

In passing you may even ask whether it is proper to use language to characterize language. May not, but we do so, in the hope that words we use do have a reference beyond language it self, for example to how it is used.

To single out something as significant
is an interpretive act, thus all social research must be so at heart
"There are no data only interpretations", Nietzsche said[185]. This is true as far as sentences in a 1:1 correspondence to a non-linguistic-reality are rare, if at all possible. But there is more to it: Just to identify some facts as being data is an interpretation of what is meaningful – within a given frame of reference. Thus in principle all research is interpretative. But as this may cover the former sentence too, let us first look at some usages of the term "interpretation".

Interpretation…is the referral of the unknown into the known

Alfred Schutz[186]

4.3   Making sense of the term "interpretation"

So let us look at the array of schemes available for attributing meaning to what we notice or believe we experience, recalling that a) "making sense" relates as much to worlds around as within us, whether they be associated with positive or negative connotations of experience:

In a positive vein, the term "interpretation" reminds us of at least two facts, which may be called our *subjective condition*, namely that:

- What we each perceive and rank as significant is (somewhat) different from the next man's perception, which may be due to
  - o our age, sex and temperament – the *biological* elements
  - o our training, job and social standing – the *social* elements
  - o as well as our life story in general, the *personal life* experience

- Interpretation is a way of making what occurs in the outer as well as our inner world intelligible or meaningful. This requires the words that the languages we know contain – *the semantic aspect*:
  - o We do so by means of schemata ranging from sophisticated concepts, routine categorizations to superficial stereotypes – the *cognitive* aspect.
- Yet reality pressure may at times leave us in doubt as to whether this is possible and when it fails, we may
  - o either see the discrepancy as a challenge to expand our abilities to come to terms with reality, the *explorative* strategy.
  - o Or, if language still fails us, we may try to express ourselves in poems, painting and/or musical expression – what we here – stuck as we are within language – call *poetic imagery.*
- Otherwise if feeling frightened or hurt, we may try to escape into mental reparation – the *bad consciousness* aspect.[187]

Some state it more simply though: "Interpretations are the particular schemata we apply in order to "explain" what happens to and around us. A sort of hypothetic inference of trying to identify the conditions under which a given phenomena was to emerge, – a logic Peirce – christened as *retroduction*.[188]

This may seem sensible enough at least by appearance as it aligns interpretations with explanations. In daily speech the two terms are indeed often used interchangeably. Yet, as researchers we have to be more precise: Explanations work by rules that should lead us to infer what will happen if so and so[189]. Interpretations is making sense by drawing on rules from which we infer – consciously or not – what may have lead a noticed entity in to a given state of affair.

In general *interpretation* is the fundamental art of

- Assigning meaning, including finding a reason or reasons to *expretate*[190] why something happened the way it did.

"Finding reasons" implies that interpretations hinge on the observed as much as on what could be observed. Thus an emotional outburst in public, which in hindsight may seem meaningless to the actor himself, may indeed be perceived as a meaningful expression to bystanders. It all depends on whether the observer can place the incident within a given frame.[191]

So where as Naïve Realism assumes that "what you see" is "what is there", *Subjectivism* likewise assumes that the meaning you take for granted is *the* meaning. Thus the subjectivist – just as a thief believes everybody steals – by implication believe either i) that the Other must feel as she/he would do in similar situations or that ii) she – in case of disagreement – is the better judge as she do know how other role players "really" are.

So in the context of outlining a case-based research strategy of interpretation, we may have to be more constructive. Thus I suggest the following: Interpretation is

- the general use of concepts and other more elaborate constructs, including more or less mundane theory-like schemes or viewpoints to *make the behaviour of other people, societies or even events of nature intelligible* to ourselves, but
- in particular, a resort to constructs applied in hindsight of *why people feel and act* like they do and perhaps even what they try to achieve.

Interpretations not only assign names to patterns of behaviour, but may in addition attempt to elucidate why they are performed in the way they are. As conceptual schemes they depend on our idioms of the expected and are thus often guided by our considerations of necessary characteristics rather than the sufficient.

So individuals – even when they focus on the same event – will rely on either i) one or several favoured interpretations or ii) the only one available to them, because their language only allows them to apply the one which they were brought up or later trained to use as a guide.

Recognizing that "we all may make mistakes", subjectivist reactions may, of course, like naïve realism not stand the trial of time. Thus we may – as at least case researchers ought to – experiment with different schemes of interpretations of what we notice.

Accordingly we may distinguish between

- o *subjectivism,* – the naïve spontaneous, taken-for-granted fact that you "see" what is going on – an epistemological twin of naïve realism.
- o *suspended* or bracketed interpretation: a self-conscious, *reflective* activity. Deliberate experimentation with different interpretations while being aware that if we do not, we may just jump to a conclusion and thus could loose sight of a more appropriate perspective.

Interpretations are implicitly moralistic

It is up to us to choose whether we will give ourselves away to subjective interpretations, to professional[192] or playful experimenting with different schemes of "reading". In short we are responsible for our interpretations, – ref to existential truth, ref § 2.2. Off course, subjectivity may act as a protective shield. But self-denial of responsibility should indeed have consequences, as already mentioned.

> Thus we are led to recognize that social research in any case draws on interpretations, whether they be naïve or disguised. Thus social research is by implication is moral activity. And you cannot – should you want to – escape through the mouse-hole of making a stand for "explanation". That too is a choice.

So we better make our stand explicit. We are even so more bound to be normative so far we advise others what to consider before, during and after generation of facts.

This leaves us with the following program, first

- to look at historical exemplars where interpretation is a shared term for bestowing/reading meaning into and/or predicting events, then
- establish some characteristics, including some negatively tainted, for interpretative practice, before we
- finally settle for a more positive, rich, multi-perspectivist and self-observant practice for interpretation that eventually – in a later chapter – will move us towards an exegesis of understanding.

**I pay no regard to the things that are seen,
but to those that are unseen.**

St Paul[193]

4.4   Interpretation as a craft – a historical perspective

Historically "interpretation" was the art of identifying meaning by "seeing" what is at work behind the manifest, as it appears. In particular notification in the form of "divination" was esteemed[194] as a the cunning to

a) recognize the expressed signs of the divine or devilish powers working behind the veil of apparent reality,

b) "explain" what these signs mean and

c) guide us towards choosing the right precautions needed to safeguard our future.

And signs there were, everywhere. The augurs of Greece and Rome took omens from the type and directions of flight of birds. Appearing from the right was by the Greek seen as good and if from the left as bad. To the Romans it was the opposite. Others like the haruspices, read the will of a god in the entrails of sacrificed animals – liver and gallbladder – in particular, – a craft known as *exitispicy*. This may seem too fantastic to us. Yet it was an old science known to the Babylonians, amongst the Hittites[195] and still to day practised in Melanesia. Yet not all Greeks and Romans[196] believed in it.

To day exitispicy *seem* too fantastic to be believable. Yet we should not commit the *Fallacy of Assumed Irrationality* and discard what we cannot contain. For as Lévi Strauss says: The logic of myth may be alien to us, "buy only to the extent that our Western thinking is dominated by a too narrow logic"[197]. So we should rather regard what we cannot contain as a challenge to understand what an act of an Other may express. No matter what, how to read the hidden is the prototype for interpretation.

Dreams, astrology etc.

According to the Greek, dreams too were seen as signs, specifically as messages from the underworld[198].

People themselves were believed to be able to interpret their dreams[199], and if not, professionals were supposed to be able to help. Future potentialities could be revealed by either a throw of the dice, or by focusing on chance utterances, like the sensitivity of Master Freud for slips of tongue.

Just as the old Babylonian science of astrology with profound poetry expressed an linkage between the very small – our time of birth – with the greatest we know of, – the universe.

Hermeneutics

The early Christians, however, perceived diviners as devil-worshippers. Yet Christian culture soon developed an interpretive discourse of their own: "Hermeneutics". Theologians took passages from the Bible as a base by which they rephrased contemporary events – as they saw it – in their proper moral light.

The practice was – as they saw it – instituted by none other than Jesus, – the gracious. After the resurrection the incarnated joins a group of two. They discuss how the alleged now crucified prophet, had disappeared and left the tomb empty. Jesus, whom they do not recognize, says: "You fools, so slow-witted in grasping all what the prophets have declared! Did not the Messiah have to suffer in this way before attaining his glory!" And the text continues: "He proceeded from Moses and the various prophets to explain to them in all the Scriptures what related to himself."[200]

This passage endorsed the use of the Bible as an "explanatory" guide to interpret whatever happened, including earthquakes[201], draught, political unrest and sicknesses, etc., as expressions of God's will. As such the Bible is seen as *allegoric*: The texts *express* some deeper layers of meaning beyond the mere account of what happened when. If so the art of theologians is by means of the New Testament to make sense of present events.

This practice was secularized in the 19th century, and today hermeneutics is the scholarly discipline of interpreting man-made signs in general and writings in particular. So although "hermeneutics" has been used in a variety of ways, they have all had the same core: "Hermeios" is Greek for a priest at the Oracle at Delphi and linked to the trickster Hermes who – as a messenger from the Gods – is able to transform what is beyond human understanding into a form that human intelligence can grasp.[202] Thus we could refine our definition a little:

Interpretation is a way of transferring something
that is otherwise unintelligible into a form we can get hold of intellectually.

Such a transformation can be established by relating a statement to a greater corpus of texts: "Texts don't have meanings except in their relations to other texts. A text is a relational event, not a substance to be analysed" in it self, as an art critic may express it.[203]

Interpretation – what a wand of magic to make sense
out of what one does not have the faintest working knowledge of

Interpreting natural phenomena as such
Natural phenomena too are off course subject to "we know best" interpretations. We have already mentioned how Aristotle attributed a soul to magnets, ref Figure 1.6 #1, page 25 and how the Greek imagined that natural phenomena could be as rule driven as civilized societies.

Every one has hir favourites; one of mine by Adam of Bremen, who around 1076 wrote about Geography. Drawing on several sources he refers to the existence of North America (Vinland), Greenland. – And to Iceland, where "the ice on account of its age is so black in appearance that it burns when fire is set to it"[204] And yes there is a lot of ice and fire up there!

To day.
Today we look at the claims of augurs and the practices of the original hermeneutical art with suspicion. Their verdicts lacked coherence. They were "not grounded in extended sets of comprehensive and at least partially verifiable theories".

Nor do we "see" the war in Iraq 2003–7 – like the many incidents of the Bible – as due to the wrath of God. It was a political decision made by the President of the American "people"! Yet, Bush may argue he acted as the hand of God. Sociologists, however, certainly know better and explain the incident by means of their criteria of generalizations developed from past cases, be it fights for resources, concern for the safety of Israel, etc.

No matter what, interpretation is still the *art of taking noticed signs* as expressions of an otherwise more profound and hard-to-get-at-reality. A practice we – from case to case –better look at with reservation!

How can frogs in their pond come to share a notion of the ocean?

Until lions produce their own historians,
stories of hunting will glorify the hunter of game

4.5   Interpretation, negative social practices

Interpretation as a disapproving term
We all adhere to some basic statements about the world as they appear more proper, realistic or dignified to us than others. And with good reason – particularly if these are shared with those close to us, refer back to Figure 2.6 #1. – Statements we without much ado accept as valid and self-evident. While outsiders – who do not agree with "us" – are quick to characterize such sets as ideological expressions.

And sure dialogue can be enlightening. Yet many researchers – rather than listening – feel they have to fight their opponents and thus they bolster their own stand using various language games to belittle others, of which the following is the most simple:

In this inconspicuous perspective, interpretation[205] is beliefs *others* are prone to cling on. And even "we" may admit that their presentations may not necessarily be completely un-true – it is easy for "us" to see how they are interest-infested, politically radical or just too traditional ways of looking at the world.

Thus, you will probably see me as an interpreter as long as I appear to perceive what matters in the world in a different set of modes than you. In this light interpretations may at best emerge as spurious, amusing or curious, if not biased and/or dangerously self-destructive, or at worst used as a term to degrade those who do not adhere to "our" right ways of looking at the world.

Yet, let us be positive
While we have to acknowledge the negative or "accusing the other" use of the term "interpretation", we should not adhere to it. We should rather use it as a positive term for *sensing the world with more or less awareness of what we are doing and how*. In this sense interpretation will be seen as an integrated facet of living, which we should cultivate and make the best of. So in a positive vain we should

- readily acknowledge that we do interpret and
  - o learn to enjoy acquainting ourselves with some of the schemes for interpretations available on the intellectual, emotional and political markets "of making sense",
  - o while interpretations that seem to be too spurious should all the more make us wonder or
  - o recognize how they may cause us pain as we sense their self-destructive powers and thus the harm they may do to those who adhere to them.

Thus, rather than defaming alien interpretations we should embrace and explore their range.

Interpretation in a general sense is a translation from one domain to another, – be it of limp of cow, the glint in the eye of a sloppy dressed politician, or an assumed religious symbol.

But let us start with an apparently straightforward interpretative activity: Translation.

"Call me a cab." "OK, Mr A Cap"

4.6   Interpretation as translation

The cunning Greek god, Hermes had many responsibilities, one of which was to take charge of interpretation in general and the specific art of translating languages in particular. To translate a text across time and place is indeed a challenge as circumstances vary. Yet even when the frame of reference and type of presentation should be maintained, translation may be more tricky than we might be aware of – as illustrated by the following example of the conversion of an influential German body of texts into English, refer to Figure 4.6 #1.

The German terms originating out of Freud's introspective analysis refers to the experiences of lived life and are consequently borrowed from everyday speech.[206] They thus align the analysing person and the Other on the same level of dialogue.

The English terms are of course assumed to be translations, yet they are given a new twist: They are made technical. Thus they may – by implication – serve as a demarcation line between the therapist, as the master, and the person on the couch, as a client. This "technification" of Freud's key terms as well as increasing popularity of Freudianism may have helped promote a more schematic exposition of the oeuvre of the founding father.

That something may be lost as well as added in translations of texts is trivial. What I want to highlight goes beyond that:

Figure 4.6 #1: HOW KEY TERMS OF FREUD WERE TRANSLATED					
Reference	TERMS OF FREUD	Associations to the German text.	"Proper" translation[207]	OFFICIATED TRANSLATION	Associations to the officiated English version
Conscience	ÜBER ICH[209]	The internalised self-control of man	Upper-Me	SUPER EGO	Kind of policeman for the personality[208]
Consciousness	ICH	Here I am, as my self	I or Me	EGO	Egoism, acknowledged self-interest
Pre- or unconsciousness	ES	The drives of a child before it learns to control itself	It	ID	Reservoir for man's instinctive drives [210]

The implications of the standard translation into English may call for a short comment:

"Upper-Me": The part of me, which makes an inner voice heard as an ap-peal to a higher authority, the genesis of which may be

- • o un-known to the person himself or
- • o accepted as a heritage and identifying part of one's cultural identity
- • o a self-imposed guideline based on rational calculations, etc.

The "Super-Ego" as used in English though is often associated with:

- • o self-repression of all kinds.

Translation, maintaining neither context nor opus operandi

If the context is changed translations may be disastrous. In the early days of machine translation, "The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is frail"[211] was translated into Russian and then back into English as "The alcohol is passable but the meat rotten".

Obviously the machines could not identify the context – as they were created for translating scientific texts. Thus to exploit this sample as evidence and claim that automatic translations do not work would be an error. It is just that transferring Christian concepts to the realm of biology and physics is to go beyond context. Unfortunately this is less obvious that the same happens when an author pretends to present the views of a writer, whom she is subsequently going to attack.

Furthermore, imagine how much more may be lost or distorted when experiences, such as feelings and emotional occurrences, are converted to text! So as we turn to the challenge of converting the real into text, – as it occurs in social research at several levels – we will have to bear in mind how translation from one domain to another is an uncertain and shaky conversion.

The craft of translating texts

As expected there are several theories of how to convert texts across time and place. Taking a short look at these, may give us a better feel for the challenges of interpretation in general.

In an often reprinted, article Roman Jacobson[212] distinguishes between:

- o *Rewording*: translation, one by one, of the verbal signs from one language to another
- o *Transmutation*: interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of an other, nonverbal system.
- o *Proper translation*: interpretation of the verbal signs in one text by the means of an other language

Rewording is bound to create difficulties, as the chosen words in either language may have different spans of significance or meaning due to cultural reference, – say when the Eskimos around the American Airbase in Northern Greenland, called a Negro for a black White. Nor would a literal translation of proverb have the right flavour to it, nor would a poem, if the rhythm is to be kept. Add to this, the array of potential semiotic and grammatical differences!

Transmutation too contains a mixed bag of difficulties. Artistic illustrations of scenes in a novel may open or close the inner visions of a reader. Architectural and blue prints on the other hand add so much precision to a description, that informed readers may do without much, if any supplementary text.

And I do hope that many illustrations in this book do express the aim of my text better than the mere words alone could do. Yet I believe neither can speak as well for them selves as they do in combination.

Proper translations – transforming a text from a source language to a target language involves series of diverse kinds of translations in it self.

First "we" have to identify how each segment functions within the full corpus of text with regard to the culture of which it is an integrated part, then we have to identify the aim – we may assume – the author had for making it up. Next the "we" have grasp the ethos of the author, including the ways and means she applies as sense-making devices. Thus never quote anybody with out respect for context!

Then we have a) to consider the target culture, – how to find the means to express both the corpus and bits of the original text. Then b) before considering what words to use, we have determine whether the translated text is to be presented as if c) conceived in the target language or be d) presented in a way that honours is foreignness, ref Figure 4.6 #2.

I have not much to say in favour of c: Rephrasing the original text as if it was conceived today of someone from within the target language will course increase the texts accessibility for the common reader. Yet context is lost!

The alternative, d: To honour and make the foreignness of the original text obvious to the reader is – from a research view – far more worthy to consider, – not the least because as the German philosopher, Scleiermacher said: "Learning the classifications and thought-patterns of foreign cultures could enrich the target language". [213]

German translations of to day show more respect for the original text than English translations which tend to stress readability rather than introducing a sense for the foreign.

So interpretation as a craft is at least a triple construal:

o   Unravel the meaning of the original text itself, embedded as it is in the culture of the author, as well as hir background, etc., please refer to Figure 4.6 #2 then
o   identify the characteristics of the new domain and choose the means and the intention by which the meaning of the original text are to be transferred to it
o   Convert the text across domains

Figure 4.6 # 2: ONE PRESENTATION OF PROPER TRANSLATIONS
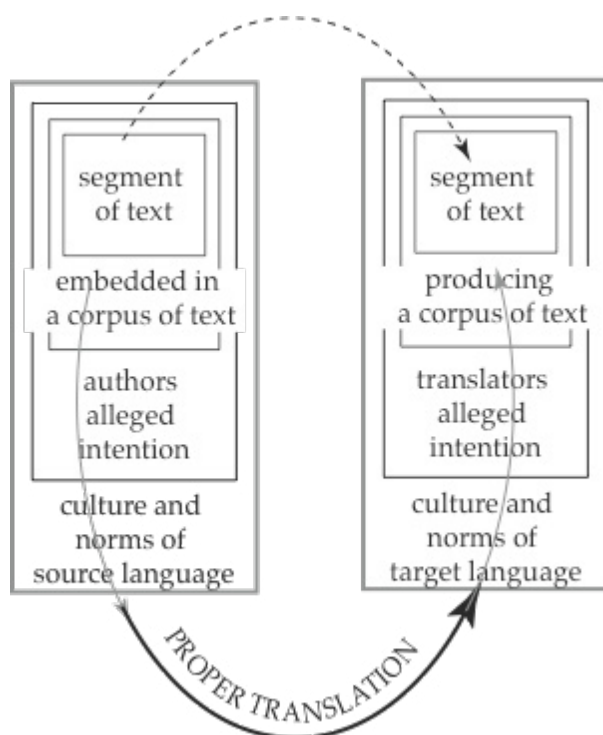
Proper translation is not a question about rewording, but step by step of to re-render the meaning of each segment of text into a target language.

Thus the translator has to decide whether

1) her text should express how an author would had written it, – if the target language had been her own, or whether

2) she should give the reader an impression of the culture of origin including, outlaying its "odd" metaphors, proverbs or poetic references associated with names for certain flowers.

We shall later in § 6.11 try to apply some of these distinctions for translation in a more extended sense. First though we have to look at the challenge of reference.

Even without reference, expressions may never the less make sense

I have mentioned the uncertainties of making sense of an apparent tautology like: "There is a house in Barcelona", refer to page 43.

So let us now look at a Danish expression like: "Never is a flag as beautiful as in head wind". In terms of reference this is obviously pure nonsense. Flags have to go with wind. Yet such a sentence, which cannot have any literal reference, may nevertheless be meaningful as an expression – provided *you* can establish a context. In this case, to express admiration for a person who keeps on struggling despite all odds.

Translation as conversion

In research though, ambiguous references are not allowed, although it occurs ever so often. E.g it should not be left to the reader to guess what an author has in mind when he in a text refers "something" as ambiguous as empathy.

But certain degrees of haziness is hard to avoid, as not all – according to dictionaries correct translations of terms – has the same span of significance. Nor the same array of terms! So the proper term may not even exist in the target language. If so the interpreter has struggle to search for another way of expressing what the author aims at.

To sum up, *interpretation in its broadest sense includes reading signs and present what is sensed in another medium*. Thus I particularly like one German word for translating: "übersetzen" – the literal meaning of which is to cross over a fence between domains.

The last to know about the sea is the fish.

Chinese proverb

From noticing signs to awareness of oneself as an agent of interpretation

We induce meaning as we make notes. Enraptured young men thrive on the smallest sign of appreciation from the fair damsel they themselves are drawn to. We read the weather, take omens from what management does rather than from what they say, as we know all too well that they may have hidden agendas. Or we pass our vile conceptions of political occurrences on to others with delightful indignation.

Reading signs is a tricky business; what is expressed may be mixed with "image-creating" schemes. Consider for instance a sentence like: "This is good wine". Such an appreciation may appear like an expert evaluation. Yet in terms of informational value it just means "I like the taste of this". Thus the intention behind the expression may very well be to promote oneself as a connoisseur of wine. Just as we through our celebration rituals for our dead heroes show to the world and ourselves what kind of society "we are".

"Reading signs" is so integrated a part of the natural flow of life that we are not necessarily aware of it. But it's the job of fieldworkers to question what we do notice as well as how others take note and read as signs.

Say we notice how members of a group have a hard time not only to make decisions, but to stick with those made. What may that entail? And what if the members withhold information from and/or even bad-mouth each other? Well, we have no guarantee for being able to read it properly. It all depends on circumstance. So we have, step by step, to consider what the observed behaviours may signify! Yet, for illustrative purposes allow me to suggest a vague guide for an initial translation of such occurrences into concepts, see Figure 4.6 #3.

Figure 4.6 #3: WHAT BEHAVIOUR IN GROUPS MAY INDICATE[214, 215]

DATA DOMAIN	ACCUMULATION OF OBSERVATIONS		SEEN OR READ AS
Study of memos and minutes	Difficulty making decisions		o Conflict concerning means and goals
	Decisions are often altered		o Lack of opportunity for mutual listening
Observational study of inter-personal behaviour	Information is withheld,		o "divide & rule" management
	Group members are secretly bad-mouthing each other, meetings and interchanges are dominated by formality		o unbound competition o fear/self-defence and rules matter, not vigilance
Interviews with employees	Negative attitude and dissatisfaction in general with production, plan-ning, management, decisions in the past, etc.	+ a high degree of absence	Potential conflicts, not yet acknowledged by group members
		+ no noticeable degree of absence	Interview with crackpot!

The table illustrates how we have to use different types of facts in order to create an embracing picture. Artefacts, memos, observations and semi-structured interviews, etc., have to be combined in order to identify, e.g., how often "what" happens as well as to identify "why".

No matter how sure we are of our aptitude for reading signs, we can never be certain that we are right. Really – if realists – we should acknowledge that social reality might never be as we just imagine it. What a sign might signify depends not just on it as such, but on when and how it occurs in conjunction with other signs. And who knows whether we noticed them all. All we can do is to start our search with an initial tentative conjecture of what any occurrence might mean.

Reading signs is by no means simple or straightforward. What somebody appears to express may be for effect. Or we may, in the course of "reading", rely on our own subjectivist schemes rather than on say comparisons across cases. Thus spokespersons for case studies again and again emphasise one particular dimension which research workers in the explanatory mode rarely emphasise nor perceive as a challenge: *Self-awareness is a necessary agent of noticing as well of presenting* final texts.

Fieldworkers acknowledge we are invited strangers – that we are ignorant. Thus we have constantly to reflect on how far we are able to identify what is going on, and thus continuously have to observe and experiment with how we observe.

We all run the risk of being seen as ideological ingrained theorists, – particularly if we nurture an antagonistic attitude to others. This may the case or not. But how would you know your position, if you have not even given yourself away to playful experiments with different schemes of interpretation? So rather than to identify yourself with a particular perspective you might be better off trying to be a curious rascal!

What we notice is properly released due to many antecedents or as some say, causes. Yet we are often all too quick to attribute motives to what we see other people do. And we do it with even greater ease when we look at others from afar. Thus being near may have educational effects for us! How often have I not – as a case researcher – been taken by surprise when an informant showed me how incomplete my immediate as well as later analytical interpretations were!

Thus we might soften our own ways of discerning or *looking at signs* as an "idea generating technique", rather than being captivated by our self-created interpretations. We will return to in the last chapter dealing with research on the understanding mode, refer to § 6.5 & 6.9. First however, we have to recall how interpretation may be coloured by choice of context:

The part and the whole,
– the challenge of how to choose a context for interpretation
A text in front of us lays itself open to more interpretations than the one the author believed she expressed. How often have we not experienced a text explicitly written with one purpose in mind twisted around by a referee. This may of course be the result of an outright malignant strategy or personal drive, but not necessarily. How a text is "seen" depends on the context chosen by the analyst. Figure 4.6 #4 PWHO depicts a number of strategies for choice of orientation and range for choice of context.

Figure 4.6 #4: PARTS AND WHOLES – IDEAL-TYPICAL FORMS OF PLACING TEXTS IN RELATION TO A WHOLE		
PLACING		ILLUSTRATIONS
A TEXT IN A GRANDER CONTEXT	BITS OF INTERVIEWS IN A COMPREHENSIVE IMAGE	SELECTED FOR A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS
A) Relating the elements of the text to the text at large, on premises of our likening	"Just" relating discrete elements in the interview to the interview at large	Searching for consistency in the informant's use of key concepts or, for a pattern in his choice of metaphors
B.1) Relating the text to what we know about the author's life (expression angle)	Relating the interview to hir personal back-ground, education and position in company and/or community	Which aspects of life does the speaker stress and which does she ignore, be it economy, – need for control, participation or different customers perception of company?
B.2) Relating the intention we believe the Other might have had for producing it (effect angle)	"Seeing" what is said as a mean to create an effect the other may hope to create as e.g. a politically conscious being	What images of her self does the speaker promote and how do we relate these to her behavior and the perceptions her colleagues have of her
C.1) Relating the text to the particular time and culture in which it was produced	Using interview as an example of how middle managers in a Danish, medium-sized company in a rural area in West Jutland evaluate present challenges	A sample of case studies of selected companies are chosen in order to illustrate the concerns and actions taken across say US manufacturing industries through the transition period in the early 2000s and the outcome compared to the national strategies chosen elsewhere
C.2) Relating the text to the traditions and other authors he refers to for inspiration as well as those he write up against	The interview is seen an expression of the challenges and dilemmas facing supervisors in 2000 during the on going organizational challenges towards greater participation.	

In case A) refer to Figure 4.6 #3, the analyst believes himself able to dissect the text in front of him, regardless of who produced it and when. This, of course, must be done be in a certain way, – linguistically, argumentatively or with a more personal outlook, as when texts are read for personal enlightenment.

B.1-2) exemplify two avenues, often chosen by a psychology related literary critic as she wants to "explain" how a given author worked and why.[216]

C.1-2), may for instance exemplify the integration of texts as props for cultural enlightenment. Including relating a text of a certain author to her contemporary artists, their time and predecessors, – ref to the quote by Bloom al ready referred to in § 4.4.

Relating parts to a whole is, of course, not limited to textual analysis. And – as this essay is particularly devoted to empirically based social research – I will confine myself to a sketc.h of interpretative approaches to primarily human behaviour, including speech-acts. Thus I regrettably have to bypass the fun of interpretative studies of artefacts, architectural expressions, ancient paintings, etc.

So let us recall that choice of *context* is not the only way we set the scene. Whatever we choose to bring to light depends on the perspective chosen, as well as our focus.

INTERPRETATION ACCORDING
TO SPAN, LEVEL AND SELF-AWARENESS

Awareness of context, perspective, is as essential as the need to differentiate between the social sciences with each their focus on persons, groups, organizations or cultures. In short we need to relate our interpretations to a self-defined level and span.

If you see the point, you are not in it

4.7   The challenge of classification – introducing level and span

It is a challenge to present a short, yet comprehensive typology for interpretative practices across different domains. After several attempts, I have primarily settled for *level, span and focus*, but I might have chosen scale and scope as well.

LEVEL is here – as in general systems theory – defined as *degree of aggregatio*n. Culture studies represent a higher degree of aggregation than social-psychological studies of groups. Level may thus, metaphorically be read as how many dimensions of life a given science tries to cover and read an aggregated order into.

SPAN refers to the extent to which a given principle of interpretation and/or theory is claimed to cover. For instance materialism has an alleged greater span than, say, behaviourism.

FOCUS refers to a more limited area or number of cases to which a given interpretative principle is expected to be applicable. While span and scale are more or less sketc.hy, focus will attempt to outline opus operandi.

In the following chapter on explanations we have to add another dimension that might be used to characterize interpretations: Degree of *specificity* concerning when and how a claim can be applied, see Figure 5.8 #3, page 226. Here though an implicit reference to specificity will suffice.

Level, span and focus are all aspects of the art of generalization from, to and across cases as metaphorically depicted in figure 4.7 #1.

Figure 4.7 #1: LEVEL, SPAN AND FOCUS
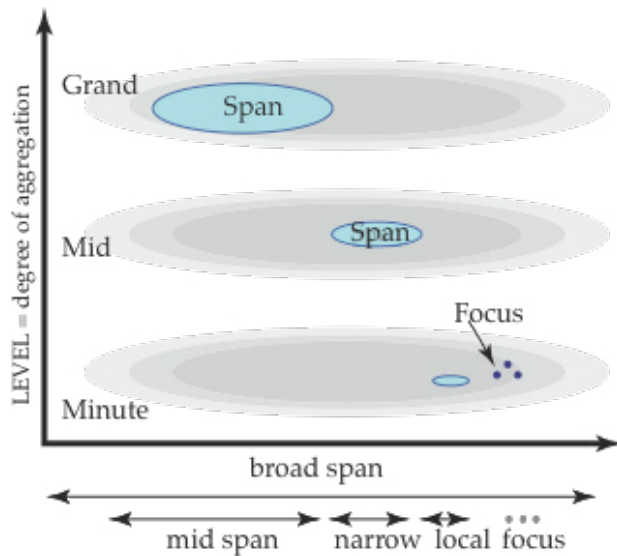
Level refers to the degree of theoretical aggregation. "Culture – sociology – psychology" is a popular three-tier social structure.

Readers may observe that no room is left e.g. for economics as a discipline per se. This is debatable and will be discussed later in relation to Institutinalism in §4.12.

Three levels are neat, but one might also try to work with e.g. a seven-tier structure: "History –culture – sociology – social psychology – personal psychology – neurology – biochemistry.

Span refers to the degree of coverage we expect from a theory. Or we may just *focus* on a set of local constructs based e.g. on research from one field.

Levels are relatively easy to define by means of the classifications by which each type of science defines it self. But for case research we usually need to move across levels. Studying how teams organize themselves in a high-tech company, we cannot e.g. ignore the culture or type of economy it is embedded in. While the focus in this case could be on social psychology, the sets of higher-level aggregations will serve as background. Nor can we focus on a given culture without drawing on descriptions of lower-level phenomena.

Thus we have to add a historical dimension in order to complete the imagery of levels, ref Figure 4.7 #2, which we will later expound in more detail in chapter 5.16 on Emergence.

**Figure 4.7 #2: EVENTS MAY BE CATEGORIZED AS TYPES WITHIN
A HIERARCHY, AS WELL AS HAPPENINGS ALONG A TIME LINE**
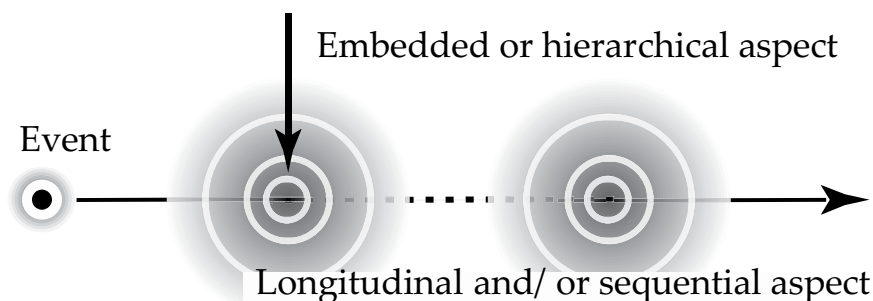
Events can either be seen as an exemplar of a type embedded in a hierarchical structure of categories and/or as an occurrence with antecedents, duration, presence as well as with a potential for becoming.

Level and span, a closer look

As we have to distinguish between different levels of interpretation we have to suggest a number. Here I have just as an illustration of the idea settled for at least three:

- *Minute level*: Strategies for interpreting the behaviour of individuals – be it our own or of those we meet, hear or read about during everyday life. – The *psychological* level, you might say.
- *Mid level:* Interpretations meant to cover the behaviour of groups working together and/or aggregated traits of persons in certain jobs, including partial postulates about the essence of a selected social institution, for instance the function of social institutions like marriage, "giving gifts", un-employment benefits, etc. Also called the anthropological and/or *sociological* level.
- *Grand level*: Interpretations relating to highlighting and defining the characteristics and inner workings of more aggregated social phenomena, say Peasant Armies in the Middle Ages, Renaissance Culture or the Modern so called Democratic State, – the *cultural* level.

Secondly various sets of interpretations may claim to cover various breadths of span. Like rational choice theory assumes to cover a broader span than consumer behaviour theory. So allow me to suggest this taxonomy:

- *Narrow span,* interpretations that purport just to cover a small sample of concrete incidents at hand, say paedophiles' peculiar attraction to children.
- *Mid span*, interpretive practices claimed to be valid for what love is in general or the commonly shared features of organizations and institutionalized life.
- *Broad span,* all encompassing, powerful postulates on the fundamental nature, essence and/or drives of for instance a man, institutions, societies, nature, life and/or the godly.

Thus level relates to the "extent of aggregation" of *what* is characterized, and span to *how* much we include across any level.

4.8   Some ad hoc interpretations primarily at the minute level

Interpretations may be made at the spur of the moment, with some hesitation or better with deliberate self-conscious awareness. The first just comes to us; the second with some uneasiness, the latter we have to learn. Let us first look at some of our spontaneous ways and means through which we try to make sense of everyday social life. On this level, our interpretations consist mainly in

- *Labelling, assigning names* to occurrences – you check what you recognize is detectable by others as well – or just appears to be so to you-
- *Outlining relations* between occurrences be they perceived as real or symbolic[217] and what – as we see it – releases them. By some called identification of causes.

Among the mass of minute interpretations of everyday life, allow me first to select and comment on a few of particular importance to social research in general and fieldwork in particular:

- o   Attribution of motives
- o   Projections

Attribution of motives
– from ad hoc to more substantiated practices
For nameless years, spokes-persons for the Christian churches used reference to providence as the *grand* master principle operating beyond all sorts of movements, ranging from earthquakes and pest to political as well as everyday events. This served several purposes.

One is personal resilience: We may not know why something happened, but if it is G.d's will, so let it be: Do not meddle with that. It stifled curiosity with the same implicit message as Stoicism: "Do not occupy and trouble yourself with what you are unable to control. Just turn to life and do your own best". Now, one might say that G.d is too comprehensive a concept to "explain" all sorts of minor or major stuff and thus a violation of categories across levels. But that might trample on some people's feelings. So let us pass over that, because there is more at stake: The claim implicates that everything, as it occurs, does so for a reason.

The belief that occurrences happen for a reason or a purpose is as old as man's first efforts to come to terms with nature. So when asked, we had better – if we want to prove our worth – be able to present a reason for the course of events. To present and "show oneself able to expretate", ref foot note 19, has such a powerful grip on the western mind set that we tend to more or less automatically drum up reasons when asked.

It is fascinating to follow the cunning with which a three-year-old – having sensed the magic of language – can present explanations for everything. Say, the milkman is late: "He's kissing a lady!" Or why an aeroplane fell out of the sky: "The pilot just fell asleep!" Children are so quick to invent probable reasons in order to make our world intelligible, which they without any notion of shame triumphantly present to others. Language certainly has a magic of its own, ref § 2.3 & § 4.2.

So the ability to present *ad hoc interpretations* causes comes to us we learn to speak. And it stays with us as an integrated feature of everyday language games. We might for instance claim that the "behaviour of a *lecher* is due to his thirst for women". Now this "alleged explication" may merely exist within language itself as a tautology – like "No bachelors are married".

Yet there may be more to it, a subjective dimension: I may occasionally have recognized inwardly how a passing female may tickle me sexually. So even the above statement about a lecher could literally be read as a tautology, what it express may based on emotional occurrences I recognize from myself.

This reference to the drives of a lecher exemplifies interpretation in one of its most common forms: A probable cause, an intention or a drive we *recognize* from within ourselves, is put forward as the only one. –Thus committing the *fallacy of insufficient specification*! Because, as already stated, what we observe may have a plurality of causes.

Secondly, even though the statement parades as an explanation, it is not, as the effect comes before the alleged cause. "We search for something in order to state why something is as it is."[218] Reference to "motivation" is thus just to make sense. Motives do not necessarily "exist" apart from being forces we imagine at work within others as we try to make their actions intelligible to ourselves

Yet, if we as researchers refer to motivation, we must be able to establish the "existence" of specific inner drives independently of behaviour. An alleged cause is just an *"after the fact invention"* which only acquires validity by sheer appearance.

So, let us just accept "motivation" as a *tentative pattern* by means of which we – according to contingent circumstance – may make a first educated guess as to what is at stake. And then next search for both horizontal and vertical coherence as outlined by the previous figure 2.4 #2.

Why does the lady in the yellow dress abstain from eating, unlike the rest of us around the table?" "Oh, she is not hungry!" Oh yes, that makes sense! Yet she may – for all sorts of other reason – abstain from eating even she want to. She may e.g. be fasting in order to test her power to resist her carnal appetites. We will only know why, if we ask her, and even then she might – in order to protect herself – just want give us an answer she reckons will be effectively acceptable for us.

Intent and/or disposition

So we attribute motives to other people. They may be very specific and may relate to a situation at hand, *intent*, or they may be more general, as a disposition to act, believed to be contained within the other. A sketc.h of some of the varieties of inter-relations is exemplified in Figure 4.8 #1 ATSEQ.1.

Figure 4.8 #1 ATSEQ.1. AN ATTRIBUTION SEQUENCE

Consider the following sequence: John tells Louis that Ricky has belittled him. Now Louis feels slighted. This in turn may lead to a three-step sequence of subsequent attributions:

0: An act is perceived
1: An immediate cause for what Ricky did is identified
2: A reason is provided: Ricky intended to hurt Louis' reputation
3: This may lead to a more comprehensive aggregate "explanation". Ricky is attributed with a general trait that may hint at how he will act in the future as he is a mischievous sot".
4: Thus, in hindsight the effect and what caused it is interpreted as a consequence of Ricky's general disposition. This will most likely colour Louis' future perception of him.
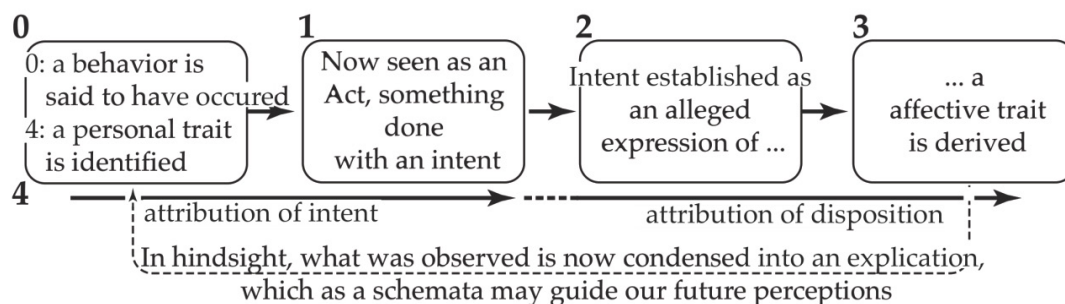
The ease with which we move from reading signs to interpretation is fraught with pitfalls, especially as the certainty of having found a reason all too easily clouds the need to look closer at opus operandi.

In Figure 4.8 #1, ATSEQ.1.we, for instance, ignored to attribute any characteristics to John and Louis. Our inclination towards making our worlds intelligible is all too often stronger than our inclination to explore. It may even be a question of decorum not to! In addition, ad hoc interpretations have their own reward: They enable us to appear as if we know what is going on – at least to ourselves.

This may have dire consequences for social research, but let us first take a further glance at our practices.

Man as a self-interpreting entity.
As an "I" man has been subject to many definitions. One is to identify ourselves either by what we do, *functional identity*, or by the direction of changes we perceive is taking place within us, *dynamic identity*.[219]

In the first case we attribute our identity to what we do, our job, how we usually react, hobbies or what we have achieved, place of birth, exams, etc. By dynamic identity we refer to ourselves as a person in movement towards who knows what!

Both types have advantages as well as disadvantages. One has to be honest as to where we come from, but to cling to a certain outlooks just because you were trained as a lawyer is, of course, a self-limiting amputation in contrast to seeing one self as being on the move and open for other perspectives.

Secondly, self-interpretation by means of identification with goals, acts and dispositions may lead to confusion, if not delusion. Say, yesterday I told you that have now decided to stop overeating. Yet, now you see "I" just bought a chocolate bar! So obviously "I" do want to eat more than I will ! "We" have all caught ourselves doing something we have decided not to do. Thus who are we then, really? And as the proof is in the pudding, *purpose and act can only be separated in theory*, not in practice.

What "we" "really" want is expressed in our actions. But if so who is the "I" in the sentence above? A divided "I", certainly! Some "I_A" want to give myself away to eating, another to make "me" stay away from guzzling. So what "I" am is a battlefield of I_N's, as Gestalt psychology teaches us. So, isn't all our talk about say, "wanting not to," just an invocation from one "Me" to persuade another "Me"? And in the example stated, the magic apparently did not work!

It is first when you see, what you actually do, "you" know who you are and what you want as a person. You may eventually be led to stop fattening up, but persuasion merely by words is weak voodoo.[220]

Thus the images we make out of ourselves, either as we are or want to be, cannot necessarily bear a reality test. Language is an all too convenient playground for beliefs, but of course, nor could we instruct and guide ourselves through change without it.

> Intent is too intimate…to be more than approximately interpreted.
> It even escapes self-observation…We constantly explain acts
> due to petty feelings or blind routine by
> generous passions or lofty ideals
>
> Durkheim[221]

Laddering as an example of enforced self-attribution
Despite the ease with which we attribute motives to others, we may – if asked seriously – hesitate to state our own. Instead "we" would rather – if given the time and space – tell you about significant incidents in our lives from which we later took guidance. Yet, westerners are brought up to be responsible and thus expected to be accountable. So we – divided I's or not – are supposed to be able to produce reasons "here and now" for what we did if asked. This is amply illustrated by the following game drawn from a social research practice:

Laddering is an interrogation technique primarily used in marketing. The investigator invites another, defined as a consumer, to tell why she is buying a certain product. The informant states a reason, say: it is for amusement. She is then asked why amusement, is important to her. She offers a reason: It makes me smile. The interrogator again asks why smiling matters. The successive flow of "why's" creates a pressure to answer, the aim being to lead the informant to indicate a string of increasingly more fundamental" values for her conduct of life" related to, say, the purchase of bread.[222] Please refer to Figure 4.8 #2.

Figure 4.8 #2: REASONS GIVEN AT INCREASINGLY HIGHER LEVEL OF ABSTRACTION FOR PURCHASES, ACCORDING TO LADDERING LADD

Alleged "values"   "good health"   "feeling good"

Attribution of meaning

Image of personal consequences of use

Characteristics attributed to product ...

Product seen as instrumental for achieving value
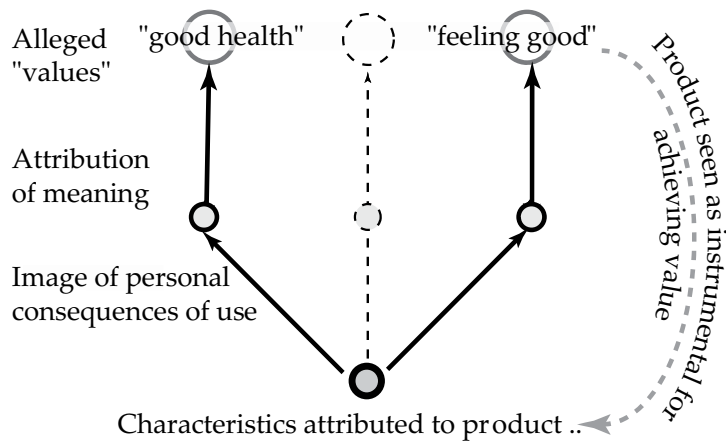
Laddering consists of asking a person a series of why-questions. This should result in a means-end chain: product characteristics, consequen-ces, life values, like, those listed below:

I buy organically grown vegetables as they are

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free from pesticides, because

- o   it is healthier for me to eat than any alternative, (personal consequences)
- o   And I prefer to stay healthy, (personal commitment)
- o   Furthermore, it makes me feel good to help preserve nature, (personal commitment to a social goal).

Several "values" are hinted at in the figure above. As one at least is expected to be able to state at least one reason why they bought a product, even they might have bought it on impulse, ect.

Laddering exemplifies how people, when asked, are able to present a *coherent* relation between our actions and what they mean to us, staying healthy, feeling good and preserving nature. Yet observe how reasons given for the behaviour in focus is not related to others aspects of life of the informants, nor integrated in a model like the one outlined as Figure 2.4 #2 CODES, page 52. Thus the interviewer is left high and dry without any possibility to ascertain whether "health" "really" is a concern for the interviewee. To do so we would have to explore whether the interviewee smokes, drinks alcohol, exercises, etc. "Laddering-answers" ought just to be taken as ad hoc. At best laddering just "measures" what people believe they ought to say, rather than what an independent observer may "measure" by going, say, through their trash cans.

However dubious the technique is as a reflection-inducing method, it more than amply illustrates our social readiness to attribute "qualities" to ourselves. For an illustration, consider two incidents of series and responses to statements and questions:

- a)   "No thank you I do not eat greasy foods!" Why? "I want to stay slim!" Why? "It is better for my health and sense of well-being!" or
- b)   "Chocolate"? "Yes thank you, I really should not!" Why? "Because I am on a diet…!" So? "…but what the heck, let us share, it tastes so good!"

Re A) Wanting to stay in good health is a raison d'être we all – if asked – should expect an interviewer to accept as reasonable. So it is a "good" answer! And like all the other answers given in the laddering interviews I have seen, it is expressed in positive terms.

Furthermore, staying healthy and feeling good are not necessarily independent values, as the latter may be a consequence of the first. To be reliable, the search for vertical coherence has to be supplemented with horizontal coherence.

Re B) Next, and this is indeed more serious than any methodological issues. So let us look at why laddering is a recommended technique in marketing. Let us take a dubious product:

Soft drinks are heavily advertised on tv as a remedy of creating a great social atmosphere particular amongst young people. Yet dieticians and dentists believe them to be "harmful" for our health. Now whether sugared food will make you fat depends what and how much you otherwise gulp down. What is important in this context is the tension we might feel between a short-term drive for immediate gratification, a mid-term drive for good company and a long-term goal of slimming down.

This is where laddering comes in as a help to advertisers: We live in an economy where industry can produce far more than we westerners can consume. The challenge is therefore no longer to satisfy some our basic needs, but to get goods sold. If being with others is shown to be valued, industry is with the aid of laddering given a tool for marketing departments to persuade consumers to buy stuff for short and mid-term gratification. An effect, openly admitted by some laddering experts![223]

Thus instead of helping us to improve our self-control in the long term, the advertising departments of business schools instruct their students in techniques that may undermine the efforts of any citizen that tries to achieve self-control, in this case staying slim and fit. Thus the divided "Self"[224] is left to fend for itself. And people even they could act otherwise are tempted to do something they know they will regret, as the short perspective runs counter to any planned behaviour in order to achieve long-term goals, refer back to figure 2.4 #2.

Thus, in accordance with the idiom of looking at ourselves as if we are rational creatures[225] with a positive self-image in contrast to what we really do, we have all the more reason to present socially acceptable reasons for our actions to a stranger.

Self-attribution as illustrated by "Laddering" does not necessarily imply knowing, it may imply biased presentations of oneself as a rational creature driven by positive motives rather than twisted passions and an inclination to counteract feelings of inferiority by means of expression. Any darker side of emotional life, such as jealousy, hardly ever rises to the surface by laddering, and if they do, only as projections.[226]

Expressed goals may matter, but so does circumstance certainly too
So it is hardly surprising that evidence for commitment to self-attributed goals are indeed scarce. Experiment after experiment show, how situational factors has a far greater weight than lofty self-perceptions[227].

You may characterize yourself as a helpful person, yet whether you will help another is circumstantial. Say you just see how some papers – accidentally, as it appears – drop from the hand of another. Now most people, 24 out of 25, will just leave the unfortunate man to his own mess. Yet, say "you" just found a quarter, if so 14 out of 16 will help.[228]

That off course does not mean, that we do not help each other. Just that it depends on the situation and who needs help. Just as it is far easier to punish a stranger or kill some afar, than one close to you.

So searching inward for reasons could – if conducted in a more self-reflective mood – open doors to our inner arena of contradictions.[229]

If we really want to study what drives people, including our troubles of balancing our drives, we thus have to engage our selves in a dialogue with others in a quest for vertical and horizontal coherence, ref § 2.4, – as well as triangulate what the acquaintances of any Other may tell us about her. But that is another story that in time moves us towards the final chapter on understanding.

The Other as a reflection of ourselves.
In its most naïve sense attribution of motives is driven by the assumption that "my sense of the internal life of others is accurate" – a position we have already referred to as *subjectivism.* Whereas naïve realism reflects the assumption that what I see is what it is, subjectivism reflects the assumption that I can sense the inner drives of the Other.

Subjectivism may be broken down into at least two stands, one of deductive identification and one of dissociation, namely

o the Other is a human being like me, thus she must feel like me when exposed to similar situations.
o while some "Others" are like me, still others are radically different an driven to act in ways that are beyond me.

Recognizing oneself in the Other may indeed be naïve. Yet in terms of solidarity it may be of great practical value. This is why we readily donate money to the havoc-stricken unknown. Just as imagining what I would feel if I, say, lost my job, gives me an idea of how it might hurt any Other, etc.

Nevertheless, we should not – and especially as social researchers – let ourselves be tempted be a belief in our own "expertise" and assume we know what happens to and within others. Understanding is not to be built on naïve belief, but on reflection and checking, ref Figure 4.8 #3. And recalling laddering, how can we assume to be able to get under the skin of the Other, when we tend to glamorize our own inner life, when asked to state a reason for our acts?

As for believing in the Other being different, the risk of making mistakes is even greater. Despite the ideal of the neutral researcher so dear to the Logical Empiricists, we should not believe our selves to be free from the vices and shortcomings we bestow on others. So let us look at the darker side of transference of motives.

The worst of all deceptions is self-deception

"Socrates"[230]

Projection

Among the many forms of attributing motives to others, projection is a prime example of what bias entails. The more energy we may need to upkeep of our own respectability the more we may be tempted to overlook aspects of our own behaviour, which would otherwise hurt our idealized self-picture. So, we bestow the darker aspects of ourselves on to others – particularly on people we have a reason to dislike, say because they exert power over us.

As a result politicians, managers and colleagues are often targets of transference of dispositions, like overzealous ambition, greed and contempt of others. Of course, we cannot just offhandedly evaluate to which degree defamatory remarks are well grounded or a projection. One should always try to be sensitive, search for additional clues and remember that targets for projections may at least partially display some of the characteristics attributed to them. Yet, the "projector" may not recognize how she possibly exaggerates the clues she identifies, nor how blind she may be to other more positive characteristics, which could also be attributed to the person or persons in question. So "the less we know, the more we are likely to project…", as JAC Browns points out.[231]

Managers may – when interviewed – express their annoyance with workers who do not pay attention, – who are sloppy, or just want to get as much out of their day with a minimum effort. A little later the same manager may stress that her central contribution to the company is process optimisation – getting the most out of production with the least investment. But isn't that what the workers for their part – as he sees it – want too?

And if the workers may be blamed for not seizing initiatives, but not given the abilities, nor room to make a difference, is that necessarily just their fault? Has management set up "problem identification groups of employees" and openly made them selves vulnerable to criticism?[232] Are management prepared to share the benefits of running a business with the shop floor? Or do they merely take pride in how much money they make? If so, they apply different standards according to whom they evaluate.

Of course, the bright interviewer can bring a manager to recognize such discrepancies. But it takes some heart to do so. As we may expect it to be an unpleasant "here and now" experience to be guided to face up to one's own projections. Just as it in hindsight could be crucially rewarding if faced and subsequently acted upon.

Thus there are a lot reasons to be suspicious of the suspicious, not the least of those who claim *all* industrial mangers to be exploiters, all Christians to be hypocrites or all politicians driven by self-interest. The will to make exaggerated statements about others at distance betrays a lack of will to distinguish and is thus most likely rooted in projections.

Thus socialist revolutionaries – if they do get in power – are likely to give themselves away to the worst vices of mono-capitalism, be it favouritism, corruption and self-grandiosity.

Bad conscience

Amongst projections *bad conscience* is a particularly vicious type. Here the "other" is not only debased, but punished for what one unwittingly neglects to grasp of oneself.

An example: In the eighties, the emergence of qualitative case studies was met with hostility from established survey-based researchers. For several reasons, of course, which were not all equally flattering for all qualitative studies! Some were and are indeed still too sloppy. But I am sure that personal sense of uneasiness with quantitative methodology was part of it too!

Curiously it was not my colleagues in the data processing and statistical department who tried to impede neither my engagement nor the students, certainly! The primary obstruction came from the Dean of Research who was devoted to surveys and statistical analysis. My insistent demand for respect and need to let "people express themselves" seemed to touch a concern that his approach had to neglect. So I questioned whether "scientists" have a special right to subject others to accommodate to their more specific vocabularies!

To avoid facing up to a potential inner unease, the Dean felt that he had to fight the person that triggered such an uncertainty. A hostility that lingered on as a personal dislike as more and more PhD students, even some from his own department, began to attend courses in qualitative research, including mine. Apart from the bad conscience I here attribute to him, it is evident that since I aroused his wrath rather than his sensitivity, I failed too.

Examples of bad conscience are bountiful and may include majority cultures' collective defaming of minorities, e.g., White Protestants against "Natives" in the Colonial Era, Males towards Females, or Israelis against their, in a genetic sense, "Palestinian Brothers".

While the other is hurt, we – as projectors – too have a price to pay for attributing bad motives and traits as well as rationalizing our negativity to the Other. It undermines one's own ability for sense-making.

The fallacy of assumed irrationality

But let us finish on a lighter note. Let us look at a situation where we hear about people we certainly do not sympathize with, nor can we imagine them to be like us in any way, say the, Communists of Cambodia (Khmer Rouge), the priests in the Danish church who in their time profited from the forced transports of Africans as slaves to the Americas, or our days suicide bombers. Here we may opt for at least three alternatives:

- o Either stating that it is beyond our conception that anyone might behave like that, or
- o that – in order to present oneself as a knowledgeable person – one may come up with a reason by e.g. referring to jealousy, economical self-interest, struggle for power, despair, etc. or
- o just claim the Other to be irrational.

First: It is absolutely fair as well as honest just to state that "I do not know why and how they act like they do". This keeps the door open for further search, whereas the second position closes it.

The third, though, is even more tragic. To deny the logic of what one cannot contain is a luxury that social researchers hardly can afford! The very fact that we fail to see any reason for the actions of another does not mean the other is human like the rest of us. It is not a fault of the "Other's" if "you" cannot contain him! So stick to what you do know, face what you do not know and do not indulge in the *fallacy of assumed irrationality*!

We have to ask our selves: As long as our interpretations hinge on either recognition or denial of what we could recognize within the Other, we can hardly trust ourselves able to produce an insight of what is going on within others. And if we do, it seems as if we are condemned to our own subjectivity. In principle, yes! But there is more to it, which we as social researchers have to be painfully aware of:

First we should abstain from attributing motives to anyone just by appearance. Surveillance is necessary, but not sufficient. Noticing must be supplemented with a personal report of the Other. Yet even that may not be enough. When confronted most westerners will be able – as they are expected to – to give "after-the-fact expretations (ref foot note 19) of their actions, as illustrated in the case of laddering.

Minute interpretation, consequences for social research
The only way to get a better foundation for our evaluations is long-range observation and dialogue, helping people to explore and get acquainted with their inner drives. Coming to terms must not be done in a slipshod manner but approached with care: Aiming for coherence through analytical generalization, integrating new evidence with identified patterns and search for potential consequences may sensitize us to identify what we have failed to grasp, as indicated in Figure 4.8 #3.

Minute interpretations aim to establish a background that let us believe we are able to infer why an identified event or series of events occurred as it did. And they may be obliviously naïve, ad hoc, consciously focused on certain aspects rather than others, or done with the playful self-awareness of a try-out. In the latter case of open-minded, experimentally focused interpretations we talk about an *indicative* approach, as illustrated in the previously presented Figure 4.6 #3, page 117.

Figure: 4.8 #3: ATSEQ.2 AN ATTRIBUTION SEQUENCE, # 1 CONTINUED
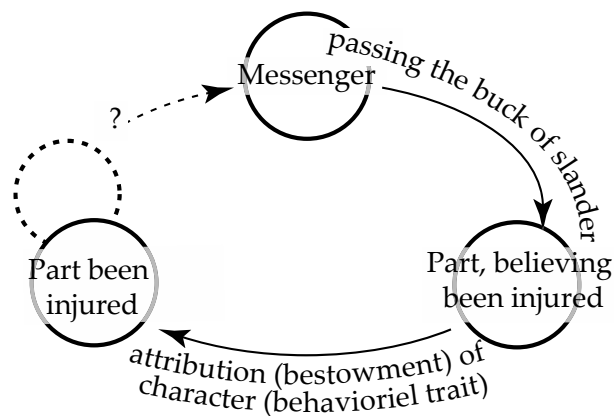
Referring to Figure 4.8 #1, we neither considered John's role as a messenger, nor Louis' sensitivity. So let us repeat the fact: All we noticed was what John said. So what?

May be Louis already had an inkling against Ricky, who on his part in fact did not bad-mouth him. Or may be John just used the magic of language in order to create a double effect: Making Louis feel slighted and in consequence arousing his anger against Ricky so they together can stigmatize the poor sot with mischievousness and thus attributing him with a foul character trait.

Language is indeed magical! Words rule the day. – They, as the social constructivists preach, shape the social!

Yet is also obvious that Louis before taken a stand should have checked what Ricky actually said. If he in fact did say anything with the intention of belittling him.

Thus, the best way is *triple-listening*: Listen to and testing the Other as well as well as one-self: Bringing our subjectivity to the test, and check our perceptions of the other by presenting what we perceive and convey them back to her.

Reflection and mutual agreement is, of course, no guarantee of anything either. Yet, disagreement is a clear sign that further search, and especially dialogue is needed. Dialogue, thus, is the gateway to more grounded insight or perhaps even understanding. A challenge we will deal with later in § 6.

Reference to social causes may be trivial

If you ask me why George is taking extra courses in math. I think you will accept my answer, as I inform you "that his grades so far is too low to be allowed into Bayview University". Adding this what he wants too.

Now you may ask why he wants to go to university. This is far more challenging to respond to. First he might not know himself, secondly there may a lot of "reasons" ranging from George nurturing a vision of the life as an academic being more independent than that of a labourer, rebellion to or accommodating to the wishes of his father, getting rid of an old girlfriend the nice way by insisting he has to move, etc.

In the first case (taking courses) the set stage is limited and the reasons given open for others to test. In the latter case when reference is made to "social causes" the arena set is wide open for alternative, partially mutually supportive and conflicting drives. And if so we can only suggest some probable drivers[233].

Summing up our conclusions so far

Minute interpretations are applicable within the domain of interpersonal interchange, ranging from a) common-sense attribution of motivation to the every-day behaviour of the Other, to b) research-based psychological schemes. Among the guidelines identified for close-up case studies we may mention:

- Minute level interpretations may work through the transfer of inner drives, which we sense from ourselves, to others (attribution), regardless of whether we are ready to recognize such drives as part of ourselves or not (projection). Yet,
- we cannot be expected to know what others are up to, nor what drives them. The case of the fasting woman shows us how dangerous it is to attribute motives we know from ourselves to others. In every case many inner drives as well as outer stimulations may have been activated.
- Nor can we just rely on self-reports, particularly not when these are done in a slipshod manner, as documented in the case of laddering.

- Remember, there are no clear-cut relations between self-proclaimed attitudes and expressed behaviour. When confronted by researchers with an unknown agenda, the easiest way out is to whisk him off with a series of pleasing, politically correct answers, as most consumers tend to do when asked whether they buy ecologically acceptable food. Furthermore, as demonstrated by Chris Argyris, managers may not know whether their theory of action is compatible with how they actually behave.[234]
- Nor should we give in and opt to choose between obviously inadequate sources of insight! But the tension between words and deeds are indeed a most fascinating subject in itself.[235]
- Finally reference to "social drivers" should be listened to, but not accepted just at face value, so
- one of the high roads to greater self-awareness and change is to become aware of the discrepancies between our self-proclaimed image and actual behaviours.

With this in mind let us move on to schemes of attribution for more aggregated forms of social behaviour on mid-level.

4.9   Mid-level interpretations

Mid-level interpretations are mainly presentations of the assumed behavior of social groups, as well as why social institutions operate as some perceive them to do, – be it political parties, governmental departments, the judicial system, unemployment schemes, IT-based productions controls, etc., including at times postulates of the "nature" of selected social domains. Thus, while minute-level reasoning relates to psychological issues, mid-level thinking tries to explicate the raison d'être of more, encompassing social or sociological organized entities.

So let us start at the lower end, groups. Different social schools of thought nurture each their aggregate theories for our socialized behaviours, spanning from the more manifest to the most abstract, such as:

o *Reference group theory*: which simply states that we all take "significant Other" as a reference and/or guide for evaluating our own performance and that we explore the consequences, – a stand that will include hero worship.[236]…

o *Social stratification*[237] *and social mobility*: Sets of guidelines for differentiation between social groups, based on, e.g., economic, educational and occupational criteria, including span of control over other people. Rules are often supported by empirical data of how various groups view each other in terms of say, status. Social mobility theory, i.e. make good use of statistical data to show how selected groups of people ascend or descend relative to other groups in a social hierarchy as regards, e.g., technological changes.

Theories from these two theoretical domains may be combined, along the lines outlined by figure 2.4 #1.1, and if so used to explicate why the emotional strain of being fired is much tougher compared to being laid off, even the economic consequences may be the same. Or they may be used to expretate why trained operators to an increasing degree opt for middle-class norms. This opens up for theories related to:

o *Generation of social norms* – sets of principles for the on going changes of conduct in various population groups as history changes.

o *Cognitive Dissonance Theory* – an abstract principle, which, according to Festinger,[238] states something like: If reality is felt to be in dissonance with our thinking, we will feel strained. A way out is to re-define our goals in ways that will diminish the felt discrepancy. Thus "Cognitive Dissonance Theory" in its abstract format may include several other more specific theories, as illustrated in Figure 4.9 #1.

Figure 4.9 #: SELECTED MID-LEVEL THEORIES MAY BE INTEGRATED AT THE COST OF INCREASED ABSTRACTILIZATION
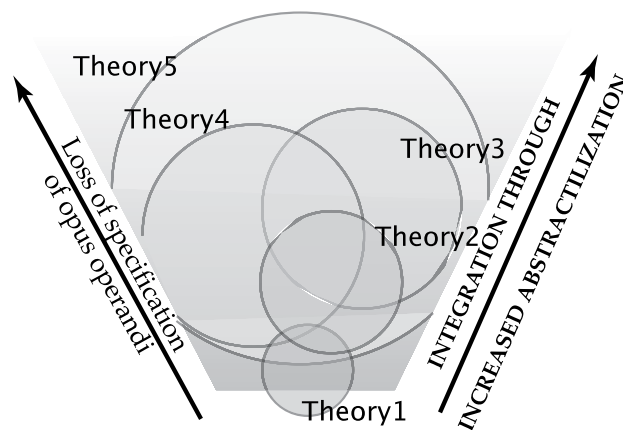
By making theories increasingly abstract like "Cognitive Dissonance Theory", they may include several more concrete theories with each their specific references to opus operandi. Yet to give a theory an increased air of universal validity has to be paid with a loss of reference to concrete applicability.

In conjunction with the two principles already outlined, Cognitive Dissonance Theory may be used as a frame to outline possible coping strategies, including those of emotional appeasement when confronted with a loss: For a concrete example, consider how complacency may work as a psychological self-defence for workers without much control of their lively hood[239]. Or worse how projective fantasies may act as falsifying safeguards for a wounded self-image, or as a push towards a more realistic elaboration of our situation, or theoretically, towards analytical generalization.

One further example of combining theories
Referring to the notion of "Social Mobility", let us focus not at those who move up, but stay put and try to make the most out of Festinger's principle:

If so, we may get a sense of how and the unfortunate could exploit the magic of language to psychologically comfort themselves by ruminating about, "how far better off "we" are, since "we" are not among those rich people who have acquired their wealth by exploiting others".
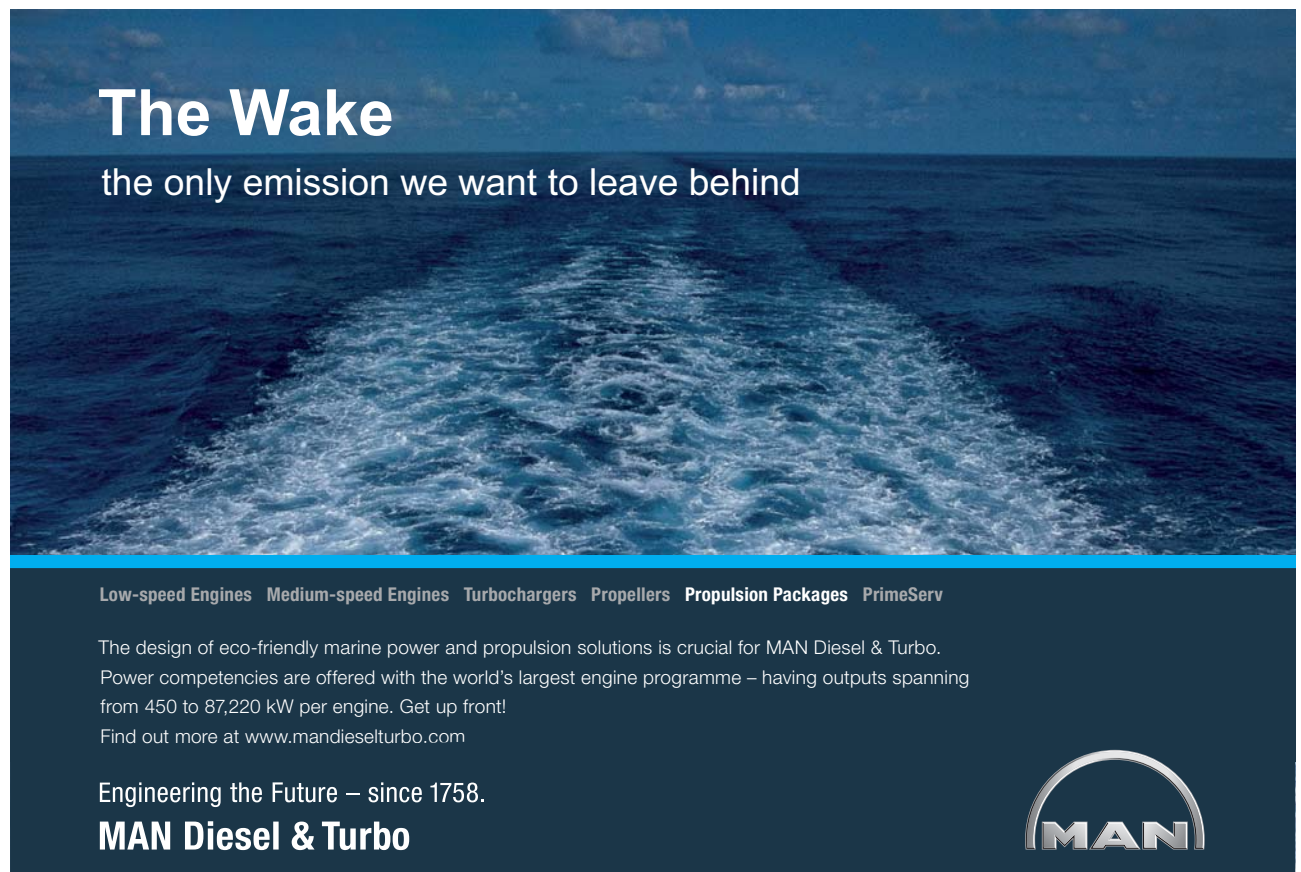
Typologies

Thus mid-level interpretations may outline

- Allegedly broad theories combining individual performance with emergent social or biological demands. Allow me here to mention two examples of such typologies:
  o In a long line of books Adizes has identified four types of organizational decision-makers: The *producer*, *P*, with an eye for short and mid-term affectivity. The *administrator*, *A*, with an eye for efficiency. The *entrepreneurs*, *E*, who take long-term, often quite new, initiatives. The *integrators*, *I*, who get people to cooperate and help them find their own means of solving challenges facing their parts of the firm (facilitation).
  This simple, yet catching typology may – when combined with the traditional model for the growth, maturing and decay of businesses – be developed into a strikingly rich description of required role leadership in different situations.[240]

Or

  o Erik Erikson's model of the eight stages of man, – most prominent example of how far a rather simple typology can go. It describes how our orientation towards life changes as we grow and the conflicts that each stage may contain, please refer to Figure 4.9 #2[241] ERIKS

Figure 4.9 #2: THE STAGES OF MAN ACCORDING TO ERIK ERIKSON

AGE	MODALITIES	Tensions
0–1, Infancy	To get and to give in return	Trust- Mistrust
2–3, toddler	To hold and to let go	Autonomy – Shame and Doubt
3–6, pre-schooler	To go after and to play	Initiative – Guilt
7–12, school age	To complete and make things together	Industrialness – Sense of inferiority
12–18, adolesence	To be oneself or not, and to share	Identity – Identity diffusion
20–35, early adulthood	To loose and find oneself in Others	Intimacy – Isolation
35–50 adulthood	To improve and to care for	Care – Self-absorption
60–, older adulthood	To be, through having been	Wisdom – Disgust & Despair

The chart is a simplification of Erik Erikson's own presentation[242] with an emphasis on aspects that might serve us well within the confines of the present text. Erikson's work is a well-founded reminder of the insufficiency of simplified models of man as an economically rational or sex-driven creature.

Our aims in life change as we grow and the radius of our significant relations change from mother to both parents, basic family, neighbourhood, peer groups, partners in friendship, labour and shared household and lastly in old age "my kind of people".

Summing up so far and moving on

Mid-level interpretation claims to show how different types of people acts, but also at a higher aggregated level how social institution function, whether by necessity or more or less on their own premises.

Let us take a sweeping, look at some of these: first an apparently *sense-making* approach, secondly an outright *ideological* approach, thirdly at examples of *analogical* thinking, particularly transference of a thought schemes from biological and technical sciences to social "science", and finally allow me to devote a few words to *statistic* generalization as a follow-up from § 2.10.

Functionalism (1)[243]

Our jaws and teeth serve us as a grinder. Likewise functionalism is grounded on the belief that any organization or department hereof serves a purpose: sales, production, instruction of employees, etc. And like some of our organs, the heart for instance,[244] some departments may, while serving the whole, nevertheless be semi-independent, e.g. the research department. The very names for these departments state how *or* why[245] it is.

"Functionalism" extends this scheme of purposefulness to social institutions in general – like unemployment benefit schemes, industrial plants and marriage rituals. Unemployment benefit schemes are for instance devised to maintain the population's purchasing power thus keeping industries running, as Keynesian economists will tell you. Functional theories state the purpose of a selected social institution, which may serve as a guide for performance evaluation.

So as car engines propel us forward, the purpose of prisons is – let us say – to punish and keep delinquents off the streets – just as the juridical system is there to ensure fairness and justice. So if you one might say that functionalism thrives on the metaphor of the machine, or better an of organism. This may seem reasonable enough. Social institutions serve a purpose. Right?

Yet there is only one snag to it: We do not necessarily agree what the purpose is. And that is why it is an interpretative scheme. Some claim that the purpose of prisons is or should at least be re-education rather than punishment.

A lot reasons are also been attributed to unemployment benefit schemes, ranging from Christian concern for the impoverished, social solidarity, need for a surplus army of hands, or to keep labour costs down, etc. Some of these may at certain times have had served some of these attributed functions, but may now be out-dated as e.g. "the surplus army of hands" claim. To day very few jobs in the West can be filled without years of initial training.

Thus the sheer attribution of a function to a social institution is not sufficient to state why it "exists". It requires something more, as we shall she when we come to the next chapter on "Explanation". For now it will suffice to state that functionalities we – as readers of newspapers – attribute to institutions may at best be naively ad hoc, at worst presented with a hidden political agenda.

This calamity is easily reinforced as researchers, confined within each their own discipline, often favour one type of functionalist expretation[246], rather than others, e.g. "it is all a question of power", as if the same principle lurks behind any event worthy of their attention.

Conflict sociology – as a brainchild of Marxism – may serve as an instructive example of an over-extended, broad span and thus rather ideological abuse of the functionalist idiom.

Adherents to this scheme instruct us to look for the heavy hand of management suppressing workers. And surely oppression of employees does exist. But as discussed in the Employee Owner, unions have, especially in the past, been as much part of the subjugation process as management. Alignment of their union members was, as union leadership saw it, a defensive strategy against exploitation.

Now, it is all right to be on watch for the trace of the exploitive hand of venture capitalists and management. But do not assume greed lurks as the only driver behind any introduction of expansive educational programs, profit sharing schemes or even employee ownership! It is good to be guided by expectations, but not to stick to them! Observations and inductive reasoning's may be as good if not a better guide. Allow me in passing to mention that is was to reject such "Truth before Looking"-Strategies that led Glaser and Strauss to formulate their Grounded Method approach.[247]

Now *suppression ideologies* may be bad enough in itself but the *the vulgar Darwinist approach to Liberalism*, is even worse as it opts to legitimise the power of the more gifted to exploit the weaker by stating "that 's Nature". An idea, that is controversial for an array of reasons:

First of all, this is not what Darwin said. Animals use a lot of survival strategies. According to your own temperament, you may – as your ideal pattern for society – choose the lone tiger, the pack of wolves, a flock of chimpanzees or the cooperating beehive. Thus with such a multitude of examples of "survival strategies" to choose from, the one you prefer may reflect your own subjectivism rather than the richness of reality.

If this is not enough, Darwinism accentuates a challenge, which the modern spokesperson for "evolutionary biology" still neglects: Natural selection of "evolutionary biology" purports only to "explain" when and how some life forms are screened out as conditions change. It does not gives us rules for when and how new life forms may emerge. Evolutionary biology contains only a negative principle. Oh, new species arise due to chance, – mutations, as it is called. But appeal to pure chance exemplifies *the fallacy of the principle of assumed concreteness,* in this case by making a principle out of one's own ignorance.

So we better either wonder or opt for the rather poetic Bergsonian concept of "Elan Vital"[248]: "In all matter of life there is an inborn tendency to multiply and increase sensitivity". And idea, which – as I see it – is a poetic extension of traits from, what is closest to us: An ever increased maturing of the individual to embrace more of life from birth to adulthood

Analogical transference of conceptual scheme
from hard sciences to the realm of social interpretations
Throughout history philosophers have been inspired to take *the most advanced technology of their day as an idiom* for the inner structure of man, society or even the universe.

Examples include Plato, who modelled his "world of Ideas" on geometrical reasoning. The mechanistic clock in the Church Tower in Middle Age was taken to symbolize the structure of the universe; – chemical transformation, which Schelling took as an idiom for social revolution; – the hydraulic pressure within a steam boiler, which Freud took as a picture of the pent-up pressure from unreleased psychological force, and the computer which according to cognitive psychology may serve as well as a model for the our ways of coming to terms with our acting.

Such schemes of transference across domains may indeed be enlightening as they offer us new perspectives. Yet, they may be narrowing too, as the focus they advocate necessarily leaves something out of consideration.

Thus cognitive psychology pays a prize for taking the computer as its paradigm: as it subsequently has to disregard for the whole realm of feelings and emotions embedded in our body. And while there have been cognitive attempts to embrace them, those I know of are strikingly inadequate, which a devotee, like Lazarus, with delightful honesty openly admits.[249]

To see the universe as nothing but a grand mechanistic clock or human consciousness as nothing but a bit-by-bit feedback structure are striking examples of *reductionist* interpretation that comes up with a solution before the problem is thoroughly explored.

Statistical correlation studies
 – a prime example of interpretations geared for mid-level
By necessity statistical surveys and analyses take place on mid-level, and many mid-level theories do in fact refer to statistical evidence. The essence of statistical analysis is the idea that all secondary, minute individual details any member of a group may possess will "counteract" each other in the multitude of samples. Thus only the general picture will stand out according to – "the law of great numbers".

But isn't statistical analysis just descriptive? Well figures in themselves do present nothing but different degrees of co-variation amongst selected variables. But nothing is gained apart from the presentation of rows of numbers. No! The numbers intrigues us to make sense out of them and so we do!

Let me here interject I respect the diligent care which the very best makers of surveys put into the control of the effects of their wording of questionnaires. However, un till recent most have been more than sloppy with wording the questions or fall into the trap of measuring what they can measure, rather than what they say they want to measure. For instance taking absence as the indicator for dissatisfaction, rather than dealing with the array of other indicators such as slander, mistrust, carelessness, work slowdowns and wrench throwing.

But certainly the reason why the best surveys serves us so well, is exactly because they are mid-level interpretations.

4.10   Minute and mid-level theorizing

Characteristics of interpretations of mid-level studies
Interpretations at mid-level represent selected perspectives that in hindsight can be used to make sense of events, including strings of re-occurring events. Thus they have to stick to a format that can serve as guides for empirical inquiry[250].

Methodologically mid-level theorizing include

- Integrated statements for social behaviour with
    - an assumed coverage across otherwise seemingly different lifestyles or organizational behaviours due to low levels of abstraction.[251]
- The central claims are neither subtle nor sophisticated and thus easy to applicable, thus
    - the basic concepts may readily be subject to statistical identification[252] and enumeration and so
    - combined into statements of co-variance within the chosen domain.
- Various mid-level principles may often be combined to form more specific theories. Sometimes even in combination with minute.
- Yet however inspirational, we have to be careful. Despite overexpansion of span and thus flagrant neglect of opus operandi, proponents often present mid-level theories of interpretation as explanatory.

The dividing line between minute and mid-level
To draw a dividing line between minute- and mid-level principles of analysis is not always as easy as one would expect at a first glance.

But here is a profound difference. Whereas minute-level principles primarily relate to our concrete existence, mid-span principles are more concerned with social realities of identified groups, organizations or social institutions at large.

As theories at both levels may be broad or narrow, abstract or concrete, some may be integrated others not.

E.g. it would be impossible to integrate Maslow's hierarchy of needs with suppression theory. Nor has the individual manager as a person a place in Adizes' typology, – nor can conflict theory embrace the devotion of any retiring owner who transfers a lump of his shares as ESOP capital to his employees.

But other mid-level theories may indeed absorb some minute-level theories as part of their build-up. Thus projection could be seen as an example of a coping tactic in accordance with discrepancy theory.

Broad-span interpretation on the mid-level
Festinger's theory exemplifies a broad-span integration of several theories carefully selected by theorampling across several domains of thinking – and even, at times, levels. And so may "Suppression Theory".

To go broad is a temptation for those who, when facing any new situation, would do their best to offer an interpretation that seems to fit their basic conception. Some students of political science are thus glad to interpret any move by a political party as a quest for or expression of power. – Just as an economist may stake his reputation on his belief in man as a rational attendant to his own interests.

**Because you have a key,
do not believe you can open all locks**

The cult of the rational

It is indeed fascinating how many a theorist is committed to bestowing power or selfish motives to others without seeing any need to include himself as a father and university professor in the scheme. "Everybody is so egotistical. No one seems to think about me"! How intriguing; we do not necessarily believe we share the characteristics we bestow on others, not even the group we belong to![253]

Could we imagine a believer in rationality who would ground his pleasure of watching and playing with his grandchildren as sheer calculation? If confronted – regardless of observations like those of Eriksson, refer to the previous Figure 4.9 #2 ERIK- he might state this is his way of securing their devotion when he grows old enough to need their care – as if grandchildren aren't a pleasure in them selves!

Apparently, it is the rule of today in the western world to pay lip-service to calculation and self-interest! It is as if our mind is stamped by the great breakthrough of the cult of the rational in the late 18th century, when social thinkers were so proud of their abilities to demask religion and other ideal conceptions of man and his strivings within society. Nietzsche, for example, saw Christianity as a form of collective defence of the weak against the individual expression of the independent, stronger-willed person! And Freudianism and Marxism – especially in their popularly known forms – strived to show us that "it is all a question" of sex or exploitation.

Thus broad-span interpretation should always be approached with care. To claim rational calculation, procreation, sex and/or power to be the essence of the social intercourse may thus be seen as an exaggerated, out-of-level-transference of minute-level conceptions via mid-level to grander, – a trait we will return to shortly in § 4.15.

So let us look at some of the most persuasive forms of grand-level thinking: 1) beliefs concerning life in general and more modestly, 2) unravelling patterns for social institutions across cultures.

4.11   Grand-level theorizing

Introductory overview

Broad, grand-level interpretations consist of a fundamental, often *ontological* claim about the essence of nature, the social world or the human conditions at large. Often supplemented with an associated *epistemology*, that outlines how we are able to come to terms with reality as defined. Among such sweeping convictions we already referred:

o   Realism, the belief[254] that there is at least a partly rule driven existence independent of us. And so may our inner and the social reality be – if not in principle – then at least at large.
o   Idealism, the belief that reality and in particular the social is shaped as man perceives it.

Both contain aspects worth noticing. Yet ultimately such grand-level theorizing is grounded in a committed belief – existential convictions as we called it, ref to § 2.2, page 34.

For some ideologies (ref page 41, 61) the ontological aspect though gets the upper hand.

In the following we will first refer to such two historical examples, which is as much with us to day as they were generations ago:

•   *Materialism*: The claim that what exists is but material entities in varying physical and chemical states and relations.
•   *Vitalism*: Life is endowed with spirit – as opposed to "dead matter".

But grand-level thinking may also be less ambitious and focused on cultural aspects. Thus our last examples will deal with

•   Identification of *cross-cultural patterns*.

But there are also grand level theorizing that primarily stress epistemological aspects, while the ontological position is rather uncertain or at least uncommitted! Amongst these one with contemporary prominence is grounded in the perception that language "dictates" how we "view" the world, define our perceptions of our personal identity, and which represents a challenge to the conception of understanding we will introduce in § 6:

•   *Structuralism*

**What is real…is the lived world, we share,
a world of complexity, ambiguity and richness that exceed simple dualism**

Linda Martin Alcoff[255]

An ontological challenge: Vitalism and Materialism

The doctrine of *Vitalism* claims that there is a fundamental difference between the living and the inanimate. The living is more than an accumulation of material parts! What is alive is imbued with a spirit or as some terms it, a soul. In contrast matter does not, – as Aristotle too taught, refer to Figure 1.6 #1.

Unfortunately we do not get a notion of what neither spirit nor soul is. It is just stated that it is. This turns Vitalism into an indeed a vague doctrine. Yet the writings of the self-proclaimed vitalist, Driesch[256], do make a lot of sense. – He saw biological beings as driven by a force of self-fulfilment. A drive, which in his day long before cybernetics could not be integrated in mechanical works!

Despite the vagueness of the term Vitalism, it is still extremely important as a carrier of an expressed feeling of respect for all living matter – formerly as expressed as animism – today expressed as an ecological concern for the flora and fauna of the Earth. A feeling some – inspired by Hindu visions of life – extends to include a vision of the Earth as the embodiment of the parthenogenic goddess Gaia. While, the Christian Church, in its ethnocentric simplicity, seems only to bestow the honour of having a soul to man.

Materialism is simply the ontological claim that everything that is, is composed entirely by the matter and nothing else. Materialism is thus a negative principle with an affirmative side. It denies that anything exists beyond the physical. Mind and consciousness including religious beliefs are just movements in matter just as the greening of leaves in spring. How this is possible is "just" a challenge for science to unravel, – a theme we will return in § 5.15.

As a program for science, materialists – at times called Naturalism,[257] – has driven man to the frontiers of human mastery of knowledge – the outer limits of astronomical space and the inner spheres of atoms and molecules, while its contribution to the social has been less illuminating, if not outright devastating for our respect for the unknown Other!

Vitalism is based on sentiment, Materialism on the intellect. Unfortunately proponents of either view seem more driven by a desire to reduce their counterparts to narrow-mindedness of confused make-belief, rather than see each other view as a source of inspiration for research and policy-making.

Ideology, doctrine, grand theory and the Nugget in the Rubble

Broad-span perceptions of reality particularly at the grand level are often linked to what many with a loose hand name as ideologies. And so may mid-level views like "Suppression Theory" be. Now, *ideology* is as slippery a term, which used positively may denote
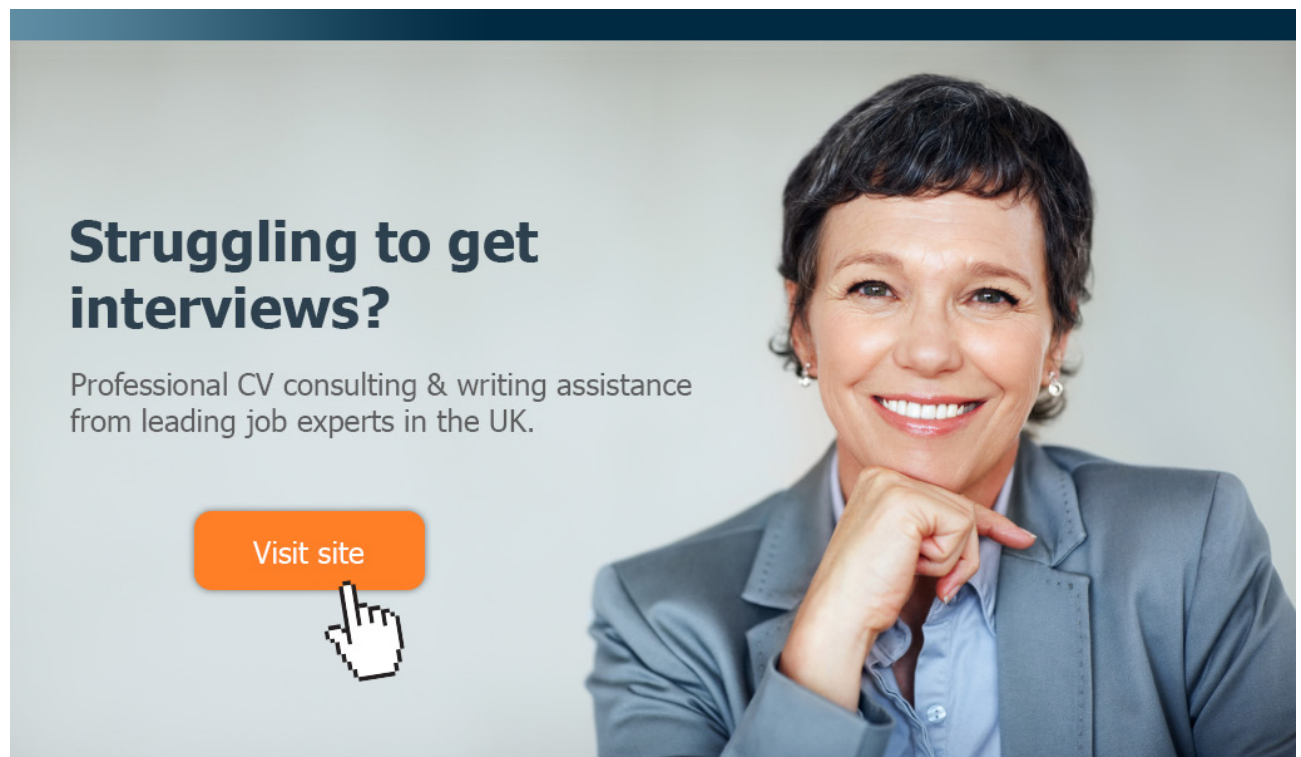
> a) a body of conceptual ideas behind a given scientific domain or
>   Or negatively expressed as
> b) a degrading term to defame a body of ideas which the speaker abhor.

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Personally, I prefer to use the term in the impartial way and leave it to those who use the term as a negative characterization of other views to include their own.

Thus I suggest we call any cluster of more or less coherent ideas and beliefs a doctrine. *Doctrine* is the positive expression for ideology in sense a) referred to above.

To distance one self from ideas, one is prone to reject, is as common as it is way of cutting yourself of from understanding. It may be far more productive to try to come to grips with why some people is drawn to them. Most so called ideologies – or should we say doctrines, I know of – contains an inner core worth noticing. If it was not for the uncertainty of the term I would had written "an inner core of truth"! Unfortunately some – when enlightened fell tempted to bolster and protect the core with outer layers of defences and attacks on other perspectives. Thus readers may get caught in the outer defensive web, rather than bring themselves in touch with the inner productive nuggets.

And certainly both Materialism and Vitalism do present some evidence to back them up and thus claim their points worth our respect. The material existence of our body, its needs and physiological and psychological processes of interchanges are as fascinating and evident as our vital striving towards competence, fulfilment and spirited awe for life.

Yet claims are often defined in opposition to others, so they cannot on their premises all be true across any span.

So rather than wasting our energy in denial of the truth in other views, we may serve ourselves better to be on the lookout for what any view may inspire us to get a better sense of. So expect there is a kernel of truth beneath the layers of protective statements, claimed by some to be basic!

Thus we have arrived at the *eight lesson of truth* I have found important enough to name:

The Principle of Searching for the Nugget in the Rubble.

The nugget in rubble principle is that more at point since as even two views was conceived as opposites, they are not. Oh yes Materialism is founded on a denial of spirituality. Vitalists, in contrast just claim that matter is not just all what is. So while Materialism excludes Vitalism, Vitalism includes matter.

Nor is realism and idealism necessarily mutually exclusive, but may seen as supplementary as we shall document in an upcoming chapter on Emergence 5.15.

And do recall how rejection has consequences as it warns others against searching as well as respect for other dimensions. A materialist rejects spiritualism, yet the price may be that compassion for and/or responsibility towards the Other is sent down the drain! Materialism as we know it in the West represents not only an anti-Christian, anti-religious stand, but often even an anti-social sentiment as the straight-minded, – who assumingly knows better – prefer to see it.

Thus in our interpretation, it is the *denial* of the main tenets of a competing doctrine that defines a system of beliefs as an ideology, rather than the set of potentially enlightening perspectives it may contain. With this short presentation let us turn to two more mundane examples of less than grand-, but still high-level aggregations:

Grand-level identification of cross-cultural patterns
By implication grand-level interpretation must be directed towards highly aggregated conceptions of the social. Be it identification of cross-national or cross-cultural patterns of private and public institutions, – the identification of the background for and the inner development of revolutions – or the best policies to foster economic growth. Let me just mention two such examples:

In his cross-cultural studies of empires, Eisenstadt sought to identify the circumstances in which state bureaucracies break down.[258] A study that builds on samples spanning across cultures that are more different in type and time than most cross-comparative studies of pattern matching I know of. His samples include Sassanid Persia 224–642, the Byzantine Empire 395–518, the T'ang Empire of China 618–907, the Spanish-American Empire 1493–1898 and Absolutist Europe ≈1400 – ≈1900.

Eisenstadt starts by identifying two forces at work within societies: rule-setting by the government and various more or less free-floating, self determining sub-sections of society, – be it various religious institutions, industries and commercial enterprises and trade relations. As his point of departure Eisenstadt states that any administration has to orchestrate the interplay between a) the ruling elite as the centre of power with its tendencies to impose its political goals on all and b) the more or less independent sub-systems at work within the state. Now the main finding of his study is the following:

In over-zealous bureaucratic empires, the contradictions in the respective orientations and activities of the rulers and their major supportive institutions may easily become so strong that they undermine the basic conditions and premises for the state to function. This happens when the central government imposes too rigid strains on the flow of free resources, e.g. production, trade, religious worship, censorship, recruitment etc.[259] In other words: If you want to rule all and everything, you will end up ruling nothing.

Likewise, but with a far more limited scope, Brinton sought to identify when to anticipate revolutions and how they will proceed.[260] He based his analysis on a sample of four western cases: England 1640, America 1776–89, France 1789, and Russia 1917–21. By pattern matching or if you like comparison of cases, he identified the following ideal flow:

First a preliminary stage of internal tension between different strata of society – a bitterness that is enforced if people across strata are acquainted with each other – say between a ruling military class, landowners and business. "One" does not fight a distant, "untouchable" upper class.

In the initial stages members of the intellectual class withdraw their support for the government, the bureaucracy struggles on but soon looses control as it abstains from using or is unable to use the necessary power to stifle the unrest.

The ruling class yields and government is transferred to a group of moderates who initiates reforms. For the extremists though their reforms are too slow and temperate. So the radicals seize power. In three out of the four mentioned cases, the moderates are there after incarcerated and killed. Violence escalates to terror. The rule of the radicals becomes increasingly centralized. And a new order is installed. So the process that started as an outcry for greater freedom ends in curtailing it.

Brinton finally points out that there is an initial similarity within them: "They exhibit an increasing scale of promises to the common man"…promises that, in their extreme form, are not fulfilled.[261]

For less unstructured manners of revolt, *Roland Mousnier* have examined the background for "peasant uprisings" in the seventeenth century within France, Russsia and China.[262]

His concludes[263]: Peasants, and in particular small scale operators, revolted due to sudden increased central taxation, say when it doubled in order to finance national wars. The breakout of uprisings were often spontaneous, it started at one place, preferably far from the capital – and then multiplied across the country.

As contrast to the later revolutionary movements the peasant did not ask for a restructuring of society. They just wanted to get rid of central government, the privileges of the mighty, Kings ministers and their favourites and be left to live in their own peace.

The three cases[264] we have brought up are instructive in several ways[265]. First, grand schemes obviously must limit themselves to sweeping statements about societies and their general characteristics. Yet what they lack in terms of specification they gain in assumed universality. While Brinton is able to identify the aspirations and doings of some key actors, Eisenstadt, with his even grander scheme, hardly ever – apart from figureheads of state – mentions any person by name.

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Secondly, the cases can be read in succession. Despite their different scopes, they do indeed supplement each other. The obvious differences between revolts and revolutions indicate the opus operandi for the latter: The revolutions, within the present sample, all occurred within major cities, often the capital, and were driven along by workers, not due necessarily to famine nor taxation, but to an aroused sense of been under–privileged. Secondly ideological leadership is part of the play. Presumably this would still be the case to day, all though, I guess, the inter-net would be an integrated part of any could-be-revolution in the future.

Secondly I have a sense that the way Eistenstadt and Brinton present their cases may be read as an ideological praise of an ethos for liberal economy. Thus I have at times used them accordingly.

With these few words, let us finally turn to a grand epistemological challenge for those who, like me, nurture a deep-seated notion for the real: *Structuralism*.

> **There is no…unique self who uses language**
> **to describe an objective world or to express it self;**
> **it is the structure of language that speaks thru the person**
> Steiner Kvale[266]
> **The modern citizen is caught up in a web of beliefs, expectations and sanctions**
> **that tie him to the existing regime far more tightly**
> **than was the case for his peasant ancestors**
> Barrington Moore[267]
> **By and large, institutions and social structures are**
> **not the result of what people want and believe, but of what they take for granted**
> Ernest Gellner[268]

4.12   Structuralism, a grand-level epistemological scheme,

Structuralism is an all too important perspective to be neglected. Yet is not so much a research discipline as a philosophy that basically addresses the social practices each of us each more or less accepts as "natural". Be it going to work, greeting a guest in our office with a handshake, or like we take the existence of an I for granted, as one says "I am married too" or discuss the Freudian "Ich".[269]

The idea being, that we may, but do not generally, neither recognize nor question such ways of being and acting, nor their genesis. The "natural" is shaped through socialization. In particular Structuralism stress how language shapes our "taken for granted reality" or if you prefer "defines" it.

But off course what is implicit – like social mores – may be made explicit e.g. through field-work. Just as we by looking backwards in time will notice how social practices and perceptions – however slowly – like codes do change over time. As for instance "getting married" is not any longer taken as "natural" as it once were, while homosexuality soon may be.

All though the structuralist ethos is all the more true for traditional societies, one should be left in doubt that the basic claims of structuralism are inescapable for us too. In fact, I have occasionally implicitly referred to them in passing. But I also have to admit that I for years have been passionately bothered by the fact that Structuralism – basically sound as it is – stands out as a tough challenge to the core of existentialism as well as any other belief focusing on man as an independent agent.

<div align="center">

Don't follow sounds if they be they mere echoes!

</div>

Setting the stage, language as dominator.
Despite what is commonly stated the greatest challenge researchers face is thus not our individual subjectivity. Our personal quirks may be revealed as our fellow citizens take notes of our more or less automatic interpretations.

No, what colours our perceptions more than anything is the cultural codes we are embedded in, – prevailing patterns of thinking, – the way were brought up, – the occupations we can envision, – the ethical and scientific norms we are guided to adopt, etc. Amongst these inherent *reality-structuring* rails, let us within the confines of the present essay primarily take a further look at language.

Words captivate us more than we generally are ready to acknowledge. A word may now and then intrigue us. Yet in general words live within us with a naturalness we seldom dispute. We live by what we can name and thus conceptually manipulate. They are one of the means by which we try to express our inner emotional life. Some words may fall out of use and new may be introduced. But fundamentally, codes of behavior have a persistence far beyond our own lives.

Structuralism as a social theory grew out of Linguistics.[270] Languages are systems of interconnected references – which may be read as signs – which too – even more than codes – have permanence of their own that goes beyond our private existence. Thus they appear as self-sustained. The difference between, say residence and abode, is to be explicated by using other words, which themselves refer to other words, none of which in any obvious ways can be connected to what they might signify.[271]

Admittedly some written signs seem to have been recognizable symbols for corresponding references, like in Chinese "West" is depicted in the image of a setting sun, refer to Figure 4.12 #1. But otherwise neither the sound nor the spelling of "House" has more likeness with a shelter than "Mouse". It is long forgotten how "house" came to signify what it does. It is a convention that we as children just have to accept, along with grammar and other rules for combining words. Language thus – all ready stated – appears as a self-sustained system. – And meaning thus becomes as if contained in a text itself.

Figure 4.12 #1: DEPICTIVE SIGNS AS LETTERS

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Letters and words may be based on symbols. The letter D for instance originated out of a triangle for delta, Δ. While West in Chinenese so poetically[101] is depicted as the sun setting in pond. Likewise and with the same symbol for sun, East is depicted as the sun rising behind a tree. Otherwise there is hardly any correspondence between words neither as sounds nor as graphic signifiers and what they signify. Names are conventional.[272]

Discourses
So Structuralism is the theory of coherence par excellence. "Abhor", "dislike" or "detest" may be transferred to the same cluster of interrelated signs, but the three words cannot always replace each other. They belong to different discourses. "Residence" may make us think of a house, but also trigger images of upper class, wealth or perhaps tycoons

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And should we replace say "residence" with "abode" an entirely new discourse might occur, most likely a comic one. Just like "truth" has many different connotations whether used in a court of law, a validity scheme or a text referring to or by Nietzsche, as referred to in chapter 2.

Figure 4.12 #2 PSTRU: VARIETIES OF STRUCTURALISM, ILLUSTRATED

According to the classical version of Structuralism we as individuals are socio-culturally determined by sets of standard ways of thinking, organized in different varieties of discourses.[103]
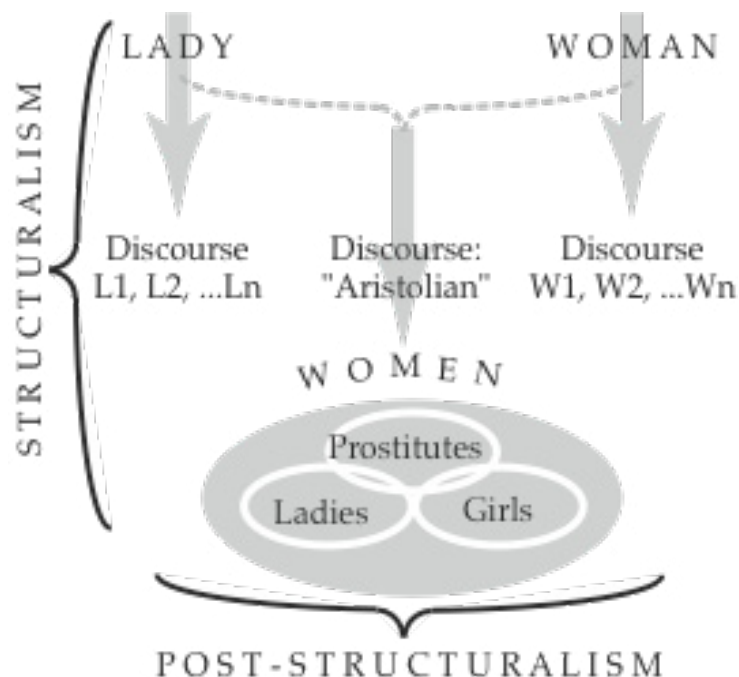
The two words "Lady" and "Woman" occur in different contexts or discourses where they cannot replace each other without having an effect on the meaning of a whole section of text.[104]

"Lady" may not even refer to some of our own kind. The first association to come mind may a bitch drawn by W Disney, discourse L_1. Others may place it within the context of a novel of Elliot W_2, etc.

This also goes for woman, a word with a lot of connotations, depending on context.

This is quite different from the categorization scheme of the Aristotelian syllogistic discourse, which would categorize "ladies" as one of several subspecies of the general term for female: Women. So looking at discourses rather than in a strict Aristotelian categorization, there will be discourses where ladies and/or girls will be euphemisms for prostitutes. *Post-structuralism* though states that context is not necessarily given a forehand, not even by genre, but is to be established by the reader himself. Accordingly we – as we read – creates a meaning of the text, – often at the cost of whatever the producer of the text may have expressed or intended of effect. And indeed most of us certainly use novels for enlightenment and inspiration – rather than for scholarship!

This thinking could lead us one step further and state: Words have no fixed, perhaps not even a meaning in themselves; it all depends on context, and historical circumstance if you like, – an idea that the idiom of post-structuralism seemingly takes even further in to the socially meaningless, please refer to Figure 4.12 #2.[274, 275]

As an example of what discourse analysis may reveal allow me to refer to "the Employee Owner":

Year after year I ask management what effect the introduction of employee ownership had on the workers. Oh, managers informed me, the workers had become more responsible. Which, I accepted – as I like them conformed to the same traditional text book-language.

Yet one day as I took a closer look at my latest transcripts I realized that "responsible" was not a part of the worker-owners vocabulary. No, after years the owner-workers – when asked – used a phrases like: "Now, we care more". This was a quite another way of expressing one self, and a breakthrough for me:

Care does not refer to the discourse of managerial thinking, but to family life and the things we posses. Thus the workers herewith expressed that the company had come "ours" as an emotional reality and not just in the legal sense. Now they had come to take the same care of their machine, what they did at work and each other, as they would do at home for their car, their domestic tasks and family.

Next I realized that the workers as mere employees had not been irresponsible, nor had they never defined them selves as such. They had just in the previous more adversarial culture related them selves to the union rather than to the firm.

Care and responsibility belongs to two different types of discourse. But If we have no sense of the conventions governing a genre – like positivist operationalist schemes for measuring or guidelines for reading poetry[276] – we will either be bewildered by the string of words at the risk of dismissing them as meaningless or – if our drive to appear knowledgeable overwhelms us – subject the terms to fit some scheme of ours, according to the principle of magical cover up!

Language as an enclosed "reality" in itself

But let us return to the challenge of Structuralism proper. Due to the inner coherence of languages, words have a life of their own. The meaning of any word listed in a dictionary is determined by reference to other words. Thus they may prevail without any reference to a language-independent reality. This self-contained reality has dire consequences: We may exchange words without necessarily understanding – e.g. in terms of lived experience – what oneself or the other is talking about. This is amply illustrated by the computer program ELIZA[277] as well as this example:

My kid brother Sven of 9 and I were at a family dinner. As children then we were supposed to play a minor role at the table. Then Sven suddenly broke through the conversion, exclaiming: "Oh, how piquant this tastes". The adults smiled enjoying the praise thus bestowed on the hostess. She herself radiated with satisfaction. Sven, while pleased with the reaction, was puzzled. Before anyone had a chance to say anything, he continued: "What does piquant actually mean"? Obviously, while he had a sense of the meaning of the word as being a way to express appreciation, he had no idea of what it referred to. And surely you can go far just by indulging in verbose streams of words as long as they seem bound together by some notion of coherence.

Or take a far more serious example: In 1949 Everett C Hughes illustrated how you as an outsider – not just in terms of language but by background – may be self-inflicting hurt as you cannot untangle yourself from the language games of the majority. He wrote[278]: "The American Negro is a living contradiction. In the eyes of the Other, he is objectively what he is seen as. Yet personally "he" cannot accept the status to which Negroes are assigned, but neither can he completely free himself from it. Thus the contradiction is subjective too". Fortunately, the Black Americans also by addressing patterns of talk seem to have come a long way since!

If so, what "really" exists in terms of durability is – as stated in the Middle Age – not people, but language, or in general terms the social! We are just like drops of a wave that carry language, perceptions of what is just, godly etc. in all their varieties of interwoven patterns forward with minute changes we need not be aware of.

Each science, each research tradition, yes each system or domain of thought has its own inclusive inter-woven sets of concepts and ideas we have to acknowledge in order to speak it – like the notion of rationality for business studies. Thus what students have to prove, exam upon exam in order to pass, is that they can, say, talk like a proper economist. Accordingly the prevalent metaphor for "to study" is not to explore a field, but "to read".

This positions Structuralism as a grand challenge for those who want to believe it may be possible to reach others as well as express ourselves without not just letting words carry us away.

Structuralism and the abandoning of ontology
Vocabularies set the conditions for our "giving voice"[279]. Language uses us far more then we use it. Just like the technology of any period determines what we can do!

If so, ontology is out. Reality appears to us as it is shaped by language. It constitutes how and what we can notice and experience. – And with a grip on our mind of which – as we have pointed out – we aren't necessarily aware. Languages shape us more than we ever are able to shape it

This conception of language is easily extended to literary analysis and may even be radicalized further. Some even claim that language determines our desires, not just in the shape of commercials, but as texts in general, – be it novels and/or psychological essays, film, aspirations voiced by our parents at home at the kitchen table. An obvious example being the Barbie Doll which became to be elevated to be a major signifier of female attractiveness. What we long for are shaped by the culture we are enmeshed in.

Of course, we better be suspicious when everything is reduced to depending on one aspect, particularly when it is achieved through vagueness in terms of concretization and lack of predictive value. But let us stay on track.[280]

Driven by its own inner logic the next step is easily taken: Seeing culture as a text, or even to see reality as a text, as proposed by Ricoeur.[281] The world is as it appears to you as the text in a novel. Just as you your Self are a social construction!

With ontology out of the way, the concept of the individual – so dear to western Christianity – is washed down the drain along with any notion of the unconscious. Neither exists apart from being expressions that pop up in certain types or genres of discourse.

As "man and his consciousness" is seen as a product of prevailing social circumstances, language – in its widest sense – becomes the only enduring reality, – a view already voiced in the medieval period.

Whether we like it or not, we have to recognize structuralism has some bearing. Silently, with a force, which we hardly recognize, vocabularies mark what is worth to be watching for. It works at least in two ways: Texts may open our eyes and establish contacts between writers of the past and our selves. – As well as draw veils between our selves and the perspectives we otherwise might have applied.

With reference to Figure 4.12 #2 PSTRU, we may remind our selves about the difference between being a woman and being "assigned to the category of female" and not as men are to man.[282] Implicitly in the normal English discourse of flow of words, "being woman" is to be at the fringe of what public life implicitly ranks as normal, in contrast to Swedish where "man" as in mankind is a "she".

We take a lot for granted. We in the West for instance seem to take a social institution like "democracy" as the "natural" – in the sense of being the undisputable – state every modern society should adhere to while the Islamic world may not. This even though no western society is democratic in any real sense. Our industries e.g. are not owned nor controlled by their employees even they carry them. What, we have, is just representative Democracy!

The term "democracy", as many other abstract concepts, is *poly-semical,* refer to page 38 & 19. What it means grows out of a context. Thus if reality is like a text, it may be up to us to construct the discourse we want to.

To reject structuralism would thus be to forsake the need for reflection as to how we are swallowed up by the language as well as the social norms we implicitly adhere to. But we may very well too – as we will do in § 6 – look into whether it is the whole and nothing but the whole truth.

First, we need to look at a particular present-day structuralist's conceptualization of relevance for social research in general and case research in particular: *Institutionalism*.

Institutionalism

Let us start with an example. A Danish manufacturing company set out to encourage its operators to take greater part in running it. Amongst initiative, the production manager took a bright woman out of production and trained her in how to help her comrades identify areas in need of improvement. Then he assigned her the title of change agent and let her loose on the floor. As expected she soon became a great help according to both management and her colleagues.

After a few weeks though, she changed. She dressed up, became more stylish, did her hair better, applied an elegant, subdued make-up, ect. She simply responded to her inner image of females in middle-managerial positions. The role had conquered her and in consequence she became less effective as a figure of identification for her now "former co-workers"!

People strive to live up to or speculate in appearance. It is not just what is said that affects us. Just as situational factors may – neither by force nor against "our will" – "determine" how we act, ref § 4.8, page 130-. Thus the proper term is properly not so much "determination" as "railing" (being led by rails). We shift track.

Taking this scheme to the mid- or even grand-level, we encounter Institutionalism as a philosophy of organizational theory, sociology and economics.

Institutionalism emphasizes the interplay between current social so called values[283] and how they, according to circumstance,

- o set standards for appropriate behaviour – the stable society approach, and
- o constrain and regulate behaviour legally – the social-realist perspective.

Industry can now produce more than Western consumers can absorb. Thus organizations are increasingly bound to use other means than merely the utility of their products to legitimize their existence in the eyes of a surrounding world. So, organizations now fight for our attention in order to publicly announce their concerns for their shareholders, the environment, their employees, the local community as well as the unfortunate in the Third World.

Such a tendency does not come out of the blue. One fact is that the game has changed from producing to selling. But a multitude of small – in themselves rather irrelevant – events have had their impact too. After scandals like Enron, the financial crises in 2007–9, companies has felt a need to publicly stress how ethical their norms are. This exemplifies, how Institutionalism has a dynamic aspect of change associated with it.

This way of thinking may thus inspire us to look how current "values" structure our perception of the "natural", primarily in terms of – regulative codes, including codes for dressing; – reference to normative guide lines, as do not lie nor steel; – cultural symbols, like our reference for democracy and our national sport teams.

The very idea of "institutionalism" dates back to the dawn of modern sociology Rational calculation does not do it alone, as many university economists seem to believe. Organizations – including manufacturing companies and public agencies – have to adapt to the changing norms of what is expected – and thus to the social circumstances of which they themselves may be a part. Thus, the alleged founder of the Institutionalist School in the US, Veblen[284], claimed that economics should be seen as an aspect of a culture and not as a system contained in itself. Institutionalism thus aim to cover all the levels listed in Figure 4.7 #1.

A truth – familiar to any reader of Durkheim, Weber and Marx![285] Or, as my one-time teacher in Economics, Dr Edmund Stillman of the Hudson Research Institute in Paris, taught: Economy, if to become a science, has to become an anthropological discipline, see also Figure 4.12 #3.

Figure 4.12 #3: MAIN TENETS AND CONSEQUENCES OF INSTITUTIONALISM FOR ECONOMICS

Major tenets of Institutionalism:
- Our historical, social and institutional environment shape how we act and what we take for granted
- Economic transactions are embedded in social and cultural processes, which most individuals just adapt to without hardly any reflections

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Consequently, economists should
o pay attention to the uniformities of custom, habit, and law as modes of organizing economic life rather than just mathematical modeling, as well as
o try to identify typical behavioural patterns of select elitist groups
o study the sources of potential clashes of interest in the existing social structure rather than concentrate on price and/or measure economic performance against some hypothetical norm

And finally,
o Economic generalizations should specify the limits of the culture and time to which they apply.

Despite Keynes were all too well aware how economics as a science is embedded in the historical, the Keynesian revolution unfortunately drew most theorists of economics towards modelling. How this came about is another story, which we will have to pass over here. Instead, let me just dwell on one of the beauties of institutionalism:

It outlines how case research may serve as a medium for making explicit the implicit rules that guide the lives of people in the workplace, thus opening for scrutiny and thus even leading to partial emancipation as we shall see in § 6.13.

A last example of grandiose perception of the social
Finally, let me just call to mind the most grandiose perception of the social I know of from the history of social research, namely Hegel's idea of history as an unfolding liberation movement. A vision that was to inspire the growth of Marxism, while the idea in itself was indebted to the spirited, vitalistic concept of life conceived during Romanticism.

DYNAMICS OF INTERPRETATION

4.13   Characteristics of interpretative practices across levels

Grand-level perspectives are like seeing municipalities from the sky, cultures from satellites and nations through a reversed telescope: All-inclusive, sweeping outlines of patterns in which any detail is lost. And, unfortunately, opus operandi, too, are if not totally ignored then at least rarely specifiable with any precision.

Thus grand-level perspectives generally leave us with a dehumanized worldview where our uniqueness as individuals – as you and "I" may imagine it – vanishes.

As do statistics on the mid level. However much discomforting this may be, and challenge our vanities, there is no reason for discarding mid level statistics. Quite the opposite! To ignore that we are shaped by implicit routines, language and technologies would be to forego the very challenge of coming to our senses and paying attention to how and when it happens. A subject we will deal with in § 6.

But now let us first explore how to characterize the different levels, next see what happens if we move across them.

How to differentiate between levels
The dividing line between the different levels of interpretation may be hard to draw. Any social phenomenon – marriage, for example – may be rooted in many perspectives beyond the quasi-holy union of two people "I" personally experience it as. While people gobbled up in their image of objectivity and/or in debasing the social may choose to reduce marriage to a utility function,[286] a variant of legalized prostitution, institutionalisation of the practice of child caring, or even a laughable idealization of the biological drive for reproduction.

Thus allow me to offer a rule of thumb for differentiation between the mid and grand level, as well as narrow and broad-span interpretations:

- o Whereas mid-level thinking at best thrives on postulating that "A *might be* B", or at worst "A is *just* B",
- o Grand-level as well as broad-span interpretations often hinge on "A is *nothing but* B"[287].

Grand theories – as we know of them from scientific literature – are seldom wrong in the sense that they state something completely out of touch with reality, – all though some conspiracy theories and/or theological fantasies do seem to. Yet if so, they still express something that might be worth noticing

Yet in general grand theories tend to transform what is partially true to the only truth[288, 289]. Everyday life and the sense of nuances we associate with social phenomena are ignored and, if considered, simplified. But love is more than just sex. Nor can devotion merely be reduced to an inner drive of genes to reproduce them selves without violating the richness of existence. Just as the heart is more than just a pump! And if you dispute it, we all stand to loose a little.

Main characteristics of span and levels in social research
Let us finally try to summarize our identifications of some major characteristics of social theories according to level:

Minute level

- o Easily applicable principles at least based on noticing (observation) in order to classify the behaviour of the Other.
- o characterizations that may be substantiated by personal reflection and/or statistical enumeration.

Mid level

- o More abstract, yet simple claims for traits of sociologically classified groups, the workings of institutions, identification of social trends, all working in the open or behind the manifest.
- o Patterns may be verified temporarily by statistical enumeration or/and exemplified by illuminating examples, – which is particularly essential for the suspicious in order to bolster their claims.

Grand level

- o Essentially fundamentalist perspectives on the human condition generally taken for granted as the base of each school of research.
- o Adherents should be able to illustrate the trustworthiness of the basic tenets by concrete examples.

Independent of level, "span" defines the domains covered by a chosen scheme of interpretation across a given level. Spans may thus purport to include

- o a string of similar cases within a specified domain, or
- o several cases and/or lifestyles or cultures, or even
- o to state what is valid across several scientific domains, explicitly, or at worst just implicitly assumed to be universally valid,
- o or even worse, span may not be considered at all!

Whatever the level, interpretations generally have a base from which the key tenets are drawn as the primary foundation, – be they

- o psychological images and arguments – implicit or explicit
- o biological, including reference to "need for survival" which admittedly occurs in many varieties such as power, drive for competence, lust, etc.
- o mainly speculative, as for instance to build a worldview on some scheme of rationality.

Figure 4.13 #1: TRANSFERENCE OF IDEAS ACROSS LEVELS

APPLYING	INTERPRETATIONS AT		
	MINUTE-LEVEL	MID-LEVEL	GRAND-LEVEL
MINUTE-LEVEL EVENTS TO	Generally identifiable personality traits chosen to explain the behaviour of another person	Membership of class or profession employed to expretate the behaviour of a person in question	Wrath of G.d or "purpose of life "as a reference to explain outcome of individual behaviour
MID-LEVEL PHENOMENA TO	Using generalized statements like proverbs to explain decisions and behaviour of e.g. politicians	Functional analysis of interchange between institutions	Culture chosen as an explanatory variable for institutional behaviour
GRAND AGGREGATED EVENTS TO	Using the inferred personality of Stalin to explain the horrors of Soviet Socialism	Game theory or a scheme of check and balances used to explain international politics	Marxism as an instrument to expretate the inner logic of industrialization, colonization, etc.

Yet what is more confusing than just ignoring level and span is to transfer conceptual schemes across levels, as shall illustrate next:

Consequences of transferring

minute-level thinking to grand-level thinking and vice versa

Figure 4.13 #1 tries to depict how concepts may be transferred across the levels of aggregation they were designed to cover.

When concepts of interpretation – as shown – are transferred from one level to another, we might wonder about the consequences. To mix them must come at a prize.

It is certainly not the same to e.g. see France as embodied in a person (Marianne) or as an assemblage of several more or less self-conscious departments, governmental and private organizations. I grant that it may be enlightening to bestow human sentiments and reactions on nations. But at least I would expect that we do not do so without reflecting on what we – if so – are entranced in. To mix them may be a category mistake and yet still a powerful idea-generating technique.

With the typology chosen here we get six variants for overexpansion of concepts to other levels. In the following we will briefly explore the advantages as well as costs of transferring concepts across levels for the four most radical versions. Please refer to Figure 4.13 #2 MIRANLEV, which prematurely indicate the conclusions we will reach.

**Figure 4.13 #2: CONSEQUENCES OF TRANSFERRING
SMALL AND GRAND PERSPECTIVES TO OTHER LEVELS MIRANLEV:**

LEVEL of event	LEVEL of perspective	CONSEQUENCE in terms of Cost
Small transferred to	Grand	Loss of reality
	Mid	Loss of social dimensions
Grand transferred to	Mid	Loss of sense of concreteness
	Low	De-humanization

A favoured trick of the News is to present political events as if they were the outcome of the thoughts and personal traits of key political figures. During the recent Balkan genocides, Milosevic's presumed sinister personality was used to make sense of what really was hard to interpret and even more difficult explain. Many of these expositions even attributed him with traits of character that embodied the presenter's perception of the history of Serbia. This shows how inappropriate and offending it is – especially to the sensitivity of mid-level theorists – to interpret highly-aggregated political events by minute means as if the domains covered by Institutionalism do not count. Of course they do, the problem is that it takes a lot of work to unravel them.

"A country should be governed as a big business" is a popular example for expanding mid-level thinking to society. I grant you that very few mid-level social researchers would make such a claim. Mid-level theorists are perfectly aware that the multitude of goals that have to be honoured – particularly in democracies. It is not that it is easier to run private companies. What differ though is the number and the interests stakeholders. Thus, if a country is seen as nothing but a big firm, you stand to lose your sense of some vital differences of dimensions!

Over-extending a perspective

Economic thinking, grounded in a rationalist paradigm, offers a scheme for interpretation according to which every man will seek to optimise his own welfare as best he can. What counts is thus our goals, the information we possess and what resources we control, etc.

This may sound reasonable enough. Yet, on closer inspection, the position is fraught with difficulty. Why do monks struggle with their inner drives in order to live in celibacy, why do freedom fighters risk their lives and why do mothers starve in order to feed their babies? Oh, the economist may insist, this is indeed due to their goals. If so the paradigm is empty as it can be used to "explain" any behaviour. Whether I beat my wife or not will thus be due to what gives me the most pleasure. How convenient. This type of thinking though has a drawback: Something has to happen before we can vouch for an alleged cause. Thus any such assumed "explication" may merely be a rhetorical scam. We do not know!

Yet in a certain way such a scheme may make sense. Can anyone be expected to really act against his own interests? Well, that is up to you to decide. But if not, ethical behaviour must by implication be a misnomer.[290] The rationalist paradigm is simply too abstract to be trustworthy. But it is, of course, this very lack of concreteness that allows its applicants to drum up an answer no matter the situation.

Yet the idea of "optimalization of one's self-interest" is not entirely unfounded. Yet as long as we are not told *what* a certain group of people want to optimize and *why*, we lose the very foundation for grasping their behaviour as well as evaluating their rational dimension. Transferring a minute-level perspective to mid-level theories is an overexpansion of a concept, which – as illustrated – may easily lead to a loss or impoverishment of other vital aspects

We may also pass perspectives from the mid to the grand level for instance by stating that as the weather changes so do politics, or claim the "Darwinist predator imaginary" to be the all-encompassing paradigm for the social. The first is obviously too abstract to specify anything, the latter too vulgar. Of course mammals share a lot of features. But, if you claim some biological aspect to be what only count for humans, you are beyond seeing us as we perceive ourselves, – as social beings as well as individuals. Likewise, if you believe something to be demonstratively valid for any man made institution, the price to pay is once again your sense of the concrete.

But yes, I grant you that in the abstract everything may be made to appear alike.

Are we then left with a disjointed universe of social theories?

As just demonstrated, it appears as if we cannot see across span and level and thus grasp the essence of being a person with a family and a job in a given society. And this is indeed our very condition, according to the foul Philosophy of Perspectivism to which we will turn shortly, ref page 170.

But let us first throw a short generalized glance at the dynamics of interpretation:

A genuine scientific analysis has to be realistic, simple and explicative

Claude Lévi-Strauss[291]

Interpretation in itself
means becoming master of something

Nietzsche[292]

Dynamics of Interpretation (1):

4.14   The more pointed horn: Exaggeration and simplification

Discovering a hidden reality, the essence of interpretation

Through the millenniums the "Will of Gods" was the accepted grand principle for explication: The ultimate reality is not bounded by what we can see and touch. Since then many mundane scientists have taken the same torch and searched for an unifying principles beneath the apparent confusion of everyday occurrences.

Visualizations of "hidden realities" on a broad scale are as bountiful as the variation of human make-belief, social schools of thought and religions. And we have now for centuries have had a paradigm as a guiding light for it: Newton's three basic laws covering all sorts of movement that is discernable by the naked eye in our sunlit Universe.

Believing in the ability to identify what drives people extends itself to include "reading" the "hidden" strategies behind an upcoming election, publically announced changes of US foreign policy, the forces behind the breakthrough of the Renaissance, and the capacity of a student of religions to give an outline of the essence of Buddhism.

Of course, any such rhetoric may be as much a means of responding to an inner call for seeing one self as a knower. So let us look at how the practices of interpretation may be presented as an oscillation between two horns:

- From exaggeration and simplification to
- playful experimental openness.

Exaggeration:

The drive to search for a unifying principle has tempted even the most talented to postulate they discovered what might be at work as soon as they detected one drive, be it greed, sexual lust, drive for recognition, self-preservation, anxiety and/or power, etc. And certainly, the best of such "inventors" are worth reading exactly due to their one-sidedness. Thus they expand:

- making what has been accepted as valid within one domain to cover a far greater span of cases or even domains.

Or even stronger:

- making what has been found to be partially true the only truth.

Yet, we have to remind ourselves what may be at stake here. Exaggeration is driven by emotion. It is all right to have detected how unfulfilled sexual desire may contribute to functional disorder, – or spotted how a manager is driven by a hunger to nourish his self-image, – as well as to identify how dysfunctional this may be. Fine! But this does not in itself allow the inventor of such images, and even less his followers, to make this the only truth and denying other views any relevance. Yet it is not all that bad, because as James reminds us: "It always leads to a better understanding of a things relevance to consider its exaggerations and perversions, its equivalents, substitutes and nearest relatives elsewhere".[293]

In both cases a probable drive is extended to be the only one in order to boost your self as a knowledgeable person. A move in the mode of self-importance you, if a Jungian, could name would name inflation.

Simplification

Exaggeration goes hand in hand with simplification.[294] Be it not in consequence then at least as an approach. Exaggeration may be experienced as self-confidence and yet express a need for a "walking stick" for having a ready at hand vocabulary to come to terms in many situations. On the other hand many new perspective for interpretation presented to us, should at first intrigue and guide us to take an enlightening new look at what we usually ourselves take for granted.

"Feminist research" may here serve as an excellent example: It inspires us to look around in a certain way. And if you do look for it, you will see more dominance patterns than you may ever have been aware of. By this I do not claim that we should see all human as well as industrial relations as mere power relations! That would exemplify yet a simplification! Yet implicit unfolding of dominance is always worth watching for, but only as one facet of organizational life!

Where exaggeration leads the way, simplification follows

As one perspective is claimed to be the only valid one we arrive at the philosophy of "A is nothing but B". The consequences of several of such– broad-span agendas have lead to a narrowing of research programmes, as well as to a desensitizing of students who thus are persuaded to ignore vast dimensions of life as irrelevant for study.

Or, as we shall see in the next chapter on Explanation, simplification may at times be formulated in opposition to exaggerated claims of its forerunners. Like e.g. behaviourism aimed to exclude emotions and self-report as legitimate domains for study – as a response to the exalted claims of Romantic philosophy and in part Psychoanalysis.

Some examples

Simplifications in terms of ignoring relevant dimensions are abundant and we have already referred to some in the previous chapters:

The redundancy theory of truth, refer to § 2.2 page 35 & § 2.6 page 64, claims: "To state: "It is *true* that aRb" is a rhetorical trick". The statement is no different than just stating "aRb". And this may seem so as far as the content is concerned. Yet they certainly do not have the same meaning, refer to Figure 4.2, page 100.

It is good to be told, "Jesus is our Saviour". But by stating that "It is certainly true that "Jesus is our Saviour", you add something beyond giving some information: You *express* how you put yourself, yourpay-cheque, your sanity at stake as a personal guarantee that Jesus is our Saviour.

To claim something to be "true" is to posit one self as an existential guarantee, ref page 34. In this light, the claim that "true is merely a redundant enforcer" becomes a tactless simplification. It simply ignores the Others willingness to personally vouch for something.

Yet for an analytical philosopher the simplification has its advantages. It makes him appear far cleverer than the man in the street with his willingness to make the best out of his beliefs by thoughtless swearing. So "knowing" comes at a price. "You" boost your own academic ego by denying existential dimensions in other people's life.

Unfortunately, academics may make careers from it!

We have also seen how the young *Wittgenstein* claimed that scientific language must mirror reality, refer to § 2.2 page 36. Later, though, he claimed that the meaning of words was given by their position in language. Thus he went from one extreme – correspondence – to the other – coherence. Stretc.hing the span of one aspect too far, others are erased. So, while both positions are useful as reminders for analysis, insisting on either will lead to a loss of all the other potential dimensions of what statements might mean as well as express.

One important point though: Could there be situations in which either of Wittgenstein's two claims actually does cover practice? If we look closely, there will be some.

The going and coming of trains better be handled as scheduled, if the train timetables are to have any value.

And what to do, when we meet a new construct, say "*Structuralization Theory*"? Well, you may look for a definition. That gives you a hint about what it's about. Yet, you will still not know how to use the term until you have become acquainted with when and how people you trust use it. And if you do it anyway, misunderstandings are bound to occur.

Social constructivism may too be seen as an exaggerated simplification too. Its basic claim – that our worlds are human constructions – stands to be believed. Of course, language came from our forefathers, – as did roads, ideas about democracy and other values present-day people refer to. Even natural wilderness is now man-made. It would no longer be there without our guardianship and protection.

And our thoughts? Well, may be they are not exactly created by language, but they would be unthinkable without! So social constructivism certainly cannot be refuted.

Yet there are worlds within us, not just anchored in conventions but rooted in our nature as religious beings, human mammals, and/or biological entities. We experience it, for example, when the ordinary language falls short and we have to resort to drawing, gesture, emotional expression or meditative dancing in order to make what we sense intelligible to ourselves.

We more than just pawns of language!

Structuralism:

Structuralism, – how ever "true" too is only so partially. It disregard several facts, primarily that the original function of language is to refer and thus that most words by implication, either have or are supposed to point toward a reality beyond language. Thus it becomes parasitic in the sense it assumes what it denies. Which is hardly surprising as its own claim for "solidity" is intimately bound to language, – not the least the terms we all ready master as an instrument of everyday life, and in particular the ordinary language we were brought up with.

Rewards of

exaggeration and simplification the "cult of the interesting"[295]

The rewards of exaggeration through simplification are indeed gratifying, provided you can get away with it. It allows you to appear wiser than ordinary people as if you now what really matters: Admiration for political leadership! Ha, it is all just a question of power! Romantic love! Oh you fool, that is just another expression of Mental Disorder Complex, MDC. As you like, "you" may thus choose any simplification you fancy in order to reduce personal experience of the Other.

Theorists may thus acquire their name not for stating the truth, but for saying something that stimulates our interest. First by attacking and negating an otherwise accepted theory. Next to outline a new way of looking at the world. And the success will be the greater the better the new way of thinking lends itself to easy schemes for practising it.

As Freud did when he showed, that dreams, – which the commonly "wise" of his day hitherto had considered as meaningless – are indeed not so. So dreams once more – as for the Greeks – became messages from a world within us that ordinary language and customs shield from us. That Freud in fact rediscovered the dynamics of dreams is by the way a myth.[296]

Or like Marx who a hundred years ago, following his Master Hegel but with another twist, showed how the wheels of history worked beneath the otherwise mundane struggles of working life.

These approaches of "the world is not just as it appears" draw from the same well as organized religion: Reality may even be the opposite of what it appears to be: For instance what is experienced as pleasure is really sinful. Thus the popular, often copied picture by Hieronymus Bosch: "Garden of Delight"[297] may "really" be a presentation in the vanity tradition of painting. Just as we recently have learned how the seeming chaos of natural phenomena may be structured by fractal geometrics.

Many issues are at work here. Let's mention some of the most prominent:

The ability of the expert

- o to transform what to us seems to be a local, unrelated phenomenon into a general one;
- o to highlight how what seems to be a phenomenon without much functional utility is really an expression of an effect, – if further looked into;
- o to demonstrate that what seems to be unrelated is really a set of interdependent phenomena.

In all cases the way is cleared for the expert – as well as the layman who wants to appear as such – to show that beneath or behind the commonsense world[298] of appearance there is a deeper, more persuasive one we unknowingly share with other people or even in some cases creatures

For the sake of completeness we may recall that research also has other attention catchers. Sometimes a striking case may settle a debate on doctrines with heavy political perspectives, as when Margaret Mead presented her idyllic image of native life in Samoa – which was taken to "prove" that education, not biology, was the determining factor for human behaviour.[299]

> **Do listen to everyone searching for truth,**
> **but do leave them the moment they declare they found it**

The master focus

To be really successful as a master scientist, it is not enough for her just to draw attention to a new perspective. Her first followers have to find a scheme for systemizing it so new students to the field is given a tool to apply it. The new perspective has to be professionalized, as exemplified, by the conversion of Freud's German concepts into the English language of psychoanalysis! Please refer to Figure 4.6 #1.

Thus a new language is to be created for detecting signs of forces lurking beneath the obvious, which the master student should know how to make intelligible to the rest of us. If the truth uncovered is somewhat banal though, the obvious avenue towards fame is to create an elaborate vocabulary as a cover-up.

In general though I think we should prepare to let ourselves to be fascinated by any new perspectives. But off course whether we will let ourselves be drawn into it or fight it will be personal choice. If the latter hopefully, there will be somebody around to guide us to awareness of our own tendencies to reject rather than be attracted to perspectives, which could help us paint a fuller picture of life.

Thus the path is cleared for a look at the other, more playful horn. But first we must in passing just touch upon the philosophy of Perspectivism.

> **"Everything is subjective", you say.**
> **This is an interpretation! The "subject" is not something given.**
> **It is something added, invented and projected behind what there is.**
> Nietzsche[300]
> **What we see is misconceived, limited views of the world.**
> **Everything is a lie. Truth in particular![301]**

Perspectivism – promotion of illusions or of deeper insights?

Perspectivism is generally a doctrine that positively states that, the validity of any sentence is relative to the school of thought in which it is imbedded. So the truth of any statement is determined relative to the perspective of which it is a part.[302]

And indeed, in reality – excuse the pun – most of what we believe, is as much inferred and construed by language as by sense of being. Thus – in this interpretation – the "reality" we know is not "the world as such", not even partially. It might be and it might be made up in countless other ways – be they more or less inclusive, coherent ways or obstacles to a good life.

Perspectivism – creating, choosing or being led to a perspective
Advocates of such a constructivist attitude may further enhance this relativism by claiming that any researcher is entitled to the views she prefers. Thus the only standard others might apply to a text is "internal coherence". Researchers should just state their premises and then call for it to be judged within the standards of say, logical positivism, Weber's sociology or according to the ethos of Nietzsche's writings on Perspectivism.[303]

To accept for instance, a theistic rather than a scientific worldview, is thus just to give priority to one way of interpretation. Seemingly very democratic! lf so, you can safely get away with whatever simplifying or exaggerating procedures of the discipline you have surrendered to. And any potentially disturbing pressure from reality can thus be passed over in silence.

Yet there are always more stories than one to be "read" between lines, more patterns behind appearances to be detected. Thus the expert guided by a fixed set of interpretative formulas may very well end up with knowing a lot about less.

So – as I see it – Perspectivism is as an ideology not for free. The conscious cultivation of a particular way of thinking may initially nourish certain sensitivities of yours. But in the longer run insensitivity to other views might be a tough price to pay for sticking to any over-expanded theoretical claim for truth as exemplified below, ref Figure 4.14 #1.[304]

Figure 4.14 #1 DORA: FROM DISCOVERY TO DOGMATISM[133]

In Vienna 1900, Dora, a somewhat troubled teenage Jewess became a client of Freud on her father's request. She told Freud how she had dreamt about a fire during which her Mother wanted to save her jewel-chest. Freud goes to great lengths to unravel the setting of the dream for us, including Dora and her mother's attraction to jewellery.

During a session Freud states: "…so far, you have only talked about jewellery and nothing about a chest." He is then informed that Mr. K has donated her a box for her jewels. Alerted by this image Freud is eager to tell her that "jewel-box" is a favourite expression (in German) of the female genitals. Dora, who by now seems familiar with the Freudian way of thinking, immediately responds: "I knew you would say that".

A remark, which Freud explains to the reader, is a common way of displacing unpleasant information from the repressed areas of mind. So as he pursues his own line of thought, he says: "Dora naturally would not follow me…in this interpretation."

To Freud Dora's very denial of his analysis is a confirmation of his ideas. To deny what he, the professional, believes that one has repressed, only serve to verify it to be so. This may very well be so. Yet in all his excitement to prove himself to be right, Freud does not notice how the young Dora has become so acquainted with his ways of thinking that she is able to predict how he will respond to the information he receives.

Apparently both felt that they knew the other well enough to predict each other's reactions without being aware of their own.

It was cases like this, that later lead Feyerabend – in boastful exaggeration of his own powers as a logician – to deny psychoanalysis any respectability, refer to § 5.3 page 200.

Now, I am a great admirer particularly of the early Freud his sensitivity, – and not least his honesty. But no interpretor is necessarily right, just because he believes to have found a formula that can explain what "boxes" in dreams may or may not symbolize. It would have been far more enlightening to Dora[305] and to us readers, if he had given her space to let herself search for what her dream about "saving a jewel-case" might imply.[306] I am sure she did not see the erect male organ as a beautiful, rock-solid, glittering jewel to be put in and out of her "box".

So, – seeing the world in a new and from one's own starting point – richer perspective may easily collapse into dogmatism. Turning initial enrichment into expretations, is a way of pleasing the devil who likes to see our sensitivity wane away and give place for semi-automatic reasoning.

Realizing that one has been short-sighted once does not necessarily a save you from ever being so again! But to seek to set events and relations in a new perspective is may indeed at times captivate an audience, ref to the validity scheme 4.14 #2.

Figure 4.14 #2 VALPER: STANDARDS FOR PERSPECTIVISM AS AN INTERTERST AROUSING SCHEME

		O R I E N T A T I O N	
		THEORETICAL	RELATED TO OTHER DOMAINS
CREATING IMPRESSIONS OF WHAT IS	DISCRE-TE	identification of what 1.1 EMPHASIS ON WHAT MATTERS Identification of facts as data may be selective but has to have some relation to occurrences in the field	generation of fact 1.2 INTERESTING "Data"-processing must be exciting in the sense that it is has to present data in a new[307] light.
SYNTHEZING: SEARCHING FOR WHOLES AND/OR CREATING MEANING		compilation of fact 2.1 IDENTIFIABLE CONSISTENCY Demand for a transparent logic – however exclusive – of which facts to select and how to "see" their "real" significance	application of results 2.2 POSITIONING Can the results be used to increase the awareness of alternative interpretations of everyday occurrences and/or a potential new world

The move from 1.1 -> 1.2 may be based on exampling: finding the right incidents relevant to the point you wish to make and excluding points that may be an embarrassment to your views.[307]

2.1 Interpretations create a sense of "getting to know"; building coherence thus serves as an argument to prove how right it is. Yet this cannot fend off the uncertainty caused by reality pressure, thus all interpretative systems have to bolster their stand with protective layers of a defensive logics' – including attacks on those who has an eye for supplementary "truths".

Choice, necessity or seduction

When we look not just upon ourselves but others, it is easy to claim we each choose our own ways of interpretation. This triggers several questions:

- o How much does a chosen interpretation include?
- o Is there something to rely on, other than our own subjectivity?
- o Do we really choose, and if so, how is this possible?
- o Or are we led to interpretation? And if so, how and when?

We will only cast a glance at these issues in the following. But I urge everyone to explore these issues for their own sake.

The fight for the last word

The problem with Perspectivism is not that it encourages us to stress a particular angle. That may indeed be

- a) educational, refer to Figure 4.14 #2 VALPER below,
- b) and may make us pause and look at aspects we previously might have neglected and
- c) ask ourselves what led us to do so.

The problem arises when researchers turn defensive and suppress other and occasionally even richer forms of insights, as, e.g., when statisticians turn against qualitative studies. Or when some give themselves away to "a tendency to reduce one's opponents to caricatures"[308] and in turn make any position of the "other" so radical, that it come all too easy to refute. Thus partial one-sidedness is as much a mirror as a window. And if we catch ourselves on the brink of doing so we may ask ourselves: "What is it, that is so frightening about the views we find ourselves so emotionally called up to refute"

Unfortunately, the academic world is infested with a will to fight for the last word rather than getting around and to the bottom of an issue. And although I personally is fascinated by one-sided views, as a case researcher I am disgusted. There is a vast difference between enjoying a fight in the ring and hearing that someone was beaten up in the street. Just as one may be horrified by listening in on the battles fought in a courtroom as caricatures of truth-seeking.

When the veil of subjectivity becomes more important than what it hides

Even worse than fighting for your own position – which you may be tempted to do in order to bolster it – is the joy some find in producing infamies of the works of others. With this sour note let us with joy proceed to the delight of playing with different interpretative schemes:

The dynamics of interpretation (2):

4.15   The softer in all seriousness the more playful approach 4.15

Interpretation as
a self-conscious reflection of identification and/or suspicion

The drive for interpretative activity is – as we recall – to see beyond appearances in order to uncover and identify what is lurking behind the surface of reality. We read behavioural signs all day long, just as we plan our own appearance for effect. Commentators interpret the words and actions of political figures. Each social science teaches us how to look for certain clues and analyse them. So we rather abstain from using interpretation as a derogatory term and instead opt for perceiving interpretation as a positive endeavour, acknowledging that

- o We do read what we take to be signals all the time, mindful there of or not
- o We may do ourselves a service by realizing when and how we interpret, which in consequence could lead us on to the track to sense why and what is leading us to act as we are inclined to.
- o Our sense of others as well as our selves increases in scope, the more we experiment with different interpretation strategies.
- o Experimenting with different interpretation strategies in addition sensitizes our awareness of what others are likely to identify as meaningful to them.

So let us take a first look of how to suspend our subjectivity while still working in an interpretative mood:

The move from a subjectivist
to a more self-conscious interpretative stand

Later we return to explanatory statements but for now let us briefly, once more, illustrate what interpretation entails with these responses:

- o "She hit Peter as she had grown increasingly impatient with her boy" Why? "He kept on answering back, so she simply surrendered to an inner urge to hit him"!
- o "Why did they marry?" "Oh they were so much in love!"

Such claims are dressed up to appear as explanations, but are indeed interpretative in what we have already termed the subjectivist mode, refer to § 4.3. Without further ado they expand one possible cause to be the only one. Not all impatient mothers respond to teasing by beating their children, nor do all youngsters in love marry. It is just a possibility.

Just to state a reason for an occurrence is to offer an interpretation you expect us to accept. And, certainly, hitting children is bad, but doing it without reason is even worse. And, certainly, marriage is a sign we hopefully can read as an expression of two persons' loving, mutual commitment. But it need not be so. "Time" will show.

What triggers an action may be different from what we suppose and so may the outcome. And if we do not get closer and follow up our interpretations we will never know! But that is exactly what we expect researchers to do. A check and outline of opus operandi! If not, the explication – or rather expretation – we offer may not be more than just an utterance. So we better be on guard:

I have often wondered "we" so readily jump to interpretations rather than admit "we" do not really know what is happening. Believing oneself to be ignorant is one of the great methodological principles of case research in the explorative integrative mood.

Any discussion between two combatants each aiming to refute the relevance of each view of the "Other" may be fun to watch, but most likely satisfying to none.

Nor do opponents necessarily meet on the same level. For instance, supervisors often instruct their students first of all to frame a research question, then state their position and choose a perspective. Or, worse still, some supervisors are more than willing to impose their favourite perspective on the student. Why? Wouldn't it be more proper to leave it to the student to explore the subject at hand, experiment with different perspectives and encourage him to try to knit them together or even better, to help her to detect or even develop new ones?

Going beyond the obvious, making something implicit explicit
Rousseau's literary career started with a prize-winning essay for the Academy of Dijon, 1750. In this he – in contrast to prevailing opinions – made the claim that the progress within arts and sciences since the Renaissance had neither improved the mental nor the emotional life of man. According to legend, his first inclination had been to praise progress, yet Diderot advised[309] the young man – if he wanted to make a name for him self – he should present the opposite view. He obliged and made a success for life from it.

Yet, arousing interest by twisting habits of thinking around may at best be far more than a trick. In realist terms it could be an opening towards seeing beyond the obvious and detect drives working inside us more or less behind our own back.

Thus Freud's psychoanalysis, Marx' political visions, Nietzsche's cynicism as well as Structuralism have all been enlightening: All created by masters of unmasking who made a name for themselves for having been – if not the first to see beyond the obvious – then for doing so with far more zest and in greater detail than anyone before them.

Any *scheme of unmasking appearances* must, in order to gain credibility, be nurtured by a sense within "me" that we partly are subject to forces we are too embarrassed to recognize – be it lust or negative emotions such as envy and pride, running counter to social decency, etc. In addition we may get a sense of how language, with its both limited and directive vocabulary, has had such a grip on us that we were unable to express ourselves authentically.

The very idea of hidden forces will always embarrass, if not outright offend some; like present-day believers in a materialist universe are insulted by the very idea of creationist teaching. But let us keep in mind that sciences too are likely to instruct us that the world of appearance is grounded in processes that are not even detectable to the naked eye. The Sun does not circle the Earth, matter is not solid but built of atoms, just as our biological heritage is grounded in genes of which most of us only know of by hear say.

On a far more modest scale, one of the virtues of case research is actually to unravel the rules that seemingly guide the behaviour of different groups of people, be they employees, patients or politicians. Or with a catchword: *Making the implicit explicit.*

For metaphorical presentation of such potential inner layers, please refer to the model Figure 4.15 #2, – a continuation of the previous Figure 2.5 #1.

Figure 4.15 #2 : VARIOUS DOMAINS OF REALITY, SENSED OR IMAGINED

| Backwards trail towards a probable structure | **domains:** realities we talk about, realities we sense, might sense and images of underlying reality |
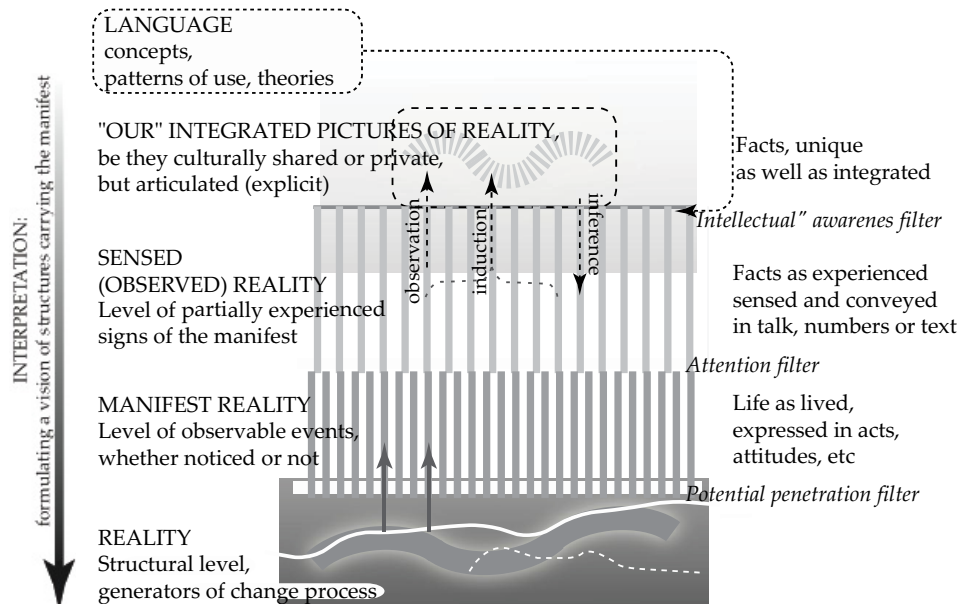
Our conceptions of the world are derived from pressures of the outside world, coloured by our emotions and shaped by the inferences and the languages we master. Far the greater part of what is happening within, to or around us just passes us by without being consciously noticed or remain hidden for us like e.g. the functions of our organs or decisions made by others.

Thus one might – metaphorically spoken – contain inner images of at least four layers:

At the "top" the intellectual level with the thought patterns, which we recognize and identify as ours. This realm of acquired beliefs, metaphors and schooling may be grounded in acquired concepts as well as in experience.

Next a level of conscious expression, language and integrated recall! What we say we know about what the world is like; "The adapted world which we feel to be the real one", as Nietzsche calls it.[310] Yet it is not all that we observe that we process, nor can express. Yet we know of it – e.g. say the colour of the surface of a lake or the texture of a tree trunk. So a great part of what we do not notice is noticeable in principle. We just do not attach any importance to it.

Beyond that, there is a level where outer occurrences as well as inner emotions trigger manifest reactions, although what is happening is beyond our observational abilities.

From sensitive openness to new rigidities

Unmasking hidden realities calls for sensitivity to the hitherto un-notice, – which when first recognized amounts to a discovery.

The early Freud could very well stand out as an ideal for us all with his acute awareness of the implicitly expressive content of his utterances, like slips of tongue.[311] And so, too, when he in his mid-career – much to his own surprise – found that suppressed sexuality could be the source of dysfunctional behaviours. Yet from then on, he saw this complex at work everywhere, recall Figure 4.14. Creative awareness was thus stifled in to dogmatism. This was strengthened as he related sexual drive to procreation, and thus biology, which reduced his overall venture to a subject of natural science rather than social research.

To us, though, this identification of the consequences of repressed sexuality as the cause of self-destructive behaviour may probably best be understood within late-Victorian norms. Any particular truth may – no matter how well it is backed by evidence – be truer in certain ages than others!

Of course, we in any case better listen to the words of the Masters, yet without necessarily letting ourselves be engulfed in them. By paying attention to opus operandi and exploring the genesis of their writings, we may learn far more than by letting our selves be swallowed up. In short, we had better try to maintain our sensitivity.

Perspectivist accounts are at times enjoyable to read, particular when presented with artistic nerve. Or they may be as boring, as the claim for rationality. As I see the claim for the perspectivist idiom may even include an array of claims as defences

- o an alibi for being sloppy,
- o a right to indulge in projections,
- o a necessity to humour some reference group, e.g. a supervisor or
- o an obligation to devote oneself to politically contorted undertakings, as e.g. was the case with conflict sociology and other "theory first" thinking schemes.

The latter issue called on Glaser and Strauss to advocate a grounded "data first approach."[312] Yet abstaining from devotion to a certain theoretical perspective only by implication will make you dependent on your personal dispositions!

So couldn't we – at least during fieldwork – take in different perspectives in order to sensitize ourselves to what the world looks like according to more than one perspective? Or we may even – as we will illustrate in the final chapter on Understanding – learn the art of dialogue – where both parts are prepared to help each other clarify the differences between them and the roots of the perspectives they face.

If so *self-conscious interpretor,* though, and thus hopefully any researcher, will look towards how she – as an observant – is interpreting. If so she will simultaneously:

- Be aware, that what she notices could be "just" the clues, she is prepared to look for any way without regard for circumstance and.
- thus always prepared to search within her self to detect how and why she notices as she does. Say
- try to recognize, how she herself be captivated by language or interpretation schemes brought to her during her upbringing, education and/or emotional scars. This prepares her even better
- tentatively wonder which inner movements may be at work behind the manifest behaviour of the Other too.

Reality is rich and generally even richer than we have imagination to encompass.

4.16   Do not fool your self, play can be serious fun!

Some personal examples of playing

Allow me to illustrate how we may look for and experiment with different practices of interpretation. During fieldwork you may be confronted with different viewpoints of practices that people share within their organization.

Traditionally, managers and workers blame each other for misdoings. Management often claims, that most workers resist change – without wondering why they may do so in the first place. And workers perceive management as a greedy bunch of self-interested persons, that rather than thinking of their own careers, should help and pay due attention to the efforts on the floor. In such a situation the explorative fieldworker may experiment with the prevailing interpretations she has identified within the organization. Look for clues that can confirm either party's perceptions of the other.

During my exploration of Employee Ownership I returned to do fieldwork at the nut and bolt company, Fastener. Here, as I saw it, the management was highly sensitive, attentive and instructive in their relations with their operators. Yet, one person, a storage worker, originally trained as a biologist, had his own views. He stuck to a vulgar-Darwinist view of seeing management as predators exploiting the good will of employees.

I had all the arguments I could want to in my bag to reject his view. But I reasoned otherwise. Some readers of my report to be – conflict sociologists for instance – would certainly try to apply their own pre-established scheme and perhaps even accuse me of being a naïve researcher infested with a bourgeois perspective. Thus to forestall any criticism and keep my mind open to other possibilities of interpretation, I for two days searched for clues – however tiny – that could affirm, the "predator" view.

A procedure I cannot recommend enough. It is an intensive and very rewarding procedure, both when the outcome forces one to partly reject any initial interpretation or to sharpen it – refer to § 2.12 on analytical generalization.

A second example: After getting married I tried to copy the ways in which my beloved, Jane, and other women reasoned. It was truly enjoyable and led me to have a far more relaxed and supporting relationship with women.

There is only one reality, but we live within each our own
There is only one reality, but we live within each our own. Or do we? Perhaps just in theory! If yes, we would be fascinated by the multitude of experiences people refer to as the reason for their attitudes.

The real is now, it is what is you can touch as well as what touches you. The real is an ever changing flux, it includes more than what is solid. It includes Time as an ultimate reality. So the *Idiom of One Reality* sets the scene for a multitude of different interpretations and attributed meanings and in consequence discussions amongst adherents with different viewpoints.

Different interpretations of society, group behaviour and the relations between man and his world are abundant. Thus rather then defending the view we may have stumbled on, it may be a more rewarding challenge to try to identify what each perspective has to offer us.

We may find that some are outright erroneous, some amusing and other delirious or even harmful. Yet we cannot deny that they have or have had their exponents. And that should intrigue us. So do embark on a quest to develop our grasp of why and under what circumstances, who turns to what perspective! Some adherents of a given view may even be acutely aware how their own professed perspective was not the only possible one.

By implication this is a rejection of the ethos of Perspectivism. There are be a multitude of language-created world, which not all is equally healthy to live by. Thus we are morally obligated continuously to identify, expretate and test those interpretations we adhere to in order to arrive, step by step, at a more complete worldview.

This line of thought paves the way towards Understanding as a mode of life in general. But first we have to deal with a dramatic wholesale rejection of interpretation in social research: The explanatory approach.

The present text
The reader might now ask whether I am aware of which minute-, mid- and grand-level assumptions I cling to, or to which degree "I" may overextend my views. Well, let me be modest: As a case researcher I have more than once caught my self in un-awareness of some preconceived, implicit assumptions. So I had better continue to listen and try to sense how and by what I may be activated.

Yet – as often referred to – I try as a working principle to approach any new scheme of thought – however extreme or overextended – expecting it to contain a kernel of "truth" worth noticing, – the *principle of the Nugget in the Rubble*! So I do acknowledge the truth of conflict sociology, yet without letting myself be sucked into it. And, certainly, structuralism – however blind to the agency view – is well grounded. Yet I try not to live by it, devoted as I am to sense feelings and imaginations, which may be difficult to express in plain language!

Thirdly, we are not accountable for what we feel, thus we may not know why we act as we do. Never the less I nurture the existentialist credo that we are responsible for how we cope with our inclinations, how we act in public, and thus for our choices as we have made them. The problem with the ethos of Structuralism is not that is wrong, but that it is a challenge to the ideal of self-governance. We will explore these issues in some detail in the last chapter § 6 on Understanding.

First, however, we have to turn to a historically far greater challenge: To deal with those who want to oust interpretation from social research, and replace it with its self-proclaimed more scientific counterpart: Explanation.

Endnotes

1. He did not actually preach stealing though, see Mark 10 18–20. Yet as I see it – it is more advisable to notice how people act rather than what they say. What counts is doing.

2. E Goffman (1959) *The presentation of the Self in Everyday Life,* (1959), Doubleday, New York.

3. Joseph Blasi (1988) *Employee Ownership – Revolution or Rip-off*, Ballinger quote page 117.

4. ESOP: Employee Stock Ownership Plan. Companies in US where ownership is set up according to certain law called ESOPs in order to distinguish them from e.g. co-ops.

   The law makes it possible for a retiring owner who sells his stock to the employees to postpone gain tax. Just as the credit institutions gain some tax advantages as they provide the employee-owners with capital for the buy out. The stock has to be equally distributed amongst all employees. The tricky part of the law, though, is the provision that even though an owner sells his stock to the employees, he may still maintain control of it until the loan has been paid back.

5. Joseph Blasi, op. cit. pages 150.

6. Erik Maaloe (1998) *The Employee Owner, – organizational & individual change within manufacturing companies as participation and sharing grow*, Akademisk Forlag, Copenhagen. Sold out from the publisher, but issues may still be obtained from the bookshop at Aarhus University, Business and Social Science, info@bssbooks.dk.

7. Paraphrase from a quote from the CEO at Reuther Mold, *The Employee Owner*, op cit. Page 90.

8. For a short overview see Erik Maaloe Employee Ownership as a joint Management-Labor Drive towards Caring and Sharing in P. Kalmi and M. Klinedinst (ed) (2006) *Participation in the Age of Globalization and Information, page 85–107, Elsevier Ltd.*

9. "Social constructivism view" The dogma that the words we use shape the world we live in. I admit the sentence may be read as tautological. If so, it is at least logically contained in it self.

10. John Locke (1690) *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Book two, chapter i, #2, Fontana, 1964.

11. Aaron Ben-Ze'ev (2000] *The Sublety of Emotions*, MIT Press, page 68.

12. David L Altheide & John M Johnson Criteria for Assesing Interpretative Validity in Qualitative Research. In NK Denzin & YS Lincoln (1994) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Sage, page 492.

13. subliminal or ultra-marginal consciousness, see Frederic Meyers *Human Personality*, (1903) Longmans, Green and Co, 1954, page xii & chapter 1 #112. It is interesting how Meyers as the founder of the term originally extended its meaning beyond the present use of term.

14. See a more systemized account please refer to Altheide & Johnson, above and for an illustration Reuben A Buford May & Mary Patillo-McCoy (2000) Do you see what you see? *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol 6, #1, page 65–87.

15. ref Henry Hitchings (2008) *The Secret Life of Words – how English became English*, Farrar, Straus & Giroux. New York, page 288 and 328.

16. From *Rudolf Arnheim* (1954) Art and Visual Perception, chapter II, Faber, London.

17. John Stuart Mill (1849) *A System of Logic* page 347.

18. William Whewell *On the Philosophy of Discovery (*1856), Burt Franklin, New York, 1971, page 240.

19. If opus operandi could be adequately defined, "if y then x" may be expressed as "x is the cause for y", e.g. "an increasingly colder environment causes liquids to shrink and freeze". Yet as a social researcher I – like Hume – am not so fond of talking about non-observables like causes. Ref Hume up cit Chapter 3, page 80. For a further discussion of this matter please refer to Tom L. Beuchamp & Alexander Rosenberg (1981) *Hume and Problem of Causation,* Oxford University Press, USA.

20. David Hume *a treatise of Human Nature,* (1739) Book 1, Part III, section vi, "of the inference from the impression to an idea", Meridan Books 1962, page 136.

21. David Hume *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding,* (1748) Gateway, Ill, 1956. For further reference please refer to Karl Popper *The logic of Scientific Discovery,* (1935) Basic Books, NY 1959, page 27–34 or *Objective Knowledge,* Oxford Un Press, 1972, Chapter 1 conjectural Knowledge, page 1–31.

22. George Berkeley *A Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710), Bobbs Merill. 1957.

23. The older distinction exemplifies the use of the relevance criteria, while the new one is scientific in the sense of establishing some criteria of the "we – the scientists – know better" type, which the rest of us accordingly have to learn to comply with.

24. Refer to William of Ockam 1285–1349 and Rochelin 1045-90 as obscure forerunners. A most important recognition and rejection of Platonism that remains with us today as part of the Social Constructivist ethos, refer as well e.g. to Nelson Goodman or Jacques Derrida.

25. Platonism as a philosophy of life states that ideals, justice or goodness i. e, are hidden as universal virtuous realities in ourselves. Our goal is thus to get in contact with them and let them emerge.

26. Universalis sunt nomina = Universals are (nothing but) names.

27. Nomen is the Latin word for name.

28. "The meaning of a word is its use in language" as Wittgenstein (1945) states in § 43, *Philosophische Unterschungen* Basil Blackwell 1953 as been generally the case and just mentioning ostensive definitions as an exception.

29. See also Kenneth J. Gergen *Realities and Relations* (1994), Harvard University Press, 1997, page 146.

30. To attribute existence to something abstract, as if a thing – moral concepts, for instance. Obviously a view in denial of Platonism!.

31. Thus the indeed poetical version of "man being created as Good breathed life in to matter".

32. Apparently "we" once more by implication see how easily we take the correspondence principle for granted, "if something has a name, it must exist.

33. A term borrowed from William of Ockham, ref Philotheus Boehner (1979) editor and translator *William of Ockham, Philosophical Writing – a selection,* Bobbs-Merill, Indiana, page xxix.

34. Carl Hempel and Paul Oppenheim *The Logic of Explanation* (1948) reprinted in Herbert Feigl and May Brocbeck *Readings in the Philosophy of Science,* Appleton-Century-Croft, 1953, paraphrase, page 319.

35. Nomothetic, from Greek Nomos = law and tithemi = to establish customary rules for how to behave and thus to expect. A term launched by Wilhelm Windelband (1900) in his *Geschichte und Naturwissenscaft,* Heitz & Münde, Strasburg. Printed in translation by *Theory and Psychology,* Vol 8, page 5–22, 1998.

36. As for the "Atomic Theory of Leucippus and Democritus" (both around 5–400 BC) see for instance GS Kirk, JE Raven and M Schofield (1983) *The Pre-socratic Philosophers,* Cambridge.

37. Aristotle (384–322 BC) *Physics,* Book 5 # 286.

38. I cannot remember the name of the guest speaker, but I do recall my own smile, when a student behind exclaimed: What an interesting theory!.

39. For the importance of our body as a reference for the conceptual structures, see George Lakoff & Mark Johnson (1999)*Philosophy in the Flesh -the embodied mind and its challenge to western thought*, Basic Books, New York.

40. Leibnitz was the first to conceive the idea of sufficient reasons (and is paraphrased below). Yet in all fairness Hume was the first to deal with it seriously. Leibnitz *Monadologie* (1720) § 32, as well as Hume *Human Treatise of Human Nature*, Book 1. part 3, (1739).

41. The very word "Magnet", according to Lucretius *De Rerum Natura* (ca 90 BC), Loeb Classics 1975, Chapter 6 906, derives from a former Greek town, Magnesia, in Asia Minor, where "stones" that attract iron were first found.

42. Aristotle *On the Soul* I, ii, referring to the beliefs of Thales, that soul is the moving force of matter and as he stated, magnets accordingly must have a soul. A wonderful example of how ad hoc definitions may take on a life of their own and determine how we should look at the world!.

43. For an excellent short introduction to the concept of "soul" as a moving force in Greek thought, please refer to Wilhelm Windelband (1891).
    "*A History of Philosophy, – the formation and development of its problems and conceptions*".
    Paper Tiger, NJ 2001, Chapter 1, § 6.

44. T.W. Adorno et al. *The Authoritarian Personality*, (1950) Norton, New York, 1969. Please observe that the sentences per implication assume all authoritarian persons to be governed by deep-rooted fears. This may only be the case for some.

45. Irving L. Janis *Victims of Groupthink – a psychological study of foreign-policy decisions and fiascoes*, Houghton Mifflin, Mass. 1972.

46. Clinton Golden & Harold J. Ruttenberg (1942) *The Dynamics of Industrial Democracy, Harper*.

47. It is a poorly formulated rule that allows others by implication to infer what is not stated.

48. John Stuart Mill (1843) *System of Logic, Book II Of reasoning,* chapter iii, § 3.

49. For a fascinating overview, see Benjamin Farrington (1944) *Greek Science*, UK.

50. Intuition is a form of felt assurance, which in the best cases builds on a feel for accumulated experiences, and at worst on make-believe.

51. The story may not be literally true. Yet it is true in essence as it neatly sums up the essentials of Newton's initial speculations and mathematical work, ref Richard S Westfall (1980) *Never at Rest, – a biography of Isaac Newton*, Cambridge Un Press, NY, page Chapter 4 in general and page 155 in particular.

52. Some may claim that Atomic Physics and Einstein's Relativity Theory have undermined Newton. That is a misunderstanding. Newtonian Physics is as valid as ever within the domain it was conceived. It just is not adequate for domains beyond it.

53. Charles Richet (1923) *Le Savant*, Hachette, Paris, page 99-100.

54. Anaphylaxie is the word used in the original text.

55. Frederic Taylor (1903-11) *Scientific Management* Greenwood Press, Conn. 1972.

56. Gotthold E Lessing (1778) *Eine Duplik*, Lachman & Muncker (eds) (1886–1924) *Gesammelte Werke,* Vol XIII, page 23.

57. Performative truth: Stating something to be true is not to describe anything. I just have to vouch for it to be the case. Like "getting married" is the performance of saying yes at the altar. Ref. John Austin (1946) *"Other Minds", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society,* Vol 20, page 148–187.

58. William James: *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), Folio Society, UK 2008, page 61-3.

59. Ref. F.P. Ramsey: *Facts and Propositions* (1927), reprinted in D.H. Meller (ed.): *F.P. Ramsey Foundations,* London 1978, page 45. Likewise "that b is x is false" appears just to be another way of saying "b is not X".

60. Quintilian: *Institutio Oratoria,* Book vii #.9.1, (ca 75 AC), translation by H.E. Butler, Loeb Classical Library, 1953.

61. Ostensive = to point towards, from Latin: to show.

62. John Locke: *An Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690), Fontana Library, 1964. Paraphrased by combining Sentences, Book 2 sub-chapter 1.2 and Book 3 sub-chapter 1.5.

63. refer to John Locke, op. cit., Book 2, sub-chapter 20.2.

64. A "proposition" is a picture of reality, Ludvig Wittgenstein (1922) *Tractatus Logicus-Philosophicus*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, sentence #4.01.

65. Ludvig Wittgenstein: *Tractatus Logicus-Philosophicus* op.cit., sentence # 4.014.

66. Wittgenstein was certainly not the first exponent of the idea. It dates back to the very dawn of our civilization, Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas and Locke, as mentioned above, as well as Wittgenstein's master Bertrand Russell, who claimed "that truth consists in some form of correspondence between belief and fact", ref. *Human Knowledge – its scopes and limits,* New York 1948, page 148.

67. Jay W. Forrester, (1962) *Industrial Dynamics,* Wright Allen Press, U.S.A.

68. See amongst other e.g. Rom Harré, *Varieties of Realism*, Basil Blackwell, page 65.

69. Ref William P Alson (1996) *A realist conception of truth*, Cornell University Press, page 5.

70. The reason why the sentence seems meaningless when X is introduced is because the original sentence presumes "is" – as a reference to existence – in non debatable,.

71. Russel L. Ackoff (1947) *Scientific Method – optimizing applied research methods*, John Wiley, page 142-6.

72. Refer to e.g. Gilbert Ryle (1931) *Systematically misleading Expressions* reprinted in Richard M. Rorty (ed.): *The Linguistic Turn,* 1967, University of Chicago Press (1992), page 86.

73. For further clarification, see "hypostatize", § 2.5.

74. Obviously this notion of reality principle as "reality-talking back" differs somewhat from the Freudian concept with the same name.

75. *Nicholas de Autrocourt, – his correspondence with Master Giles and Bernard of Arezzo*, by LM de Rijk (1994) EJ Brill, The Netherlands, page 47.

76. This argument can be read as an example of categorical imperative, launched by Kant (1785).*Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals.*

77. Please note, reference is "correspondence without any specification of opus operandi".

78. Ideology in itself is a poly-semical term, of course. In neutral terms it just refers to a body of interconnected ideas, like Empiricism, Realism, Marxism, etc. I, though, tend to define ideology in a negative sense as a body of alleged knowledge that some people are interested in defending at all costs, including disregard for the reality principle.

79. It is a fascinating thought that "doing God's will" eschews the acquisition of wisdom. – And it is even more fascinating that people do not ask whether the ancestral Jewish couple did acquire it, and if so, how their descendants since lost it.

80. For a reference to St. Augustin etc. see: Sidney Morgenbesser & James Walsh (eds) (1962) *Free Will*, USA.

81. Ref later, see § 4.11.

82. Michael Polaynia (1958) *Personal Knowledge – towards a post-critical philosophy*, London and (1963) *The Tacit Dimension.*

83. Linda Martin Alcoff (1996) *Real Knowing, – new versions of the coherence theory*, Cornell Un Press, USA, page 212, truncated by author.

84. Ref e.g. Josephus: *Life of Herod* (93–94), as translated by John Gregory (1998), Folio Society 2007.

85. John Stuart Mill(1843) *System of Logic, Book III*, London.

86. As for Aristotle's and his distinction between material, structural (formal), efficient and final cause, ref to Physics II. ii. 194–195.

87. A methodological feature we explore in greater detail in the pages to come.

88. One of the major findings of General Systems Theory, ref also strong explanations § 5.10 to come.

89. Rudolf Carnap (1928) *Der Logische Aufbau der Welt*, Berlin. This work from his youth is far better known – extreme as it is – than his later, more moderate works.

90. See, e.g., Jeremy Campbell (2001) *Liars Tale, – a history of falsehood*, New York, page 77.

91. William of Ockam (1285–1349) never used the word "razor", but "principle of economy". Ref e.g.Philotheus Boehner, editor and his translator (1979) *William of Ockham, Philosophical Writing, – a selection,* Bobbs-Merill, Indiana, page xx–xxi.

92. Diligent readers may have noticed that in this sentence – however intentionally "true", time appears as if it were it hypostatized an entity in itself. It is confusing, but so is language.

93. Refer to Frederic C. Beiser (2002) *German Idealism – the struggle against subjectivism*. Harvard University Press, page 93.

94. No works by Epemenides (from 6'th Century BC) is still in existence. Epemenides though may not have seen his evaluation of his countrymen as a paradox.

95. As for exaggeration, see § 4.15.

96.   As for expression see figure 4.2 #1, page 100.

97.   P.W. Brigdeman (1927) *The Logic of Modern Physics* MacMillian, 1960, page 5: A "concept is synonymous with the corresponding set of operations (for measuring it).

98.   My translation of "Was vernünftig ist, das ist wirklich und was wirklich ist, das ist vernünftig". G.W.F. Hegel (1821) *Grundlinien der Philosophies des Rechts* #XX, Ulstein, 1972. However Charles Taylor (1977) suggests this translation: "What is rational is actual and what is actual is rational" in his *Hegel*, Cambridge University Press, page 422. It may sound as nonsensical, yet it is a rephrasing of the classical idea "that what is true is identical with itself".

99.   For an example refer to ELIZA in Joseph Weisenbaum (1976) *Computer Power and Human Reason*, San Francisco: W.H. Freeman.

100.   Ref to the Duhem Quine thesis § 5.11.

101.   Muriel James & Dorothy Jongeward (1976) *Born to Win*, Addison Wesley, Mass.

102.   This must not be read as a defiance of God. People imagine the godly according to their own partially culturally determined imaginary, – which shows how important the religious dimension is to many of us. It is even so important that some people are ready to define themselves by denial of the godly – atheists that is.

103.   Jean Piaget (1970) *Genetic Epistemology*, Columbia Un. Press.

104.   57: Eight Ages of Man, printed in *Childhood and Society* and *Identity: Youth and Crisis, 1950, page 247–274*.

105.   N. Chomsky (1965) *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, MIT Press.

106.   See also Charles Taylor (1971) What is involved in Genetic Psychology, reprinted 1985 in *Human Agency and Language, philosophical papers*, chapter six, Cambridge University Press.
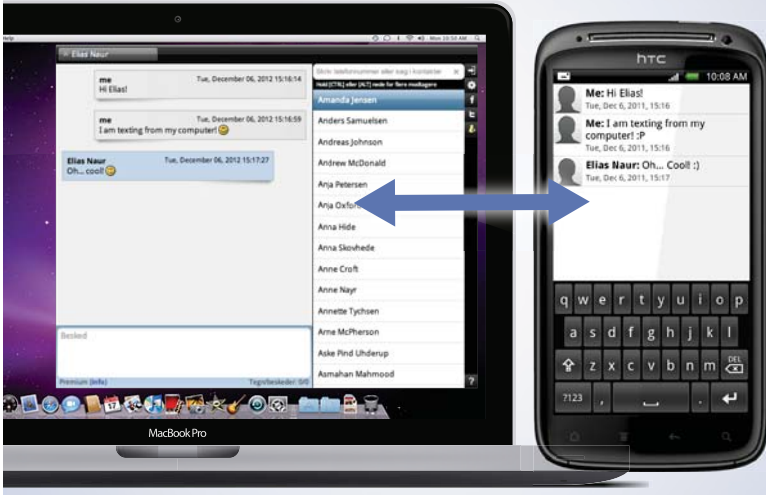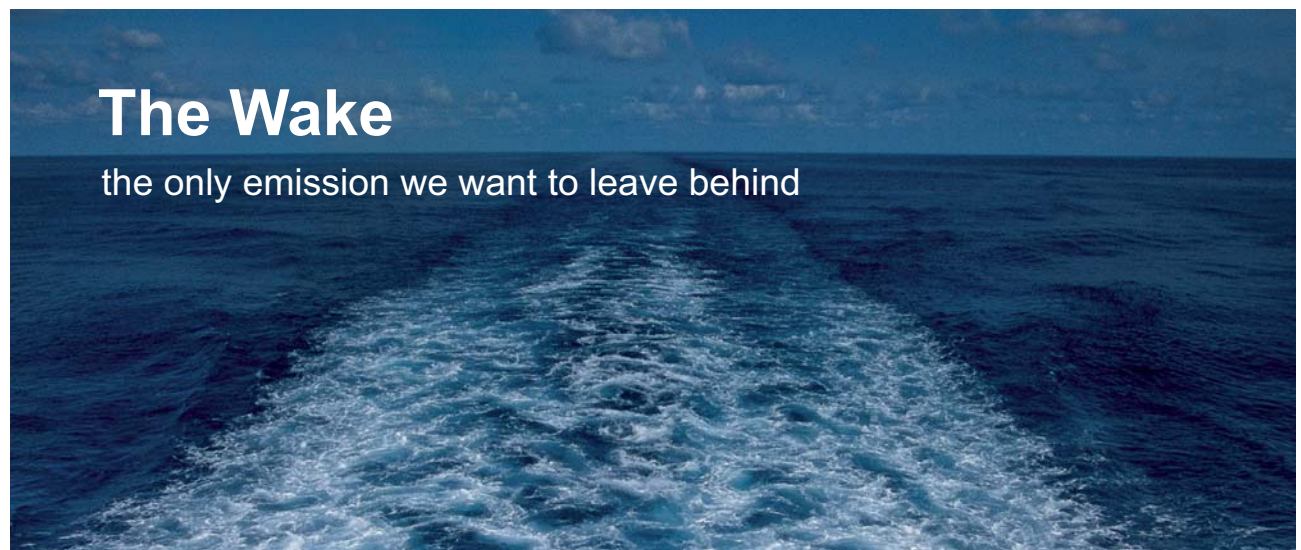
107. To hypostatize': to attribute reality or essence to a concept. Thus the sentence "I am not" even it may appear as meaningless, may be meaningful in the sense that the "I" spoken about is a hypostatized item and thus without any existence beyond language as in "The Philosophy of the I". Thus the sentence "I am not" may not be untrue as long as the "I" spoken about does not exist beyond language. Thus the I, who is speaking, is another "I", than the one "it" speaks about. A position alien to most people!.

108. Francis Bacon (1620) *Novum Organum* in English by Open Court Publ. Comp. 1994, page 63.

109. Bent Flyvbjerg (1988) *Rationality and Power*, Un of Chicago Press, page 27.

110. Among the Masters of Suspicion one can e.g. mention Nietzsche, who all his life was suspicious not only of others but himself too. As was Freud while young, but Marx never, at least not in public!.

111. Idols of the Tribe, as Francis Bacon called it, see page 53–54.

112. Idols of the Cave, as Francis Bacon called it.

113. Idols of the Market Place, as Francis Bacon called it.

114. Idols of the Theater, as Francis Bacon called it.

115. Michel Foucault (1972-9) *Power/knowledge, selected writings* Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1980, page 131. This statement, however true, is only so in a parasitic sense. The constraints alleged to should not be seen as goals in themselves but as means to achieve, and please pardon me, truth in a realist sense of the term. Yet, undoubtedly, goal displacement will occur if and when bureaucracy gets the upper hand.

116. See Richard Gillespie (1993) *Manufacturing Knowledge, -a history of the Hawthorne experiments*, Cambridge Un Press.

117. The role of editors for the advancement of science is certainly widely recognized, yet under-researched.

118. Lise L. Kjærgaard & Bodil Als-Nielsen (2002) Association between competing interests and authors' conclusions, *British Medical Journal*, Vol. 325, 3 August.

119. Margaret Mead (1928) *The Coming of Age in Samoa,* New York, 1973 and a critique: Derek Freeman (1983) *Margaret Mead and Samo, – the making and un-making of an anthropological myth,* Harvard University Press, , and for an evaluation: Erik Maaløe (1996) *Casestudier,* Akademisk Forlag Copenhagen 2002.

120. Thomas S. Kuhn (1962) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press,.

121. Max Planck (1948) *Wissenschaftliche Selbstbiographie* page 22. Translation by F. Gaynor, (1949) *Scientific Autobiography and Other Papers*, page 33–34. Quoted by Thomas S. Kuhn op. cit., page 150.

122. The reader may recognize that I in the present work has amused myself by forwarding quotes to arouse the reader's awareness that today's views associated with social constructivism have an up to thousand years old tradition behind them. Which in itself just exemplifies man's ever going reflections about language and what it may refer to.

123. Charles Darwin (1872) *The expression of the emotions in man and animals*, UK.

124. Rom Harré 1986, *Varieties of Realism*, page 6 & 17, Basil Blackwell, UK.

125. For a short reference work, see e.g. Barry Allen (1993) *Truth in Philosophy*, Harvard University Press.

126. Gilbert C Meilander (1984) *The Theory and Practice of Virtue*, chapter 4, Indiana.

127. aRb: "a is related in a specified way to b".

128. Thus the relevance of Bourdieu's concept of habitus, ref Pierre Bourdieu (2000) *The Social Structure of the Economy*, Polity Press, London 2005.

129. Thus, in consequence, the search for simplistic, all-encompassing "laws for the social" as inspired by Newtonian Physics.

130. Refer to Charles Peirce (1903) *Pragmatism and Pragmaticism* § 9, *Collected Papers*, vol. V. Harvard University Press, 1974. An example: The "truth" of legal laws cannot be deduced from the text itself. It is an empirical task to be revealed by analysis of how a given set of written laws are used in court to free or sentence people accused of violating them – the positive law idiom.

131. "Arriving at the same conclusions" is per definition impossible to achieve in the social realm as what we study – in principle and as the old Greek knew – hardly has the same time permanence as natural phenomena. Nevertheless, I believe some consistency may – period by period – occasionally be obtained within a given culture. And if not, perhaps there might be some pattern in how change occurs and what propels it.

132. Thus we implicitly assume that the final outcome of research in some way will appear as a condensation of a greater mass as well as a variety of some basic elements, be it observations, hunches, etc.

133. Sciences that deal with repetitive phenomena are usually called *nomotetic*, from Greek: "Laws" for what according to custom usually happens.

    In contrast, sciences that look exclusively upon events that are perceived as unique in time and space are called *ideographic*, from Greek "idiot", meaning private or better here, unique.

134. The personal decision or "will to believe", which – as we may recall – be called ideal or existential truth.

135. Jeremy Campbell (2001), *The Liars Tale, – a history of Falsehood*, New York.

136. The principle of "at least one nugget in the rubble", see page 147–8.

137. See John Elster (1999) *Alchemies of the Mind, – rationality and the emotions,* Cambridge University.

138. See e.g. John Burrow (2007) *A History of Histories*, chapter 26, Penguin Books, UK. We shall later exemplify the use of generalisations by historians, please refer to Eisenstadt, chapter 4.10 and Thucycides, chapter 5.2. But otherwise most historians of to day are primarily committed to narratives.

139. Dialectical reasoning is too vast and complicated an issue to be pursued here. I hope one day to unravel the conceptual mess this concept may entangle us in.

140. As exemplified from the earliest days, see e g. Herodotus (490–425 BC): *The Histories* I. 135.

141. SN Eisenstadt (1963) *The Political System of Empires*, Free Press, New York.

142. Level will be a key concept through out this essay. For it may be sufficient to state that conceived as Merton did in Robert K Merton: *Social Theory and Social Structure,* (1949), Free Press, New York, 2. ed. 1968, Chapter II.

143. We will later – in the chapter on explanation – return to and discuss aspects of Comte and Durkheim's foundation of positivism.

144. ESOP: *Employee Stock Ownership Plan* is the name for the national laws regulating such set ups.

145. John Logue & Jacquelyne Yates (2002) *The Real World of Employee Ownership*, Cornell University Press.

146. M. Fine & S.M. Gordon: Feminist Transformations of/despite psychology in M. Crawford & M. Gentry (eds) (1989) *Gender and Thought,* Springer, New York, page 146-74.

147. For a critical overview see Shulamit Reinharz (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research*, Oxford University Press, Chapter 5.

148. The Danish income taxation is indeed complicated. First of all an adjusted income is shown as a figure on our income returns, next we pay at least nine different types of income tax, apart from purchase and property taxes.

149. David Riesman (1950): *The Lonely Crowd,* Yale University Press, 1961.

150. See Robert K. Yin (1984) *Case Study Research – design and methods*, Sage, California, 1989, page 124.

151.   Leon Festinger (1957) *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, Stanford University Press.

152.   William F. Whyte (1943), *Street Corner Society, the Social Structure of Italian Slum* University of Chicago Press, 1955.

153.   For their concerns and strategies, please refer to *The Employee Owner*, up cit,.

154.   Reference to the falsification theory of Popper, see for instance his *Conjectures and Refutations,* Routledge, 1963.

155.   Robert K. Yin (1984) *Case Study Research* Sage, California, 1989, page 21 & 44.

156.   Manning actually used the term analytical induction, see P.K. Manning (1982) Analytical Induction in Ken Plummer (ed)(1990) *Symbolic Interaction Vol II*, page 401–430 and in particular page 408. The term was first coined by F. Znaniecki (1934) *The Method of Sociology*, New York, please refer to chapter vi, as opposed to "enumerative induction".

157.   Erik Maaløe (1996) *Casestudier* Akademisk Forlag, Copenhagen 2002.

158.   Ian I Mitroff (1974) *The Subjective Side of Science – a philosophical inquiry into Psychology of the Apollo Moon Scientists*, Elsevier, The Netherlands, page 10 and forward.

159.   For comparison, see Alan Blyman (2001) Social Research Methods, Oxford University Press, page 389.

160.   Arthur W. Burks (ed) (1931–1958) *Charles Sanders Peirce, Collected Papers*, Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press, Volume 8, 385–388.

161.   Phil Samouel (2002) *The Effect of Time on Relational Norms in Dyadic Exchange Relationships,* Kingston Business School, UK.

162. In case B the parable "explains"1.62% of the variation whereas a straight line (not shown) could have "explained" 1.36%. In case C the figures are 3.92 and 3.1%, respectively. Thus the parable would be a better fit than a straight line no matter what.

163. Personal communication with Phil Samouel.

164. *Arkitekten*, Copenhagen nr 26, 1976.

165. The articles, most of them published in the Danish journal Arkitekten and later assembled in *Beton lad den brase eller blomstre*, Arkitektens Forlag, Copenhagen 1976.

166. Erik Maaløe (1976) *Towards a Theory of Natural Architecture – effect and social importance of order, variation, texture and scale related to architecture.* Arkitektens Forlag, Copenhagen. Sold out but available through a bookshop at Aarhus University, info@bssbooks.dk.

167. Allow me to draw attention to the fact that in *The Employee Owner* all the informants quoted is referred to by name, apart from one. At times anonymity is necessary, but it weakens the validity of research and opens for all sorts of writer tricks, e.g. by making the number of employees interviewed appear to be higher than the few actually addressed.

168. An extension of a figure presented on page 93 in Martin Hammersley & Paul Atkin-son (1983) *Ethnography*, Tavistok Publications, which in turn builds upon Raymond Gold (1958) Roles in sociological field observations, *Social Forces* # 36, pp 217–23.

169. Andrew Sayer (1984) *Method in Social Science – a realist approach*, 2nd edition, Rougtlede 1992, page 13.

170. Professionalism: the ability to dissociate ones own likes and dislikes from any case at hand.

171. As stated in the foreword, when in brackets, *"understanding"* will in this essay exemplify how the term in all its vagueness runs us in the pen as in ordinary language. When not in brackets it refers to our definition of the term, ref to § 6.

172. Boethius: *The Consolation of Philosophie* (ca 525 AC), Book 5, v, London 1998.

173. Alfred Schutz: *The Phenomenology of the Social World* (1932) North-western Un Press, 1967, pg 12.

174. As for coping we will look at it in detail in sub-chapter 6.9.

175. Others may *objectify* any incident concerning me, like "feeling shame" by referring to incidents in my past, say when a parent scolded me for lying. Above all what matters here is not that somewhat who is wiser may refer to some more or less hidden genesis behind my reactive patterns, but the very outbreak of the emotion of shame itself.

176. The flight of birds was taken as a token by the Romans, as we shall see in the upcoming paragraph.

177. For further examples please refer to Douglas Hofstadter: *I am a strange loop*, Basic Books 2007, US, page 106.

178. Alfred Schütz: *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt* (1932). English version: *The Phenomenology of the Social World,* Northwestern University Press 1972, page 116–8.

179. Please note that Ricoeur in his *Hermeneutics & the Human Science*s (1981) Cambridge University Press, 1995, page 134 uses other less self-explanatory terms for the three positions.

180. Refer, for instance, to Wilhelm Dilthey: *Construction of the Historical World*, #II (1)–(4), (1906-10) reprinted in HP Rickman: *W Dilthey, Selected Writings*, 1976, Cambridge University Press, page 218.

181. As actors know and as linguists like Roman Jakobson reminds us, sounds matter. Spoken language is richer than written language, see Linda R Waugh & Monica Monville-Burston (eds): *On Language, Roman Jakobson*, Harvard University Press, 1990, page 50.

182. Harry G Frankfurt: *On Bullshit*, Princeton University Press, 2005.

183. The fallacy of reversing "cause" and effect.

184. Ref Daniel Lawrence O'Keefe: *Stolen Lightning – the social theory of magic,* (19829, Vintage Books, 1983, Book 1 in particular.

185. rephrased from Nietzsche: *The Will to Power* (1883-88) § 481, Vintage Books, 1967.

186. Alfred Schutz (Schütz): *The Phenomenology of the Social World* (1932) North-western Un Press, Ill, 1967, pg 84.

187. A term borrowed from Existentialism, to be expanded later in this chapter.

188. Paraphrase of a statement by Charles Sanders Peirce: *Collected Papers of…*, edited by Arthur W. Burks, Cambridge, Mass, Harvard University Press, 1931–1958, Vol 8, 385–388.

189. to be expounded in detail in the next main chapter.

190. To *expretate* is to use the formalism of explanations in order to make what really is an interpretation look like an explanation, e.g. assuming a probable cause is the effective one. The concept will be expanded later, but may be defined as *the un-conscious use of an interpretation as if it was an explanation*. Expretate is a constructed term.

191. This example is an implicit reference to and an adjustment of a dogma due to the great Max Weber: Only controlled action done with a purpose can be ranked as meaningful. See Max Weber: *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (1921), Mohr 1972, page 12. English Translation: *Economy and Society*, California Press, 1978, p. 25.

192. Professional: The belief that one should and indeed has a personally detached, non-engaged attitude towards ones own work.

193. New Testament, Epistle to the Community of Corinth, 5.2.

194. A form of interpretation by Plato named Hermeneutics, see *Epinomis* 975.C, Loeb Classical Library, Plato, Volume VII, 1955.

195. O R Gurney: *The Hittities* (1952) Folio Society 1990, page 150–54.

196. I am not sure whether the Greek ruling elite or the generals of the Roman Empire believed in divination or just exploited it for their own purposes. At least Thucydides, the great historian of Greek antiquity did not, see his *The Peloponnesian War*, ca 400 BC, Book 8. Nor did all leaders of the Greek city-states as they bribed the priests to misinform the other part in a conflict, ref Herodotos: *The Histories*, Book 5, #63.

197. Claude Lévi.-Strauss (1968): *Structural Anthropology*, University of Chicago Press 1976, page 65, edited.

198. See Homer: *Odyssey*, 19. 562.

199. Fort a similar perception to day, please refer to Medard Boss, *The Analysis of Dreams*, Philosophical Library, New York, 1958.

200. Hugh J Schonfeld: *The Original New Testament*, Luke 24: 25–27.

201. The great earthquake in Lisboa 1756 was a turning point for the belief in intervening of a revengeful God to punish sinners. At that time Lisbon was one of the richest cities in Europe. As the quake commenced in the morning of *All Saints' Day* tens of thousands of people were drowned, burned or crushed to pulp. Solid buildings like the Cathedral and the other churches people had sought out for shelter were the first to collapse. Visitors to brothels, though, were spared, as these houses of untold pleasure were constructed of timber! Thus – as the contemporary Voltaire saw it – the idea that God used nature to meddle in human life ought now to be broken. Yet of course several clergymen, including the Danish otherwise sensitive bishop Brorson, still continued to God's wrath behind events.

202. Richard E Palmer: *Hermeneutics,* North Western University Press, 1969, page 13.

203. Harold Bloom: *Kabbalah and Criticism* (1975), Continuum, New York, 1981, page 55.

204.   Adam of Bremen; *History of the archbishops of Hamburg Bremen* (1076) Columbia Un Press, 2002, page 217. A commentator wanting to save Adams skin suggests that the good archbishop might refer to ignite, which he claims could be buried just under the solidified lava, – which just adds to the fun.

205.   Refer to how Jesus above was said to explain passages in Old Testament, rather than offering us an interpretation.

206.   Although I must admit that Freud's *Das Ich und das Es/ The Ego and the Id* (1922) Standard Edition, Vol xix, page 3–66, Hogarth Press 1961, is complicated.

207.   For further evidence see Bruno Bettelheim: *Freud and Man's Soul,* Hogarth Press, London, 1983 or Lawrence Venuti: *The Translators Invisibility,* Routledge, 1995, Sub-chapter 1.3.

208.   According to Webster's Dictionary. This may seem to be more of a popular reference than a professional one; yet in my mind it covers general usage quite well.

209.   Allow me to bypass the genesis of Freud's perception of "Ich" and for those interest-ed refer to Malcolm Macmillan: *Freud Evaluated, the completed arc* (1991), Chapter 13, MIT, England, 1997.

210.   According to Webster's Dictionary, as above.

211.   Mark 14.38, Matthew 26.41.

212.   Roman Jacobson: On the Linguistic Aspects of Translation (1959), reprinted in Lawrence Venuti (ed): *The Translation Studies Reader*, Routledge, 2 ed. 2004, page 138–43. The sub-chapter relies heavily on a condensed presentation of issues referred to in this reader.
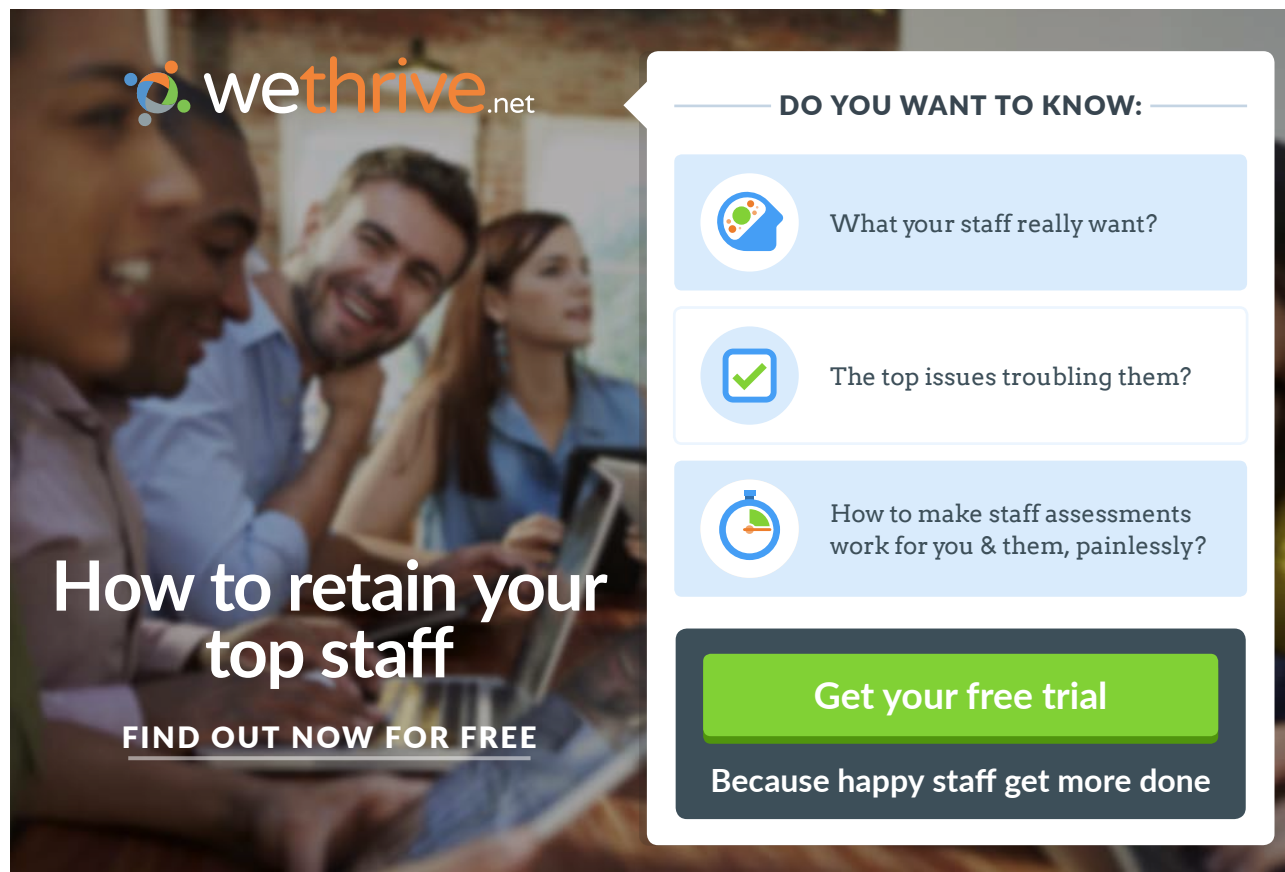
213. As was the view of Friederich Schleiermacher: *Über verschiedene Methoden des Übersetzen*, 1813. We will return to this issue in greater detail in § 6 see also Lawrence Venuti: *The Translators Invisibility*, Routledge 1996, Chapter 343 An *indication* is an inter-pretation made with the reservation that it may – under closer scrutiny – turn out to be inconclusive if not downright wrong.

214. An *indication* is an interpretation made with the reservation that it may – under clos-er scrutiny – turn out to be inconclusive if not downright wrong.

215. The table is inspired by one made by Finn Borum decades ago.

216. This is according to William Dilthey the very essence of interpretation.

217. Any word in a text is real in the sense that it is printed or can be uttered. Yet in everyday terms a word is expected to be a symbol with a reference to something outside or elsewhere in a text.

218. For a further, more passionate, exposition, see Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Will to Power*, op.cit # 551.

219. Scandinavian readers may refer to Erik Maaloe: *Egenskab og Fællesskab*, Munksgaard, Copenhagen, 1969.

220. I ask voodoo-adherents to excuse an outsider's rather disparaging reference to their religion.

221. Emile Durkheim: *Suicide, a study in Sociology* (1897), Free Press, 1951, page 43.

222. Klaus G & Susanne C Grunert: Measuring subjective meaning structures by laddering methods, *Int Jrnl of Research in Marketing* 12, 1995 pg 209–225, Elsevier.

223. Thomas J Reynolds, CF Gengler & DJ Howard: A means-end analysis of brand persuasion through advertising, *Int Jrnal of Research in Marketing,* Vol 12 (1995) pg 257–66.

224. Self is here used as a figure of speech for the embodiment of the multitude of "Upper Me's". "Me's" and "It's" (Ref Figure 4.6 #1, page 131. Thus I do not here bet for the existence of a Self as essence.

225. The link between rationality and hierarchies of value were first explored by Aristotle (384–322 BC), see *Topica* Book III, Part 2.

226. Thomas J Reynolds & Jonathan Gutman: Laddering theory, method, analysis and interpretation, *Jrnl of Advertising Research,* Feb–March 1986, pg 11–31.

227. For an overview of such experiments please refer to John M Doris: *Lack of Character, – personality and moral behavior,* Cambridge Un Press, 2002, page 24–5 in particular.

228. AM Isen & PF Levin: Effect of feeling good on helping, *Jrnl of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 41, page 346–9, 1972.

229. Refer to understanding…may make people reflect on the consequences of their acts, but may also destroy their ability to guide their own lives as they are encouraged to make ad hoc assumptions regarding their actions.

230. Plato: *Cratylus* 428D, Loeb Library, 1977.

231. JAC Brown: *Techniques of Persuasion* (1963) Penguin 1972, page 71.

232. For a reference see Erik Maaloe: *The Employee Owner*, Akademisk Forlag, Copenhagen 1998.

233. A case inspired by one given by Finn Collin: *Theory and Understanding*, Basil Blackwell, 1985, page 343–4.

234. See for instance Chris Argyris: *Overcoming Organizational Defences*, Allyn and Bacon, Mass 1990.

235. An example: As the Reuther Mold ESOP evolved the still rather complaisant employee owners began to present themselves as activists even they hardly were. Apparently the activist had now for the employees in general become role models for or the ideal type of an employee owner, ref The Employee Owner, up cit.

236. See for instance Charles Horton Cooley: *Human Nature and the Social Order*; Schoken Books, New York, 1964.

237. Kingsley Davis: "A conceptual analysis of stratification," *American Sociological Review*, 1942, 7, 309–321.

238. Leon Festinger. *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, (1957), Stanford Un Press, 1962.

239. Erik Maaloe: The Employee Owner, up cit.

240. Ichak Adizes: *Corporate Lifecycles – how and why corporations grow and die and what to about it*, Prenctice Hall, 1988 and *Managing Corporate Life Cycles*, Prentice Hall, 1999.

241. For further insight refer to Erik Erikson (ed): *Adulthood*, WW Norton Comp, New York, page 25 in particular,.

242. Erik H Erikson: *Identity and the Life Cycle (*1959) W W Norton, 1980, page 129 & 178.

243. (1) because it is an issue we will return and elaborate on in greater detail in § 5.3, page 140.

244. How the heart beats is not controlled by the mind, but by the composition of the incoming blood to be pumped forward.

245. Please note, for interpretations it is "why", not "how *and* why" as for explanations as we shall see throughout § 6.

246. Please refer to a previous footnote.

247. Barney G Glaser & Anselm L Strauss: *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Aldine Publ Co, Chicago 1967.

248. Henri Bergson: *L'Evolution Créatice*, (1907), Presses Universitaires de France, 1966.

249. Richard S Lazarus: *Emotion and Adaption*, Oxford Un Press, 1991. PAGE XX.

250. Robert K Merton: *Social Theory and Social Structure,* Chapter II, 1968 edition, page 39.

251. Robert K Merton: *Social Theory and Social Structure,* Chapter II, 1968 edition, page 68.

252. The ease with this is done betrays the costs of doing so, – as we shall se in § 5.9.

253. Fay Fransella: The Self and the Stereotype, in D Bannister (ed): *New Perspectives in Personal Construct Theory*, Academic Press, London 1977, page 39–66.

254. For a discussion see, Søren Harnow Klausen: *Reality lost and found*, Un Press of Southern Denmark, Denmark 2004, the "Doctrine of Realism" – chapter.

255. Linda Martin Alcoff: *Real knowing*, Cornell Un, New York 1966, page 213. One may also refer to the note on fear of being inconsistent on page 53.

256. Hans Driesch: *Der Vitalismus, als Geschichte und als Lehre*, Leipzig 1905, ref page 221 in particular.

257. Naturalism in this pure physical sense must not be confused with Naturalism as a term for field studies where "natural" is seen in opposition to the artificial settings of lab-experiments.

258. SN Eisenstadt: *The Political Systems of Empires – the rise and fall of historical bureaucratic societies*, (1963) Free Press, New York, 1969.

259. S N Eisenstadt up cit, refer to page 363.

260. Crane Brinton: *The Anatomy of Revolutions*, (1938) Vintage Books, New York, 1958.

261. Brinton op.cit., page 276–7.

262. Roland Mousnier: *Peasant Uprisings* (1960) George Allan and Unwin, UK, 1971.

263. ref pages 305–48 op cit. As for an investigation of later events see, PM Jones: *The peasantry in the French Revolution*, Cambridge Un Press, NY, 1988.

264. For a supplement, please refer to Barrington Moore: *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (1966). A comparative-historical analysis of the ermergence of democratic, fascist and communist regimes seen as an outcome of a bourgeois revolution!.

265. Brintons observations seems adequate and fitting also for later cases as e.g. the theocracy that emerged after the overthrow of the Shah-regime in Iran. Yet the US-revolution seem to me to be a poor pick, as it was rather a fight for independence and not a social revolution.

266.   Steiner Kvale: *InterViews,* Sage Publications, 1996 page 43.

267.   Barrington Moore, Jr: *Reflections on the causes of Human Misery*, (1970), Beacon Press, Canada 1972, truncated quote from page 35.

268.   Ernest Gellner: *Cause and Meaning in the Social Sciences* (1956), Chaucer Press, UK 1972, page 4.

269.   Neither "I" has the given solidity, as say chairs. The first "I" is a *hypostazation,* the latter a convenient construction.

270.   The term was coined in 1929, by Roman Jakobson. For a presentation see Linda R Waugh & Monica Monville-Burston (eds): *On Language, Roman Jakobson*, Harvard Un Press, 1990, page 49. This relational rather than referential concept of language builds on the initial work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, whose ideas are presented here in the genre of a text-book version.

271.   This is a hidden reference to the "absolutely final law of language" as given by F de Saussure: *Course in General Linguistics*, (1986), Allan, page 205.

272.   Ref to Ezra Pound: *ABC of Reading,* Part one, Yale University Press, 1934.

273.   For a most impressive overview of the origin of English terms, please refer to Hen-ry Hitchings: *The Secret Life of Words – How English became English,* Farar, Straus & Giroux, New York 2008, page 17.

274.   Here one has to recall that "individual" according to structuralism it self is just a word in a textual corpus.

275.   Saussure, op cit page 115–18.

276.   Which is the rational behind the quote by Bloom, ref page 109.

277.   Joseph Weisenbaun: *Computer Power and Human Reason*, W.H. Freeman, San Francisco 1976. Danish readers may refer to Erik Maaløe: Eliza, – en ven blandt maskiner, *Jyllands Posten* 15-08-1977.

278.   Paraphrase from an article of 1949, reprinted in Howard Hughes: *On work, race and the sociological imagination*, Un of Chicago Press, 2003, page 172.

279.   Saussure is best known for his distinction between *parole* – speech as an object for study of expressions encountered during say field work and *langue*, – language as an object of study for linguists.

280.   It such incidents that fuel the drives some to oust interpretations from social research in favour of explanations as we shall later document to in § 5.1.

281.   See for instance Paul Ricoeur: *Hermeneutics & the Human Sciences*, (1981), Cambridge Un Press 1995, page 140.

282.   Bronwyn Davies: Woman's Subjectivity and Feminist Stories, in Carolyn Ellis and Michael G Flaherty (eds): *Investigating Subjectivity*, Sage 1992.

283.   According to Nominalism, values have no existence in them selves, they are just high level expressions for something appreciated for its aesthetic or moral worth.

284.   Today Thorstein Veblen (1857–1929) is best known for his book *The Theory of the Leisure Class,* (1902) Houghton Mifflin, 1973, where he introduced his highly moralistic concept "conspicuous consumption". While workers and engineers had a hard time surviving, the newly rich of the day liked to flaunt a wealth that often did not even build on their own industrial ingenuity, but on making money grow. So they built grand estates and summer homes with more rooms than any family could need, while their idle, indolent ladies wasted money on absurd dresses, specially trained servants, etc. Economic man, my foot!.

285.   WV Richard Scott: *Institutions and Organizations*, Sage 2001 offers an excellent introduction to Institutionalism, its development since Veblen and contemporary challenges.

286.   Gary S Becker and Kevin M Murphy: *Social Economics,* Belknap Press, 2000, page 31–45.

287.   Refer for instance The economist Ludwig von Mieses: "Money is nothing but a medium of exchange" in *The Theory of Money and Credit* (1934), Liberty Classics, 1980, page 34. Nonsense! Money is far more than that and primarily a power symbol, which anyone who listens in on his dreams would know!.

288.   For which we have recommended an antidote, the principle of the Nugget in the Rubble.

289.   Thus violating the First Lesson of Truth, ref to the introduction.

290.   Kant stressed that ethical behaviour implies that you act against your own advantage in order to promote that of others, see Immanuel Kant: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), Cambridge University Press, New York, 1998.

291.   Claude Lévi-Strauss: *Anthroplogie Structurale,* 1958, Plon, France, page 43.

292.   Nietzsche: *The Will to Power*, op cit § 643.

293.   William James: *The Varieties of Religious Experience, – a study in human nature,* (1902), Folio Society, London, 2008, page 19.

294.   See also R Nisbeth & L Ross: *Human Inference, strategies and short comings*, Prentice Hall, NJ 1980, side 31.

295.   The text of the present sub-chapter contains many hidden references to Murray Davis: That's interesting – towards a Phenomenology of Sociology and a Sociology of Phenomenology, *Phil of Soc Sci*, 1971, #1, page 309–344.

296.   Freud is often seen as the Columbus who discovered the unconsciousness. Yet he had scores of forerunners, for reference see the deeply illuminating work: Henri F Ellenberger: *The Discovery of the Unconscious*, Basic Books, USA, 1970.

297.   1450–1516, Museo del Prado, Madrid. For a reference to e.g. Walter Bosing: *Hieronymus Bosch – between Heaven and Hell*, (1973), Taschen 2000.

298.   For a rather illuminating overview of the haziness of "common sense" please refer to Søren Harnow Klausen: *Reality lost and found,* Un Press of Southern Denmark, 2003, Part IV, Chapter 1.

299.   Margaret Mead: *Coming of age in Samoa,* (1928), New York 1972, and David Freeman: *Margaret Mead and Samoa, -the making and unmaking of an anthropological myth,* Harvard Un Press, USA, 1983.

300.   Nietzsche: *The Will to Power* (1883–88) § 481, Vintage Books, 1967.

301.   A self referring statement, which confirms what it denies, yet in it self it does express a perception of a truth, ref Figure 2.4 #3 GÖINC: GÖINC:.

302.   Refer for instance to Steven D Hales & Rex Welshon: *Perspectivism*, Un of Illinios Press, 2000, page 190.

303.   Refer primarily to the great Friedrich Nietzsche: *The Will to Power* (1906), Vintage Books, New York, 1968.

304.   Sigmund Freud: *A case of Hysteria, Complete Psychological Works,* Volume vii (1901–05) pg 64–71. "Dora" later immigrated to US. Her real name was Ida Baur, ref Felix Deutch: A Footnote to Freuds fragment of analysis of a case of Hysteria, *The Psycho-analytic Quarterly,* Vol 26 page 159–167, 1957.

305.   Hannah S Decker: *Freud, Dora and Vienna 1900*, Free Press, 1995, page 116 & 192. For an enjoyable complicated yet easy to read interpretation of the whole affair, please refer to the feminist representation by Toril Moi: Representation of Patriarchy: Sexuality and Epistemology in Freuds Dora (1981), reprinted in C Bernheimer & Claire Kahane (eds): *In Dora's Case*, Columbia Un Press, NY, 1985, page 181–99. For fragments of Dora's later life one may consult Felix Deutsch, "A Footnote to Freud's "Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria", (1957), reprinted in up cit work page 35–43.

306.   Please refer to Meddard Boss, a psychoanalyst who asks us to recognize that we do posses the means to unravel our dreams, *I Dreamt Last Night*, 1958), Gardner Press, New York, 1977.

307.   In a new light, be it presented as revolutionary, anti-conformist, captivating and/or liberating.

308.   Nietzsche*: Will to Power*, up cit, #374.

309.   Diderot – an exponent of the French Enlightenment Movement.

310.   Nietzsche: *The Will to Power* (1883–88) § 567–9.

311.   Sigmund Freud: *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901), Standard Edition, Vol VI, 1960.

312.   Barney G Glaser And Anselm Strauss: *Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Chicago 1967.

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