

Chapter 15

Extending Smedslund's Psycho-Logic System into a Social Theory



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This chapter develops in four steps.¹ First, the conceptual universe of Smedslund's psycho-logic (PL) is briefly presented along with some of its basic assumptions. Secondly, a number of flaws and limitations of PL will be discussed. Next it will be advocated that Smedslund's theory could and should be turned into a psycho/socio-logic theory. For this, a number of insights from social theory, especially from the multidisciplinary work of Rom Harré, will be presented. Moreover, it will be argued that it makes sense to bring in some elements from quantum physics as metaphors to help understand how psychological and social phenomena are entangled. In the final section, some elements of such a theory will be presented to illustrate how Smedslund's theory can be linked to the linguistic turn in the social sciences. This will include a discussion on how speech acts form the substance of psychological and social phenomena, how they give rise to moral and knowledge fields and how they create local positions taken by persons. Finally, attention will go to the consequences of the abovementioned for theorizing persons.

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¹This chapter is part of a larger project of the author to re-think the ontology of the social sciences (see Van Langenhove 2007). It draws heavily upon Van Langenhove (2017) where the reader can find more details about what is said here about the centrality of 'speech-acts' for social theory and about 'moral fields'.

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The Conceptual Universe of Smedslund

With remarkable continuity of thinking, Jan Smedslund has since the 1970s been working on an attempt to explicate and systematize the psychology used in everyday life commonsense thinking. This culminated in the 1988 book ‘Psycho-logic’, but until today, Smedslund has been updating and reformulating his project continuously (see for instance: Smedslund 1995, 1997, 2012, 2016). Smedslund defines psycho-logic as ‘*an approach to psychology, starting from ordinary language and common-sense psychology*’ (Smedslund 2012, p. 295). He also referred to it as ‘*an attempt to systematize and make precise the conceptual psychological framework embedded in ordinary language*’ (Smedslund 1995, p. 203). Common sense is thereby regarded as ‘*the set of all implications taken for granted by all members of a culture*’ (Smedslund 1988, p. 5). The outcome of Smedslund’s life–work is a system of definitions of psychological concepts and a set of axioms of the system. From the definitions and the axioms, a number of propositions have been derived that take the form of theorems and corollaries. The result is an elaborate set of concepts for which Smedslund has high hopes: His ultimate goal is that the system allows ‘one to predict behavior, given sufficient information about antecedent conditions’ (Smedslund 1988, p.3). But later, he also stated that:

the task is not –, as formerly thought, to discover hitherto unknown laws, but to explicate and systematize what we already know ... You cannot predict what a particular person will do next because you don’t know the person and his or her subjective situation sufficiently well. The better you know the person and his or her situation, the more accurate are your predictions. There are no laws to be discovered. (Smedslund 1995, p. 206)

With this, Smedslund implicitly puts himself on the side of those who reject the idea that nomothetic laws are possible in psychology and along those who favour the development of idiographic knowledge about single cases (see Smith et al. 1995).

The idea to build a conceptual framework for psychology based upon common sense is certainly an interesting and challenging concept. It is in-line with Alfred Schutz’s observation that a distinction needs to be made between first- and second-order theories: The first ones are theories constructed by the common-sense thinking of people in their daily lives, the second ones are the social scientists’ theories that cannot ignore that first-degree theorizing (Schutz 1953). According to Schutz, social scientists should not dismiss the knowledge, and perhaps the wisdom, that people have about their own situation and how they cope with it. Hence, it seems to make a lot of sense to try to map common sense as Smedslund does.

Smedslund’s system of psycho-logic of concepts is a welcome change to much of the empiricist and positivist mainstream approaches to psychology that by now have been criticized by many. In their seminal book, *The Explanation of Social Behaviour*, Harré and Secord (1974) have already pointed to the need to develop a conception of psychology that treats people not as subjects but as persons who have the capacity to talk about what they are doing and why they do it. The same volume also advocated replacing the naive empiricism of many experimental psychologists by a theory led inquiry. Since then, many scholars have followed suit and pleaded for more theory in psychology (Van Langenhove, 2012). But by and large, the dis-

cipline of psychology still suffers 'from a gross and systematic underestimation of the scope, variety, and import of theoretical work' (Kukla 2001, p. xi). Smedslund's work is, therefore, a laudable exception to this trend. But notwithstanding all my sympathy for Smedslund's approach, a number of critical remarks need to be made.

Flaws and Limitations

First of all, there is the issue to what extent one can build such a conceptual psychological framework upon only 'common sense', without taking explicitly into account insights from psychological theories and research. On the one hand, the question is if a strict separation between common-sense and scientific thinking is even possible. Often insights from psychology permeate into society and become part of what is regarded as common sense. A classic example is the spread of Freudian terminology and related thinking in Western societies (Moscovici 2008). But there are also many other concepts that have found their way from psychology to everyday life. 'ADHD' for instance, or 'burn out', these are diagnostic terms that are now widely used by laypersons and perhaps not always in a correct way. And even a concept such as 'attitude', has its origins in psychological research but is now used as an everyday concept. Interestingly, the notion of attitude does not figure in Smedslund's system, although he uses it in Smedslund (1988, p. 96) when discussing drug habits. On the other hand, it could well be that some of the common-sense ideas that people hold are false without people realizing their error. It could also be that people have appropriated scientific knowledge that makes them realize that their common sense is not correct. For instance, people all over the world see everyday the sun rising and moving until sunset. It is therefore only natural to assume from a common-sense perspective that the sun rotates around the earth. But since Galileo, we know better and people informed by science do realize that the reverse is true: It is the earth that rotates around the sun. There is thus scientific knowledge that goes against common sense as what concerns the physical realm. I see no reason not to believe that the same holds for psychological or social phenomena. The work of Kahnemann (2011) for instance, contains many examples of how common-sense thinking fails to grasp dealing with statistical probabilities. So, one may question the extent to which Smedslund's (e.g. Smedslund 1995) partial departure from common sense in designing a technical language for psychology is wise. But then statistical probabilities are hardly the only way to make sense of the world, there is also a heuristic way to make sense of the world. It should also be noticed that Smedslund thinks of PL as the explication of something inherently coherent and sound and as such psychological common sense, as Smedslund uses the words, is thus not co-extensional with failures to grasp statistical probabilities.

Secondly, Smedslund takes the individual person as a point of departure of his conceptual framework. This is of course totally in line with our common sense as we are all persons that perceive the world, including ourselves as well as other persons. Smedslund (2012, p. XX) states that a person takes for granted that other

persons can do the same as (s)he does. While I believe this observation is true, without the relevant supplements, it opens the door to an atomized and inaptly decontextualized view of psychology. This results in a functional approach where psychological phenomena are seen as purely individual phenomena. But since Lev Vygotsky's seminal work in the 1920s and 1930s, we know that the distinction between what is personal and social is not a dichotomy, but an interplay between two logically independent dimensions: The public–private axis and the individual–collective axis. Situating psychological phenomena has to be done on the Cartesian product of both dimensions. As a result, psychological phenomena can be situated in four quadrants: From public and collective to private and individual. In a way, this resonates with Smedslund's remark that 'In the simplest possible way, my agreement with social constructionism can be described as follows: Since Kant, one must agree that we cannot know "das Ding an sich". Therefore, a person must rely on the *interpretation* of the world ("construction"). However, since persons depend on each other for survival and procreation, their interpretations (constructions) must converge (constructions must be shared). Therefore, social constructionism in a broad sense is necessarily true' (Smedslund 2013, p. 86).

Thirdly, Smedslund's conceptual scheme also downplays the importance of language. While the attention goes to defining concepts, he has not clarified in sufficient detail the role of how words are used in creating social reality and how for instance analogies and metaphors shape our thinking (see Hofstadter and Sander 2013). Smedslund seems to have been primarily focused on the *semantic* aspect of concepts, and to a lesser extent the *pragmatic* aspect of using concepts. However, the concepts of PL may not only serve a representational function, but they may often also be used for presentational purposes. For instance, saying 'I am in love with you' is not only a description aiming to represent how one feels, but it is often also a message that aims to trigger a response from someone else.

Finally, there is a normative aspect to Smedslund's thinking as his axioms describe '*how we, as humans, must conceive of other humans*' (Smedslund 2012, p. 296). However, one of the basic normative beliefs in our society is that human beings have to be regarded as persons, that is as beings that are autonomous and sovereign agents. While morally this makes a lot of sense, the question is if it also holds scientifically as it implies a conceptual demarcation between psychological phenomena associated with persons and the social environment in which persons operate. This closes the door for explanations of psychological phenomena that are essentially social, even if they are perceived as individual and therefore psychological.

Bringing in Social Theory and Some Quantum Theory

The abovementioned critics to Smedslund's ideas are not insurmountable and may even be regarded as in line with some of his own proposals. As such, I believe it is possible to expand his conceptual scheme so that it provides a more general and more transdisciplinary conceptual system to look at people and societies. In the

remaining part of this chapter, I will provide a first attempt to present the axiomatic basis of my version of a psycho/social–logic system. It is grounded in three sets of insights, taken from social theory and quantum theory: (1) a definition and description of what constitutes the observable social realm, (2) a claim that speech acts are the substance of that social realm and (3) a proposal to use the notion of field as a metaphor to think about the unobservable social realm. The whole exercise is inspired by the so-called linguistic turn in philosophy as advocated by Rom Harré (see Van Langenhove 2011 for an overview of Harré's work on psychology and social sciences). Furthermore, reference is also made to some ideas from quantum physics that are used as a metaphor to grasp the counter-intuitive reality of psychological phenomena.

The Observable Social Realm

Let's start by picturing what a common-sense view of the social realm entails. What do we experience that is 'social'? One way to think about it is to see 'social' as referring to everything that would not exist without human interference. In other words, there is nothing social in the human world that has not been or is not related to what persons are doing. The next question then is what is there in the world that follows this common-sense definition?

First, there are all kinds of material *artefacts* that would not exist without having been created by human beings and are therefore of a social nature. This includes cities, roads, landscaped gardens, Korean food, wine, books, sheets and so on. The list is sheer endless, and in today's world, almost everything on the whole planet is in a way social. A mountain is a purely natural phenomenon while a Terrill is the result of human mining and thus a social phenomenon. And even natural mountains are changing due to tourism and human-induced climate change. This has made geologists propose to call the present era the Anthropocene. Mind you, humanity has only made shortly such an impact on the planet and the number of social artefacts has long been much lower. In the middle ages, for instance, the social environment of most people consisted out of far less such artefacts.

Next to the artefacts, we are all surrounded by *people*. All of these people are persons, and that is only possible because they are treated as persons. True, some of them we ignore as we do when being in an elevator with a stranger. Other people are definitely part of our social environment as we constantly interact with them, even if we cannot have a 'proper' conversation with them, as is the case with babies.² And then there all those people with whom we never have a conversation with, but to whom we are connected in complex chains of collaboration. For example, somewhere in China, people have been working on assembling the PC that I am using

²The importance of such 'conversations' between persons and babies is that it is through that process that babies become persons. See p. xx.

right now. And much of the software on this PC has been developed by people in California. I do not know any of these people, but still, we are somehow socially connected. People are for that matter the only species on earth that have organized themselves in such large and global networks. Other social animals only have local collaborations.

Finally, there are *conversations* between people. People talking to each other is perhaps the most important aspect of the observable social realm. It is through talking that people are connected to each other. There is, for instance, a chain of conversations between myself and those involved in designing and manufacturing my PC. Probably thousands of conversations have been taking place starting with the conversation between the guy who decided to fabricate this type of PC and say the investors he persuaded, up to the one guy at the counter of the shop to whom I paid when purchasing this PC and with whom I did have a conversation. Not only is this chain of conversations connecting people, but it also makes possible that things happen that need to happen if one wants to build and sell a PC. However, the main feature of this is that I do not have to know how to design a PC for using it. So, my brain is not the only tool I use for doing things, I have access to the brainpower of many others. The instrument for this is the speech act that requests others to do something. For long, the only actors that could produce speech acts were people. Today we are also told to do things by machines as well. Think of the navigation system in your car that tells you when to turn right.

Together, artefacts, people and conversations form the observable social *umwelt* in which persons operate. All three categories do have a material substance that allows us to perceive them through our senses. And, as material things, they can all be situated in space and time. It is that observable social realm that has been studied by many different social sciences disciplines according to a division of labour. The conversations are the providence of linguistic and communication studies. Artefacts are studied by disciplines such as cultural studies (art), economy (money and factories), sociology (institutions) and law (the judicial system). Persons are the subject of psychology. But the link between the object of study and the discipline is never straightforward and there are enduring debates on how the different disciplines relate to each other. This is especially true for how the ontology of the social realm is regarded. For some, the basic building block of society is the person. However, others will call this reductionistic as it illustrates methodological individualism. They will claim that the substance of society is to be found in structures, which are artefacts of a special kind. Both approaches have in common a way of looking at the social world from a perceptual perspective that situates persons and structures in time and space. They use the same ontological grid like the one used in the natural sciences to locate objects: Every material object can be situated in time and space, and the interactions between objects follow Newtonian and Humean laws. But the question is if this is the best ontological grid to study the social realm. Within the natural sciences, it is now understood that the time/space grid only makes sense on the level of macroscopic objects and events. At the quantum physical level that grid does not work to understand what is going on. So why suppose that that grid is also working for the social realm? It is the credit of Rom Harré that he challenged the use

of the time/space grid as a suitable ontology of the social realm. According to Harré, one should use another grid to make a better sense of social reality: A grid of persons and conversations (Harré 1984). Within that grid, one can locate speech acts and not persons or structures as the substance of the social realm.

Fields as the Non-visible Social Realm

If one accepts that persons, artefacts and conversations are the three observable elements of the social reality, the question is whether this is an exhaustive description of what the social realm is? Let us take another look at the material world: With our senses, we can observe a good chunk of it, but we know there is more. Radio waves, for instance, are a particular part of the physical reality and they are surrounding us at all times, but we cannot perceive them unless we have a device that transforms the radio signals in sound. I argue that the same holds for the social reality: There are social 'fields' that are as such not directly visible, but they are there and they do have a profound impact on what people do and on how a society function. One essential social field is the moral orders that give rights and duties to people. Another one is the distributed knowledge that exists (and of which most of it is now available on the www) and that is used in daily life.

Thinking of these invisible parts of the social reality in terms of 'fields' is a metaphor, so let's first take a closer look at what fields are in the natural sciences. The technical term 'field' has its origins in physics, more precisely in the mid-19th-century efforts to blend electricity and magnetism into one theory of electromagnetism based upon the notion of magnetic fields (McMullin 2002). From there, the theory developed with the help of mathematics the concept of 'vector fields'. Today, our understanding of interactions between fundamental particles is also based upon the notion of fields. Particles are considered to be an excitation (called a 'quantum') of a certain field. Such fields are said to have wave properties and those waves can 'collapse' into particles. This is the subject of quantum theory, a mathematical framework to predict the outcomes of experiments at the sub-atomic level. Behind the mathematics of quantum field theory, there still lies the notion of an 'area of influence' (McMullin 2002, p. 14).

The most revolutionary aspect of quantum theory is perhaps that the probabilities of finding certain properties in experiments are linked to the act of measurement. Wave functions (which are the expression of the quantum probabilities) are therefore regarded as 'potential realities, not actual ones' (Wendt 2015, p. 3). The mathematics behind this thinking is huge. But the essence can be captured as follows: Sub-atomic phenomena such as electrons can be regarded both as a particle and as a wave. But the conclusion of many experiments is, as Wendt noted, that '*as long as the electron is not being observed, it behaves as if it is a wave, and as soon as it is observed it behaves as if it is a particle*' (Wendt 2015, p. 46). So, the act of observing influences what is observed. This sounds familiar to many social scientists. Not

surprisingly then, the terms ‘field’ and ‘quantum’, stripped from their mathematical foundations, made their way to the social sciences.

Lewin (1938, 1921/1951) can be credited for introducing field theory in psychology and social theory. But it was Bourdieu (1993: 72–77) who popularized the notion of field amongst social sciences scholars. Since then, several other scholars have also attempted to apply quantum thinking to the understanding of psychological and social phenomena (see for instance: Zohar 1991; Zohar and Marshall 1994). Wendt (2015) even defended the claim that people are in fact quantum systems, which is something that seems doubtful. But it shows that using the quantum world grammar to think about social and psychological realm is tempting. Nevertheless, in contrast to Wendt, I believe that one should not forget it is only a metaphor: The laws of the quantum domain do not apply to our everyday lives where objects and events can be assigned exact locations and time. This in contrast to the quantum realm where elementary particles can only be described by probability distributions.

A good way to explore the power of the metaphor is to imagine that fields surround us at all times and infuse what people do. As Musser puts it: “We are swimming in it and it is always tugging upon us. We never see it directly, but it makes its presence felt by communicating forces from one place to another” (Musser 2015, p. 72). Within the material realm, the flow of time is going in one direction and objects can only take one single place in the time/space. The Newtonian and Humean laws apply and causal effects can only take place in the present and influence the direct future. For the social realm, the situation is however different: Speech acts can have delayed or even backward effects and as such, they play a crucial role in shaping the social realm. People can indeed influence the future: The speech acts in a will, for instance, can have effects even after a person’s death. And what we call history is always a reconstruction of the past based upon selections of speech acts.

Time and space are looked at by the scientists today in a different way from how they have been conceived since Newton: Space does not exist independently from time. As Rovelli noted: ‘the present is like the flatness of the Earth: an illusion’ (Rovelli 2017, p. 59). Moreover, fields and particles are the same thing: ‘Not only are the particles in a certain sense diffused in space like fields, but the fields interact like particles’ (Rovelli 2017, p. 59). The same seems to hold for speech acts (Buhler 1934; Austin 1962). On the one hand, certain speech acts can become a field under certain circumstances. For instance, when a head of state declares war on another country, both states are entering a new field that will alter both societies. On the other hand, institutional entities that are fields can interact with each other as speech acts. For instance, the EU can issue a statement such as: “Belgium needs to control its government budget”. Obviously, the EU—which is not a living human being as such—cannot *utter* such a speech act, but someone can speak on behalf of the EU. And someone can react on behalf of Belgium. As such, a conversation emerges between two entities that are fields. They interact with each other *as if* they were two persons.

So far for a small excursion on how quantum thinking can perhaps shed new light upon old debates in the social sciences. It makes this author conclude that it illus-

trates that we need to rethink the grammar of our understanding of the social world. And this is something where a Socio/Psychologic System could be of help.

Elements of an Extended Socio/Psycho-Logic System

The argument so far has been that social reality is twofold: Next to the social realm of artefacts, human beings and conversations that are located in space-time, there is also a social realm that is non-spatial and non-temporal in the sense that they are comparable to fields that cannot be situated in one space-time location. However, speech acts can make fields collapse into a local order. It is then when structures have an impact on the agency of persons. On top of it, the speech acts are also creating the persons and so-called institutional facts.

The abovementioned has major consequences for the psycho-logic system: In my view, such a system needs to address explicitly the social environment that envelops people. The social and the psychological are totally entangled and there is no reason to keep the historically grown divide between the disciplines of psychology and sociology. In this section, I will, therefore, try to extend Smedslund's Psycho-Logic system in such a way that it captures the above-outlined ontology of the social realm. I will do so by first presenting a number of axioms that together describe an ontology for the social sciences where the social and the psychological realm are completely entangled and treated as two sides of the same coin. Much as in quantum physics where light is regarded as being both wave and particle. Secondly, I will outline what an extended psycho-logic system could look like and develop one aspect of it, personality, in some more detail.

Axioms of a Socio/Psycho-Logic System

The notion of 'social' as used in 'social sciences' is seldom made explicit. It seems not really an object of contemplation. Hence the difficulties to define what social sciences are. Earlier, a common-sense definition of 'social' was already proposed. Here I take the scientific perspective and propose as a starting point the following axiom:

Axiom 1: Social refers to everything that escapes the explanatory capacity of the natural sciences.

This implies that there is a special place for social sciences, including psychology, that cannot be tackled directly by the natural sciences. Neither the old Newtonian mechanistic model nor the new quantum model can serve as a model for doing social sciences research. But this does not prevent the social sciences to look at analogies and treat some aspects of the natural sciences as metaphors that can help to understand the social realm.

Furthermore, I state that what we refer to as psychological phenomena are so entangled with social phenomena that:

Axiom 2: The social and the psychological can analytically not be separated from each other.

Thinking about the nature of persons and societies has since long been hampered by two main dichotomies: The mind–body dichotomy and the person–society dichotomy. Traditionally, scientists and philosophers have regarded the mind as a product of the physical brain and its neurons. But more and more scholars regard the mind as something that extends beyond our physical brain. According to Siegel (2017) mind is both embodied and relational and cannot be completely disentangled from our interactions. Siegel backs his claim by referring to lots of research from several different disciplines and concludes that in our modern society the common sense is that the mind is equal to brain activity and hence the self is a separate entity. But according to Siegel, the mind extends beyond our physical selves which makes it impossible to completely disentangle our subjective view of the world from our interactions.

The above has implications for our thinking about persons: Persons (P) are not to be conceived as organisms that are first ‘made’ and then dipped in a society (S). They are social beings right from the outset. Actually,

- (a) Without S, human beings cannot become P
- (b) Without S, P cannot function as agents
- (c) Without P, there exists no S
- (d) Without P, the S could not change

If one agrees that the individual psyche (mind), nor the social (society) can be taken as the basis of the social realm, then it follows that one cannot take either persons or structures as basic entities. So, the next question is: What is the substance of social reality? The answer I propose, based upon Harré (1984) and Searle (2009), is:

Axiom 3: The substance of the social realm consists out of speech acts in a web of conversations that is species-wide and history-long.

The idea that the ‘substance’ of social reality is made-up out of speech acts has been an enduring theme in linguistic philosophy ever since Austin (1962). Rom Harré and John Searle have been at the forefront in defending this claim. For Harré, *‘the fundamental human reality is a conversation, effectively without beginning or end, to which, from time to time, individuals may take contributions’* (Harré 1984, p. 20). Such a species-wide and history-long conversational web is regarded by Harré as the ‘primary’ social reality. This implies that persons and structures are to be regarded as a ‘secondary’ reality: they are products of the conversational reality that is constituted out of speech acts (Van Langenhove 2011).

According to Searle (2009), there is even one specific formal linguistic mechanism that acts as a single unifying principle that constitutes any institutional structure. The principle underlying the ontology of the social realm is the capacity of

persons to *'impose functions on objects and people where the objects and the people cannot perform the function solely in virtue of their physical structure'* (Searle 2009, p.7). Searle calls this 'status functions' as they imply a collectively recognized status. A piece of paper will count as a 20 EUR bill only if people give that status to that piece of paper. Status functions also carry what Searle calls 'deontic power'. This is where the moral perspective comes in as deontic powers are all about 'rights, duties, obligations, requirements, permissions, authorizations, entitlements, and so on' (Searle 2009, p. 9). Deontic powers are according to Searle created by a specific sort of illocutionary speech acts, namely 'declarations'. Saying 'this property is mine' is a declaration that expresses a status function and gives the speaker a whole set of rights as well as duties. At the same time, that speech act also holds deontic powers towards other people, who are supposed to respect the property rights.

For Searle, the whole of social structures and the institutionalized reality that goes with it is created by declaration. And he adds that since the invention of written language, declarations can take the form of 'standing permanent speech acts' (Searle 2009, p. 88). The importance of Searle is that he has introduced along with the notion of deontology the issue of morality into the institutional reality of structures, while at the same time linking structure to speech acts. In this way Searle is capable of explaining what exactly is the 'construction' in social construction: *'the only reality that we can create is a reality of deontology. It is a reality that "confers rights, responsibilities, and so on"'* (Searle 2009, p. 89).

Axiom 4: Speech acts create both an observable and unobservable social realm that together forms the social umwelt in which people live their lives.

The observable social realm consists out of (1) the primary social reality, that is: conversations and (2) the secondary social reality, that is people and social artefacts. The unobservable social realm consists out of social fields of (1) knowledge fields and (2) fields of moral right and duties.

Knowledge Fields

At any time, persons are embedded in an environment that consists of artefacts that are there because somewhere there has been knowledge, which is being used to fabricate them. For instance, I have limited knowledge of how to operate the PC that I use to write this chapter, but I know very little about the production processes of this PC or about the physics behind the operating system. Actually, I am using a device that I am almost totally ignorant of. That is OK because somewhere that knowledge exists and other people have been working on fabricating this machine. We all live our lives in a world that we hardly understand and take for granted. We are not experts in most areas of modern life, but we use the expertise of others. And that expertise is stored in books, patents and so on. At the same time, persons have also some knowledge of what to do when they need extra knowledge. When my PC

blocks, I know that I can find some help on the internet, or in the manual or I can call the IT person at the office and ask him to fix it. And if he can't solve the problem, he will call colleagues who do have the necessary expertise.

The knowledge used to fabricate the social world in which we live envelops us as a field that influences our capabilities of doing things and acts as an agent. When things work well, we hardly need to know how and why it functions. But when something does not function, we need to tap into the available knowledge. A fundamental characteristic of people, therefore, is that we all possess knowledge on how to get access to knowledge. Part of that knowledge deals with understanding how the social realm functions. The field of knowledge that so to speak surrounds us and influences what we can do, also has another dimension: That field only exists because of a huge network of collaborations between people. In other words, the capacity of a person to act depends as much upon his/her brain than upon the brains of others.

Moral Fields

Next to knowledge fields, we are also surrounded by moral fields. These fields concern not the capacities people have to do things, but the rights and duties people have to do those things. Taking again the example of my PC: Actually, it is not mine, but the property of the university. Being employed by the university gives me the right to take this university property back to my home to work with. And, when my labour contract ends, it is my duty to return it.

When Searle presents the essence of social structures as being a deontological and therefore of a moral nature, he places himself in a long tradition of looking at the social sciences as moral sciences and of referring to moral orders in the theorization of the social realm (see Van Langenhove 2017). It was Harré (1984) who had developed the first systematic theory of moral orders in his attempt to describe how the rights and duties of people differ from situation to situation and from context to context. For Harré, moral order is an organized '*system of rights, obligations and duties obtaining in society, together with the criteria by which people and their activities are valued*' (Harré 1987, p. 219). In Harré's view, a moral order has two dimensions: The first represents the moral rights people have in a given situation, the second is about the physical locations in space and time that a person can (legitimately) occupy. For instance, when in a pub, it gives me the right to order a drink and consume it at the bar, but it does not give me the right to stand next to the barman behind the bar. If a person occupies the moral and physical places he or she is allowed to occupy, then that person acts in a socially conformist way. Any act that puts one in an 'improper' place is, on the contrary, a socially deviant act. Harré pictures society as comprising of different moral orders, some of them rather stable, others more modest in size and only occasional convened (Harré 1984, p. 246). In other words, while some moral norms can be very universal in a given society, others are the result of locally constructed understandings of rights and responsibilities.

As a result, any given culture contains a multiplicity of interacting and complementary moral orders (Harré 1987, p. 220). Moral orders are thus a set of rules and habits that shape what people can and will do in a certain situation. Together they form a social field in which people act and interact. Whether an act is labelled as socially confirming or as socially deviant depends on both the meaning assigned to that act in reference to a certain moral order and on the knowledge the assessor has about justifications or excuses for that act (Semin and Manstead 1983).

From such a combined Searle/Harré perspective, moral orders can be regarded as sets of rights and duties created by declarations with deontic powers. At any given moment people live their lives in a multitude of overlapping moral orders. Some of those moral orders are of a very general nature and hardly linked to space and time. Other moral orders can be very specific and active only in specific spaces and/or for limited time slots only. In both cases (general or specific) moral orders can be latent or active. Latent moral orders are not 'in use' in a certain episode. Van Langenhove (2017) has identified different types of moral orders: General cultural orders, legal moral orders, institutional moral orders, conversational moral orders and personal moral orders. Together, the above five varieties of moral orders constitute the invisible moral space. Moral orders can thus be regarded as fields that surround people at any given time. It is therefore perhaps better to speak about moral fields rather than about moral orders as this allows us to emphasize that they are at the same time both a background to people, as well as a consequence of conversations between people.

It could be that one has to treat one type of moral order as being special, that is, the legal order and the related institution of a state. The same holds for natural fields as Einstein noted: The gravitational field is not just any field. Says Musser: '*all other fields are selective: the electromagnetic field for instance acts only on charged objects*' (Musser 2015, p. 82). But the gravitational field acts equally on all objects. States might play a similar role in the social realm as their legal order applies to all its citizens.

Axiom 5: The ongoing and species-wide web of conversations can be divided into meaningful chunks in time and space, that can be called episodes.

There is a species-wide and history long conversation in which speech acts are launched is not 'one' conversation, but a multitude of conversations between a limited amount of people. These conversations are structured as meaningful entities for the participants. These structures can be called 'episodes' (see Harré 1979 for a discussion of the concept). Episodes have a beginning and an end, sometimes very formal, sometimes rather fuzzy. Episodes can also overlap, both as nested episodes or as different episodes that overlap partly. A football game, for instance, is for the players and audience an episode that lasts 90 minutes of play and about 15 minutes of break between the first and second half. The two-playing half's and the break can each also be regarded as an episode. Or the period before and after the marking of the first goal. Going to watch a game, takes much longer for the supporters as it includes the travel to the stadium and perhaps the drinks in the pub afterwards

(meanwhile the pub visit can be regarded as an episode in itself. Being a fan of a team, can also be seen as an episode.

For the players, the game can be regarded as part of a larger episode, for instance, the competition of that year and so on. All of these episodes have in common that some fields will influence the acts performed, including the conversations about what is happening.

Elements of a Socio/Psycho-Logic System

I believe that, based upon the earlier axioms, it must be possible to extend Smedslund's system in such a way that it better reflects the entanglement between the social and the psychological realm. But this is a formidable exercise that cannot be achieved within the limits of this contribution. In the next paragraphs, I will limit myself to outlining what I think could be the structure of such a psycho/social-logic system and illustrate how a more detailed set of definitions could look like.

- (a) The starting point should be **speech acts** as they can be said to be the substance of the social (and psychological) realm. Smedslund builds his system upon the notion of 'being aware and active', but awareness cannot be dissociated from speech acts. I would even argue that consciousness is not possible without speech acts. Smedslund (1988) states in his axiom 1.3.4. that 'a person can describe that of which he or she is reflectively aware and only that' (p. 11).³ I would argue that is the reverse: One can only be aware of something if it can be described in language.

Next to developing a good definition of speech acts, attention should go to all the possible effects of speech acts, as well as to how speech acts are organized in episodes of conversations.

- (b) The rest of the system would then elaborate on all the social 'things' that are created by speech acts, namely **persons, moral fields, knowledge fields and collaborative networks, institutional facts and social artefacts**.

For each of these concepts, a set of definitions and corollaries needs to be worked out and where possible integrated with Smedslund's system. As mentioned before, there is no space in this contribution for developing all this. I will, therefore, limit myself to elaborate on the concepts of persons and personality in some detail below. Interestingly, the concept of 'personality' is not present as such in Smedslund's work, although he does mention on several occasions what he calls 'characteristics of persons' (see Chap. 5 of Smedslund 1988).

- (c) The point of departure is my axiom that persons and the social realm can logically not be treated as separate areas of study. This is in line with Harré (2016)

³It should be noted that Smedslund has published several versions of PL. Axiom 1.3.4 in the 1988 version corresponds to Axiom 1.4.11 in the 1997 version (Smedslund 1997, p. 10). He also made later revisions (e.g. 2012), but these were not full presentations of the entire system.

who argued that persons are both the products and the producers of social acts. Persons are born in a social environment and it is only because other persons treat them as persons, that they will become persons. This happens through what can be called 'personification': Speech acts that attribute personhood to persons. Becoming a person through personification also involves the appropriation of parts of the available knowledge fields as well as being socialized in certain moral fields.

The following conceptual scheme about persons is inspired by the personality theory developed by De Waele and Harré (1976) and builds upon an attempt to systematize it by Van Langenhove (1986). The format follows Smedslund's approach that distinguishes between definitions, corollaries and notes. References to Smedslund's presentations of PL all refer to his original exposition in Smedslund (1988).

Definition 1.0:	Persons are distinguished from non-persons by personhood.
Note 1.1:	Personhood is what distinguishes persons from non-persons. Personhood can be regarded as constituted by four basic characteristics: (a) the person is a system of intentional acts (b) the person is a rational system in the sense that he or she has the capacity to set goals and mobilize means to achieve those goals (c) the person is a reciprocal achievement, meaning that persons are persons because they are treated as such by other persons and (d) the person is a generator and communicator of meanings
Note 1.2:	Smedslund (1988) does not mention personhood. However, in his note 5.0.0. (p. 55) he talks about characteristics shared by all persons, by virtue of being persons. He argues that most of these characteristics have to do with the wants of persons, for example, their ubiquitous wants for respect, care, understanding and control.
Definition 2.0:	Persons act in order to cope with given episodes and attempt to give meaning to actions as social performances by monitoring one's own actions.
Note 2.1:	This resonates with Smedslund's axiom 2.5.1. and corresponds to axiom 1.3. in the 1997 version (p. 8).
Definition 3.0:	The acting of a person is given form and meaning as social performances through his/her personality which can be seen as a set of resources upon which a person can draw.
Note 3.1:	This set of resources are appropriated from moral and knowledge fields and can be organized into cognitive schema's that recognize four major components of social competence: (a) knowledge on how to present oneself in social situations (b) knowledge to recognize situations (c) recognition of the possibility of a judgement of the appropriateness of a performance and (d) knowledge about rules or conventions that apply in a given situation
Note 3.2:	Smedslund does include in his Psych-logic system several axioms and definitions that resonate with this. See for instance his axioms 2.5.5 and 2.5.7. about what is morally right and wrong.

Definition 4.0:	A person's particular resources are a product of his/her social background and biographical development.
Note 4.1:	persons are individuals that are socialized in a specific 'milieu' and that belong to different social groups. This will influence the knowledge and moral fields to which the person is exposed. But persons also have a specific biography that allows them to change their stance towards those fields and seek new social umwelts
Note 4.2:	Smedslund (1988, 1997) devotes a whole chapter of his Psycho-logic to 'personal change' in both PL-versions. However, the concept of biography seems to be absent. Except that in Smedslund's axiom 1.5.15 (1997, p. 16) it is stated that: 'P's awareness of the future consists of extrapolations from P's awareness of trends in the past'. In the 1988 version, this corresponds to axiom 6.1.7 (p. 71)

Conclusions

The above conceptual excursion did not intend to demonstrate that Smedslund is either right or wrong. Its main purpose was to show that other axiomatic systems are possible, not only for psychology but for the whole of the social sciences. As such, this contribution can also be regarded as a plea for more social theorizing. This not only entails that we need more theories but also more debates between different theoretical viewpoints. And above all, there is a need for more attempts to synthesize what both common-sense and social sciences can tell us about the social realm. It is the credit of Smedslund to have done an extraordinary and pioneering effort in showing how this can be achieved.

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