

**Bangor University**

## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **Dissociation, unconscious and social theory : towards an embodied relational sociology**

Rafieian Koupaei, Shahram

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# Dissociation, unconscious and social theory

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towards an embodied relational sociology

Thesis submitted for examination for:  
**PhD in Sociology and Social Policy**

Shahram Rafieian koupaei  
School of Social Sciences  
Bangor University

2015

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## **Abstract**

The recent attention which has been paid in sociology to the role of embodiment, intersubjectivity and reflexivity has resulted in the development of new social theories which aim to provide better explanations of structure and agency interactions and the dynamics of self and identity formation. In the process of the development of these theories, social theorists have often communicated with other relevant disciplines such as social psychology and psychoanalysis. Clearly, new developments in these related disciplines are likely to have relevance for micro-sociological theories. The aim of this project is to further develop modern micro-sociological theories in the light of new ideas in social psychology and recent understandings in psychoanalysis. Drawing on the ideas of relational psychoanalysis and relational sociology I have tried to define a dynamic unconscious in social theory and a fluid conceptualization of self and identity by applying the concept of dissociation as the key mechanism for shifting between different self-states. Also, based on the theories of Pierre Bourdieu, Anthony Giddens and Margaret Archer, the relationship between reflexivity and habitus is explored, different levels of reflexivity and various forms of consciousness are considered, and these interactions are further investigated using the two examples of sports training and hypnotic involuntariness. Using hypnosis as a model, the development of social self and embodied agency is explored in depth in this context. Furthermore, as a real-life example, the role of subjectivity, relationality and embodiment in doctor-patient relationships is investigated using findings in the research fields of hypnosis and placebo. In conclusion, based on the conceptualization made in this research, the place of two consciousness modalities (discursive and practical) and forms of unconscious (psychological and psychoanalytical) is clarified. Finally, the implications of this categorization for understanding core concepts such as agency, self and identity are explored and some suggestions are made for the further development and application of the theories explored in this project.

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## Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Thesis Overview .....	9
Chapter 2: Self, Identity and the Relational Approach in Sociology and Psychoanalysis ..	19
Relational sociology and relational psychoanalysis .....	22
Peirce, human subjectivity and the unconscious .....	26
Dialogical unconscious.....	35
Body and embodiment.....	37
Discussion and concluding remarks .....	39
Chapter 3: Recovering the value of the concepts of dissociation and unconscious for social theory.....	41
Dissociation and the relational context.....	43
Self and dynamics of identity formation.....	50
Self states, Erving Goffman’s dramaturgy and Judith Butler’s performativity .....	57
Conclusion .....	60
Chapter 4: Habitus and Psychological Automatism.....	62
The concept of habitus.....	63
Psychological origins of habitus .....	66
Psychological automatism .....	69
Psychological unconscious and social life.....	72
Automatism, agency and determinism.....	75
Habitus and psychological automatism .....	76
Conclusion .....	81
Chapter 5: Dissociation, reflexivity and habitus .....	83

Theories of reflexivity in modern social theory .....	84
Habitus, reflexivity and unconscious .....	86
Dissociative theory of mind .....	89
Habitus and internal conversation .....	95
Conclusion.....	102
Chapter 6: A sociological analysis of hypnosis: development of social self and phenomenology of agency .....	104
The nature of hypnosis .....	106
Hypnosis and development of social self.....	108
Goffman’s dramaturgy and Turner’s anthropology of performance.....	110
Acting, embodiment and alteration of consciousness .....	112
Phenomenology of volition and social agency.....	113
Agency and embodied self-reflexivity .....	118
Culture, role taking, rituals and alteration of consciousness.....	120
Summary and concluding remarks.....	121
Chapter 7: Hypnosis, placebo and performance: recovering the relational aspects of medicine.....	125
Hypnosis: imagination and role taking .....	126
Placebo, meaning and interpersonality .....	129
The nocebo effect.....	130
Placebo, hypnosis and the relational context .....	132
Performance and medicine.....	135
Reflexivity, lifestyle and self-care .....	141
Implications for research.....	142

Conclusion .....	143
Chapter 8: Conclusion .....	145
Modalities of consciousness .....	145
Embodied consciousness: .....	145
Discursive consciousness.....	146
Categories of unconscious .....	146
Psychoanalytic unconscious: .....	146
Psychological unconscious: .....	147
Discussion and concluding remarks .....	148
Agency:.....	148
Self and identity:.....	151
Dramaturgy and role taking: .....	153
Relationality, embodiment and institutions: .....	154



## Chapter 1: Introduction

More than half a century ago, Wrong (1961) criticized modern social theories for offering an over-socialized conception of man. He argued that the individual in these theories internalizes social rules and norms and the self is developed as a result of the efforts of the person to conform to the expectations of society. In his view, individuals are seen merely as products of socialization and the reality of their personal being is denied. He states that social theorists of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries elaborated various partial conceptualizations of the individual such as the utilitarian agent in classical economics, the person as power-seeker in the Machiavellian tradition, the Social Darwinist conceptualization of the person as self-preserved and security-seeker, and the pleasure-seeking individual of Freudianism. However, he finds no alternative that provides a satisfactory understanding of self in sociology. As a solution, he suggests that there is a need for a psychoanalytic contribution to social theory to provide a better conceptualization of personal reality. This criticism is echoed in his more recent contribution as well (Wrong, 1999) in which he contends that no successful theoretical framework has been developed since he first expressed the problem. In a similar discussion, the sociologist Margaret Archer (2000, 2006a, 2002) finds both under- and over-socialized conceptualizations of the individual unsatisfactory. She argues that the human individual should be conceptualized in a way that, on the one hand, recognizes the contribution of society to the realization of a person's potential and, on the other hand, appreciates the autonomous properties and powers that allow a person to reflect upon their social context and effectively contribute to its transformation. She then criticizes two unsatisfactory models of the human individual which have dominated social thought since the Enlightenment: 'Modernity's man' and the model of the individual as 'society's being' (Archer, 2006a, pp. 262–265). The former is an under-socialized conceptualization which draws an excessively self-sufficient picture of the person standing outside nature, mastering it. This individual also stands outside history and the influence of the historical context in the formation and shaping of the self is denied. The most important property of Modernity's man is instrumental rationality which is applied to maximize benefits. In this

model the human being is atomistic and utilitarian. The aim of the proponents of the Rational Choice Theory is to apply this approach to all social sciences and explain all human behaviour using this model. With the emergence of post modernism this conception was severely challenged and resulted in the decentring of the previously centred subject or psyche, rejection of the existence of the monadic and autonomous individual and the disappearance of the individual subject (Jameson, 1991, pp. 15–16). This view reinforced the social constructivist model of the self in which the subject is basically thought of as society's being, in which all human powers and properties apart from biological existence are considered to be the gift of society. For example, Archer (2006b) focusing on Rom Harre's trilogy *Personal Being* (1983), *The Discursive Mind* (1994) and *The Singular Self* (1998) explains the basic assumptions of the constructivist perspective. As she states, in this approach the discursive ontology is taken to be the appropriate ontological position for theorising the individual. In this view, the private lives of the people are constructed by internalizing the public utterances or 'speech acts'. According to this conception there is no thought or internal deliberation which is not derived from social discourses. In addition, the form and order of internal speech acts are dictated by the public moral order. Discussing the consequence of taking this position for subjectivity Archer (2006b, pp. 314–315) states:

This means more than a rejection of Cartesian 'mind stuff' because it constitutes a denial, strictly speaking, of any private life of the mind. Our seemingly private mental lives of dilemma, deliberation and determination, of curiosity, creativity and contrition, and of anguish, awe and amendment, lose their privacy. With it, they lose the ability to make us (something of) what we are in public....The word 'I' merely displays mastery of the first-person pronoun which indexes one's spatial location and expresses moral responsibility for the utterances made. Instead of a robust 'I', there is the discursive self, the meaning of whose symbol use is a function only of usage in discourse. Thus, there is no sense in which a psychological subject or agent has a nature which can be defined in isolation from a conversational context.

Accordingly, in this conceptualization the causal properties of the self are replaced by rule following and instead of being an objective reality it is defined as a cultural artefact. Rejecting both models of 'Modernity's man' and 'Society's Gift' Archer

(2006a, p. 261) urges the need for a balanced conceptualization in which the self is not a self-sufficient maker of society and also not a passive product of it.

Elsewhere, Archer (2007b) discusses the place of subjectivity in social theory. She argues that as a basic fact society is composed of people and each of these people has self-awareness. But the way that theorists formulate the place of this self-consciousness in their theories is different. To some, such as the idealist thinkers, self-consciousness matters greatly while to others it hardly matters at all, as in varieties of materialism. Taking a critical realist position Archer argues 'against transcendence' in favour of an emergentist position. By transcendence she refers to the theories of structure and agency relationship found in authors such as Giddens (1979, 1984) and Bourdieu (1977, 1990), who have tried to define these as ontologically inseparable and mutually constitutive. She states that the problem of structure and agency is closely related to the problem of objectivity and subjectivity and to provide a plausible answer to the former the latter should be properly addressed. She rejects transcendence because she believes that in order to be able to study the interactions of the agent and the structure it is necessary to consider them as separate and distinct entities. To analyse the interactions of structure and agency, the causal powers involved should be studied and to consider the two as an amalgam is inaccurate. She states that the individual has a unique property which is not seen in structure, namely reflexivity, and it is this that provides the causal powers for transforming structure. As a result she defines three characteristics for subjectivity and believes that it is '(a) real, (b) irreducible, and (c) possesses causal efficacy (p.23)'. The reflexive process that is practically used by agents in their lives to define and design their personal projects is 'internal conversation'. Archer has borrowed this idea from American pragmatism and although major figures in this school of thought such as Peirce, James, Dewey and Mead were interested in this process, she finds the Peircean approach most compatible with her framework. She finds this process very important and believes that it is the most neglected concept in social theory, one that has never been adequately examined, to the detriment of the understanding of reflexivity (Archer, 2006a, p. 271).

Considering the above discussion, in order to tackle the central problem of structure and agency and the problem of subjectivity and objectivity it is necessary to gain an adequate understanding of the phenomenon of consciousness. As noted, Archer argues that individual self-consciousness and reflexivity are under-theorized and the way that they are conceptualized is critical for formulating a balanced view of the social agent. But the

notion of consciousness is not adequately theorized in sociology if the other important related concept, the unconscious, is not properly addressed. Among others, it was Freud who showed that it is wrong to reduce human behaviour to consciousness. Apart from psychoanalysis, studies in various branches of psychology such as psychosocial studies, social and cognitive psychology and also neuroscience provide compelling evidence of the fact that a significant amount of human behaviour originates from unconscious forces. Obviously, these different forms of psychological and psychoanalytic unconscious are important for sociologists and the way that they theorize the behaviour of the agent in social context. In fact, social theorists have not been ignorant of unconscious forces and they have implicitly or explicitly formulated them in their theories (Chancer, 2013). One example is the habitus theory of Bourdieu (1977, 1990) in which the embodiment of culture happens subconsciously. Another instance is Giddens' (1979, 1984) theory of practice in which unconscious motivation is regarded as an important factor. In terms of the psychoanalytic formulation of consciousness, sociologists are not generally inclined to apply the Freudian approach which they find to be deterministic and inappropriate for formulating an adequate theory of agency (Akram, 2013). In this work I suggest the theoretical framework of relational psychoanalysis as an alternative that can be used in social theorising. Originally developed by Mitchell and Greenberg (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983; Mitchell, 1988, 2000) relational psychoanalysis is a synthesis of common axioms of various post-Freudian schools of psychoanalysis. Giving a central place to the concept of relationality, relational psychoanalysts try to avoid reducing psychic phenomena merely to the internal world of the isolated person disconnected from their sociocultural context and instead of taking the Freudian approach of single person psychology, suggest a two person psychology as a basis for their theories (Aron, 1996). In this light, the core concepts of psychoanalysis such as mind, unconscious and transference are redefined. As critics of traditional psychoanalysis state, in the Freudian approach the origin of the sufferings and unhappiness of the individual is usually traced back to phenomena which happen in the internal world of the person and are considered to be rooted in and connected to their childhood experiences. This approach does not emphasize the network of interactions and matrix of intersubjectivity in daily life and mainly tries to find out the cause of symptoms in past experiences especially events that occurred in childhood (Perlman & Frankel, 2009). As a result, concepts such as race, class, ethnicity and inequality do not have significant contribution in formulations of explanations of Freudian analysis. Accordingly,

the critics believe that Freudian psychoanalysis takes a conservative position towards problems such as social inequalities and racism and in practice, whenever clients complain of emotional distress, the role that these socio-political factors play in the formation of their emotional problems is ignored and the client is in practice distracted from these factors by being encouraged to focus on the life events that happened in the early years of the life (Walls, 2004). In relational psychoanalysis, in contrast, these factors can be well explored because the need for relationship with others is considered to be primary and essential and the relational context is considered to be the main factor in the emergence and evolution of mind and consciousness (Harris, 2011; Perlman & Frankel, 2009). In this view, Freudian analysis is not only inadequate in helping people to act against the oppressions imposed by the society but also functions in coordination with ideologies such as liberal individualism and this serves to maintain the status quo (Walls, 2004).

The other advantage of applying relational psychoanalysis assumptions in social theorising is that it helps the theorists to avoid certain types of dualism. Modern social scientists have found various forms of dualistic thinking such as mind-body dualism detrimental for adequate understanding and theorizing sociocultural phenomena (Crossley, 2001b) and relational psychoanalysis provides the basis for a non-dualistic view. It is also argued that because Freud was originally trained as a medical doctor, he always had the tendency to reduce psychosocial phenomena to biological interaction at the level of nervous system (Tauber, 2012). In contrast, in the relational view, mind is not confined to the interactions that take place at the level of the nervous system and minding is considered to be a process that happens at various levels from molecular interactions of brain to interpersonal interactions to complex phenomena that occur at the sociocultural level (Hollan, 2000). Considering the fact that one of the key concepts that social theory needs to borrow from psychoanalysis is the concept of unconscious, this understanding of the nature of mind provides a new conceptualization of unconscious. According to the way that mind is formulated in relational psychoanalysis, the unconscious is also conceptualized to be dynamic and processual. Taking dissociation –instead of repression– as the main mechanism of unconscious formation, relationalists argue that unconscious is not a solid and static entity. Instead, they consider it to be formed and reformed continuously. The boundary between the conscious and unconscious is always blurred and everchanging according to the relational contexts with which the person becomes engaged. The important point about relationality in the formation of the unconscious is that the

relationship can not only be with the external other but also with the internal other(s) of the private life of the individual. In fact, dissociation provides the possibility of formation of various self states in a single person and these different selves can enter a dialogue and speak to each other (Harris, 2011; Perlman & Frankel, 2009). This internal dialogue is the basis for the dialogical self theory which is found in different forms in the writings of the founders of American pragmatism (Wiley, 2006c). From a historical point of view, although pragmatism and psychoanalysis emerged at an overlapping period of time, there was not much interaction and dialogue between these two traditions. Recently some authors have tried to construct such a dialogue between them and the result of their efforts has been the development of concepts such as dialogical unconscious. In this view, different voices which are present in the internal world of the individual have different intensities and in some cases some voices may even remain suppressed in certain contexts and time periods (Burkitt, 2010a, 2010b).

The other notion that is important in relation to unconscious is memory. In fact, unconscious, in its Freudian sense, is determined by the ability of the person to remember some past events and inability to remember certain others. The research findings of modern psychology and contemporary psychoanalysis deny the assumption that past events are remembered as solid facts independent from the context of remembering. Instead, today it is believed that the way that past experiences are remembered is closely related to and defined by the context in which the remembering take place. Also it has been argued that it is the relational context that in some cases imposes the tendency of forgetting some past experiences to an individual or even a group of people. Consequently, the process of remembering is dynamic and is affected by the relational context in which the individual lives (Connerton, 1989; Prager, 2009). This understanding also supports the importance of relationality in the formation and reformation of the unconscious.

Apart from the unconscious in its Freudian sense, the other form of unconscious which is described as psychological or body unconscious is closely related to the body and the concept of embodiment. In recent years, body and the process of embodiment have been topics of interest and research in social theory (Crossley, 2001b, 2006; Shilling, 1999). Also, recent findings in neuropsychology and neuroscience support the idea that the memories of events and interactions of daily life become imprinted in the body and these can remain at an unconscious level (Fonagy & Target, 2007). These findings also show that embodiment is important in our emotional experiences and in our interactions;

emotions are primarily experienced at a sublingual level and are closely connected to our feelings in the body. From a developmental point of view, as this embodied form of experience of emotions happens prior to the formation of language, it has a basic and fundamental place in modulating daily social interactions. Also there is a complex interaction between this embodied level of understanding of emotions and language-based knowledge about emotions. In relational psychoanalysis it is argued that the process of translation of embodied emotions to verbal codes and vice versa is very important and in fact one of the key roles of analysis in psychoanalysis is to facilitate this process of translation. It is obvious that translation of emotions from one level to another is interpretative and context dependant and is defined by the analytic framework that is used by the psychoanalyst (Bucci, 2001, 2011; Holmes, 2011). In social theory, attempts have been made to use the process of analysis in a Freudian therapeutic session as a model for theorising social interactions. For example in developing his theories Habermas (1972) has tried to apply views which have come from psychoanalysis (Gardiner, 2004; Susen, 2011). The Habermasian theory has been criticised for being disembodied and ignorant of sociocultural differences. More recently, another critical theorist, Axel Honneth (1996, 1999), has also used psychoanalysis in his theories but he is more inclined towards new ideas emerging in post-Freudian schools of psychoanalysis.

The notion of embodiment and the unconscious processes involved in social identity formation have played a central role in the theories of French social theorist Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1990). The unconscious processes behind the development of social identity are described in his theory of habitus, although because of the hegemony of radical behaviourism most social theorists dismissed the concept of habit in their theories. In modern social theories the importance of habit in social life has been reconsidered by sociologists who have tried to develop formulations in which habitual action is not equalent to mindless and mechanical repetition as it was described in behaviourism (Crossley, 2013). The importance of habit has also been emphasized in the theories of American pragmatism. For example, for Peirce, the founder of this school, habit is the primary topic of research in psychology rather than consciousness (Colapietro, 1995). In sociology, although the habitus theory of Bourdieu has been widely welcomed as a strong theory to explain the process of socialization and enculturation, it has been criticized by some as being deterministic (Bottero, 2010; Jenkins, 1982; King, 2000). In fact, the other concept in modern sociology which deals with agency and conscious decision making is

reflexivity. Based on the dialogical self theory of American pragmatism, sociologists such as Margaret Archer (2003) and Norbert Wiley (2010) have considered the process of internal conversation as a reflexive process which mediates between personal agency and structure. One of the important debates in social theory is about the possibility of developing in theory in which both the conscious and unconscious forces which contribute to the formation of social identity are acknowledged. Accordingly there is an ongoing debate about the possibility of developing a theoretical framework in which both habitus and reflexivity have their own place (Adams, 2006; Archer, 2010b; Fleetwood, 2008; Sayer, 2010). In this context I will try to show that the dissociative theory of mind which is based on the concept of dissociation provides the necessary framework in which habitus and reflexivity can come together. Dissociative theory of mind provides the possibility of automatism which enables the individual to do the routine activities of life fast and with minimal need for conscious monitoring. On the other hand this theory shows that it is possible for two or more psychological tasks to work in parallel. This is important because this mechanism allows the person to be reflexive while he or she is doing the routines of daily life. In other words, the dissociative nature of the mind and psychological automatism provide the necessary underpinnings to allow internal conversation to be carried on without interruption through individuals' engagements with the habitual actions of daily life. I also try to further clarify the complex interaction between these conscious and unconscious processes using different examples in various settings such as hypnosis, athletic training and doctor-patient relationships in a healthcare setting.

Through the above discussion I have tried to show that since the time when Freud formulated his concepts, many new ideas in psychoanalysis have emerged and various new conceptualizations of mind, psyche and unconscious have developed. The argument in this thesis is that it is necessary for social theorists to acknowledge and incorporate these new understandings into social theory. Also, new findings in sociology, philosophy, neuroscience and other relevant fields can shed new light on the hidden aspects of these problems. Obviously, the problems of structure and agency relationships, and subjectivity and objectivity, are challenging and to rise to the challenge will require inputs from multiple disciplines.

Although concepts such as agency and subjectivity have always been fundamental in social theory, their importance has increased in step with the emergence of modernity and the industrialized world. As Giddens (1991) and others (Beck, Bonss, &



Lau, 2003; Beck, Giddens, & Lash, 1994) have argued, with the emergence of modernity and the transition of societies from the traditional to a post-traditional state, the life of social agents is becoming more and more unpredictable and there is an increased need for reflexivity and the self formation is becoming a reflexive project. In addition, the advancement of science and technology is linked to rapidly changing lifestyles, creating an inescapable need for people to actively interpret their experiences of change. Some critics have raised concerns about these transformations and believe that they are a threat to happiness and freedom. For instance, the Austrian-born philosopher Ivan Illich (1970, 1973, 1976) believed the progressive institutionalization of societies to be beneficial only up to a certain level, after which is detrimental. He developed the concept of counterproductivity to explain this process (Dupuy, 2004; McKnight, 2002). He argues that when institutions of the society evolve to more than a certain level, their products will be the exact opposite of what is expected. Consequently, there will be 'stupid-making schools,' iatrogenic medical systems', and 'crime-making justice systems' (McKnight, 2002, p. 50). In today's world where the hegemony of technology is increasing in various parts of society, it is important to revise and refine our theories to avoid the sacrifice of freedom, happiness and humanistic values and to redefine the place of individual person and their life-world in the context of different organizational arrangements.

Considering the above discussions, my aim in this work is to reassess the structure and agency relationship in the light of new ideas emerging in various relevant disciplines such as psychoanalysis and psychology. This involves a critical reading of important structure-agency theories including Bourdieu's habitus theory, Giddens' structuration and Archer's morphogenesis theory. Here I summarise the chapters that follow:

### **Thesis Overview**

As discussed, consciousness, unconscious and mind are central concepts for developing a theory of agency. In spite of that, social theory and traditional psychoanalysis have rarely engaged in successful dialogue and many theorists in sociology are generally reluctant to incorporate Freudian assumptions in their theories. In Chapter 2 I show that, while there are exceptions like Critical Theory, which have attempted to merge social theory and traditional psychoanalysis, those theories are not adequate to address the problems of sociology today. In modern psychoanalysis some promising ideas are

emerging that may make the marriage of these two disciplines possible. In Chapter 2, the notion of relationality is considered in the two contexts of sociology and post-Freudian psychoanalysis. The possibility of making connections between them is examined. In Relational Psychoanalysis, relationality is considered to be a fundamental need of human being. The need to connect with others is not considered to be secondary to instinctual drives or the need to gratify biological requirements. Also, mind and consciousness are dynamically organized in the relational context. Instead of repression, relationalists consider dissociation to be the primary mechanism of the formation of the unconscious and the self is dynamically evolved and maintained as a result of the function of dissociation and self-referential processes. In sociology, also, some theorists (Crossley, 2011; Dépelteau, 2015; Donati, 2010; Prandini, 2015) have tried to see relationality with fresh eyes. Proponents of relational sociology emphasize that in social theorizing, all the concepts should be viewed relationally and there is no static and solid entity in society. The basic concepts of sociology such as agency, power, mind, network and identity should be seen as processes and any essentialist conceptualization of these concepts is rejected as misleading and incorrect. In terms of self and identity formation, relational psychoanalysts believe that dissociation provides the necessary flexibility for shifting consciousness and organization of multiple self-states which connect to each other via self-referential mechanisms. Relationalists in both psychoanalysis and sociology have been inspired by the assumptions of American pragmatism, and the theory of dialogical mind is especially important common ground. Chapter 2 shows how Charles Sanders Peirce occupies a pivotal role, especially his ideas about mind and consciousness. Archer finds his model of the dialogical self useful because it provides a framework for defining a private and autonomous internal world for the social agent which can function independently. Also, Peirce believes that the main property of mind is habit making, so that consciousness is necessary for the restructuring of existing habits and the development of new ones. I will argue that when Archer uses Peirce's ideas to develop her theory of reflexivity and internal conversation, she neglects these insights and fails to theorise habits and unconscious adequately. However, the ideas are compatible with theories and addressing these issues can further enrich her framework. Using dialogical self theories in psychology some authors (Adams, 2010; Burkitt, 2010a, 2010b) have recently tried to develop a relational theory of unconscious which is examined from perspectives such as the unequal intensity of voices in internal dialogue or the importance of embodied and unvoiced experiences in

the formation of dialogical unconscious. Lastly, the chapter considers the notion of embodiment as a topic of common interest in both relational approaches in sociology and psychoanalysis. Relational psychoanalysts are trying to theorize the place of body in the relational context and reinforce these theories by incorporating the understanding provided by cognitive psychology and neuroscience. Relational sociologists have also tried to develop theories in which mind-body dualism is avoided and the primacy of embodied experience and practice over discursive and linguistic experience is appreciated. In summary, Chapter 2 argues that emerging ideas in modern psychoanalysis can be incorporated into emerging social theories to provide stronger social theoretical frameworks

Chapter 3 provides a detailed examination of dissociation as the key mechanism of self and identity formation in relational psychoanalysis. In this Chapter it is argued that applying the concept of dissociation to formulate a theory of mind can provide a better understanding of self and identity formation. From a sociological perspective, it is argued that the main problem of current social theories is that they fail to provide a balanced view of similarities and differences such as gender, nationality and ethnicity. Beginning with an historical analysis, the concept of dissociation is traced back to early studies on hysteria and hypnosis by the pioneers of psychoanalysis. The concept was not further elaborated by Freud, but was further explored by other important figures in psychodynamic psychology including Pierre Janet, and later was further studied by several psychoanalysts who developed different post-Freudian schools. Today, in the therapeutic contexts of psychoanalysis and psychiatry, dissociation is usually conceptualized as a pathological event which happens in response to psychological trauma. But another discipline in which dissociative phenomena are explored is anthropology. In their studies of possession and healing rituals, for example, anthropologists have always been dissatisfied with pathological conceptualizations of dissociation. They argue that dissociation in these contexts is not only normal but can also creatively actualize certain hidden and non-articulated aspects of self which cannot be expressed in other situations. Accordingly, some scholars (Butler & Paley, 2004; Butler, 2006) have coined the term normative dissociation to describe dissociative phenomena which are experienced in non-pathological contexts. They claim that normative dissociation is seen in many normal daily activities such as watching movies and playing sports. Dissociation is a complex phenomenon which cannot be explained solely within the boundaries of one discipline; a comprehensive

understanding requires different aspects of sociology, psychology, cultural anthropology and neurobiology to be combined. This view of dissociation provides the necessary framework to formulate a dissociative theory of mind. This thesis argues that there is a natural tendency for dissociation between various psychological faculties and that the integrity and coherence of self can only be maintained through the function of self referential processes which take place in the relational context. Relational psychoanalysts prefer the term 'relational' to 'intersubjective' or 'interpersonal' because this term encompasses the relationships that the people have with their own bodies and their internal phenomenal world as well as other people. Considering this, relationalists emphasize the importance of the embodied experience of emotions and bodily perception in the construction of experience. In their view the process formulation of these 'unformulated experiences' and their translation into words is crucial in a psychoanalytic context. Drawing on this conceptualization an alternative view of self and identity formation is articulated in which the self is continuously constructed by assembling the bits and pieces of experience which come from different sources according to the relational context in which the individual is located. Dissociation is the necessary mechanism for flexible shifting of attention. In this view, the self is not unitary and static but is fragmented and multidimensional and is actively constructed, integrated and maintained. Lastly, as the formation of self states results from the engagement of an individual in different social roles, the relevance of role theories is assessed in this context and the difference between role playing and role taking is emphasized.

Chapter 4 targets one of the most influential theories about the dynamic of structure and agency interaction, namely Bourdieu's theory of practice (1998; 1977). It focuses on the concept of habitus in his theory and the process by which the structure is embodied and the body is structured during its interaction with different sociocultural milieus or 'fields' as he called them. The important point about Bourdieu's approach is that the formation of the socialized body takes place unconsciously and there is no need for individual intentional and conscious action. To further clarify the underpinning mechanisms of internalization of structure and culture, the psychological basis of these mechanisms are explored and their origins traced back to the works of the French psychologist and philosopher Jean Piaget (1970; 1971). It has been shown (Lizardo, 2004) that Bourdieu's notion of 'body schema' and harmonization of habitus and field are conceptualized on the basis of Piaget's theories. Also recent findings in neuroscience such

as the discovery of ‘mirror neurons’ support unconscious imitation and copying in the embodiment of culture and the possibility of forming the social body (Lizardo, 2007). In spite of these facts, habitus theory is considered by many social theorists to be deterministic and inadequate to explain the active role of the agent in social transformation and identity formation (Jenkins, 1982; King, 2000; Noble & Watkins, 2003). To provide a better understanding, it is argued in Chapter 4 that the processes involved in the psychology of automatic behaviour are illuminating. According to the dissociative theory of mind it is possible for two or more psychological faculties to function in parallel and while consciousness is devoted to one of them, another or others can carry on with minimal need for conscious attention and monitoring. Historically the concept of habit was discarded in social theory in reaction to the mindless and automatic version of automatism advocated by radical behaviourism. Even today in modern social psychology some researchers (Bargh & Ferguson, 2000; Bargh & Chartrand, 1999; Bargh, 2005) believe in a new version of behaviourism in which the agency of the individual is denied. But the automatism explained in the dissociative theory of mind, which envisages the possibility of consciousness shifting from one process to another is never totally located outside the control of consciousness and is monitored consciously whenever it is needed. In fact, total dissociation of a psychological process is possible but it is only seen in psychopathological situations and neurological conditions such as schizophrenia and seizure or in severe emotional crisis such as doing something out of control in severe anger. In a normal individual the possibility of parallel processing and psychological automatism is adaptive because it organizes the mind-body system so that conscious resources are devoted to the most important activities while the routine tasks of daily life are performed successfully. One of the most important tasks that is continuously performed thanks to this organization is internal conversation. It means that this arrangement allows people to become reflexively engaged with their personal life project while they are doing their daily routines and habitual tasks. In summary, the Chapter explains that dissociation and automatism provide a framework in which the socialization of body –as described in the habitus theory– is possible and is also compatible with the possibility of the individual becoming reflexively engaged internally with internal dialogue as suggested by Archer.

While in the relationship between individual and society both unconscious embodied socialization and conscious reflexive deliberation are involved, theorists have not been successful in providing an adequate explanation for the interactions between

them. This is the problem that is dealt with in Chapter 5. Focusing on the different theories of reflexivity in modern social theory it is shown that to some theorists such as Giddens, Lash and Castells reflexivity is a recent phenomenon and a consequence of modernity. They believe that modernization of society has made the day-to-day life of the individual unpredictable and the self has become a 'reflexive project'. This is in contrast to Bourdieu, for whom reflexivity has a minimal role in the management of social life and is used by the agent only at times of crisis and when there is a mismatch between habitus and the field. Inspired by the pragmatists' ideas Archer and Wiley devote a more central role to reflexivity in the process of self construction. They believe that through the help of internal conversation, the agent is continuously in dialogue with the memories of the constructed self of the past and the imaginary self image of the future and in this process their personal projects are constructed and refined to address the ultimate concerns of the person. While reflexivity is a conscious process and habitus is formed unconsciously, the way that these two interact is crucial for developing an adequate theory of agency. In this context Giddens, in addition to declaring the need for a theory of unconscious for social theory, points to the fact that consciousness has different forms and modalities which are practical and discursive consciousness. Although he admits that these modalities of consciousness interact, he does not adequately explain the details of this process. Using two examples Chapter 5 tries to shed light on the processes involved in these interactions. The first instance is sports training. Bourdieu uses the metaphor of 'feeling for the game' to describe habitus. He states that the trainer directly speaks to the body of the athlete and discursive consciousness does not play a role in this process. He compares this with the process of formation of habitus and believes that consciousness is not involved in this process either. In a detailed analysis of sports training and coaching it is shown that although automaticity is crucial for reaching optimal performance, sportspeople who achieve this level of performance can only do reach it after many hours of practice in which consciousness in its different modalities is involved. This process takes place not only internally through complex interactions of discursive and practical consciousness but also intersubjectively via the interactions with others and primarily with the coach responsible for teaching the athlete. The other setting in which these interactions can be explored is hypnosis. Hypnosis is one of the known tools that help people to control and change their habits. In spite of the mistaken belief that the hypnotized person has a passive role in the process of hypnosis, it is argued that hypnotic phenomena cannot be

experienced without the active participation and engagement of the subject. Here again, through the complex interactions of imagination, consciousness of body and intersubjectivity, automaticity is experienced. In the process of changing a habit, self-hypnosis is also important. It is through practice that suggestions are internalized and a change of behaviour is established. Thus, there is a complex relationship between habitus and reflexivity and a comprehensive understanding of these processes is crucial for social theory.

As noted, the concept of dissociation originated from studies of hypnosis. In Chapter 6 the phenomenon of hypnosis is explored from a sociological point of view. With the aim of demystifying hypnosis and with an emphasis on its interpersonal aspects it is argued that the change of experience which involves hallucinations, modified bodily perceptions and change of state of consciousness takes place in the relational context of interaction between the hypnotist and subject. Although hypnosis is usually understood to be an intra-psychic phenomenon, in essence it is a social and interpersonal process. Historically, psychological achievements in hypnosis research were influential in the development of theories of sociogenesis of the self. In spite of that, in modern sociology hypnosis has not been systematically explored, perhaps because it is considered to be a psychological topic and also because social theories usually have a disembodied approach. In sociocognitive theories of hypnosis, a change of state of consciousness is regarded as a consequence of taking the role of the hypnotic subject and the trance state is not considered to be a necessary prerequisite for experiencing hypnotic phenomena. In this view hypnosis is considered as role taking and is defined as 'believed-in imagining'. Focusing on the concept of agency and taking a developmental perspective, Chapter 6 argues that the formation of self begins with the asymmetrical social interaction between the child and caregivers which is similar to the pattern of relationship in hypnosis. The developmental period prepares the person for accepting social roles. The chapter considers the relationship of these ideas to other domains. For example, the performative nature of social behaviour is also the core idea of various sociocultural theories including Erving Goffman's (1992) dramaturgical model in which the self is constructed by taking social roles, and Victor Turner's (1974, 1986) views on the anthropology of performance and the role of rituals in enculturation and transformation of culture. Sociocognitive theorists have emphasized the fact that hypnosis is the result of role taking which is different from role playing. Role taking means that the hypnotic subject is not faking. In spite of that,

evidence from performance studies shows that even role playing may result in alteration of consciousness as well. These studies show that deep engagement with the role that a player is performing can result in changes in the state of consciousness which are similar to hypnotic experience. Also, the phenomenological experience of non volition is an important characteristic of hypnosis which is usually the result of suggestions for change in bodily sensations. This notion endorses the importance of embodied experience for social agency. In hypnosis, change in the phenomenology of agency is the result of verbalized suggestions in which metaphors and various patterns of communications such as contradictory or paradoxical requests are used. One of famous experiments in social psychology is Milgram's (1974) group of experiments on obedience to authority which has been considered in terms of patterns of interaction to be similar to hypnosis. The performative nature of Milgram's experiment and the fact that he has shown that even small changes in the setting and scripts of the experiments can affect the participants' decision making are among the common factors between hypnosis and these experiments. Also it has been argued (Gibson, 2013; Reicher & Haslam, 2011) that other factors such as gestures, or patterns of language such as the ways in which sentences are made are important in this context as well. To conclude, issues including the body, emotions, consciousness and its alteration have not been sufficiently considered in social theory and hypnosis provides a context in which they can be explored.

Up to this stage the purpose has been to set out a theoretical framework in which a better understanding of key concepts such as self, agency and embodiment are provided and to clarify the place of these different concepts in relation to others. But it was mentioned at the beginning of this introduction that it is possible to apply these new conceptualizations to restructure different organizations of the society. It was noted that critics are concerned about the uncontrolled growth and expansion of technology which is changing societies and how sometimes they become –as Illich describes it– counterproductive. In the particular example of medicine Illich (1976) believes that modern health care systems are becoming a threat to the health of people. Although this claim has been considered too radical, many critics declare that the progress of technomedicine and the hegemony of drug industries have resulted in the medicalization of normal life events and the weakening of humanistic aspects of medicine such as empathic and caring relationships (Conrad, 2008; Rafieian, 2010). I believe taking a relational and embodied approach may be helpful in theorizing the structure of different organizations



and institutions and could provide a place for subjectivity and the phenomenological world of people in their function. Although different institutions could be targeted for this analysis, informed by my medical background I have chosen the health care system for such an analysis in Chapter 7. I also think this example is particularly appropriate for two main reasons. First, because there is an overlap between some conceptualizations I discussed in other chapters, particularly the chapter about hypnosis and what I aim to discuss in Chapter 7. The second reason is that in health systems, the body is a central topic and perhaps it provides a context in which the embodiment and the place of the body in sociocultural process could be better explored. In the light of this short explanation I will briefly summarize the aims of the last chapter of this thesis.

In Chapter 7 it is argued that in modern health care systems the dominant model of practice, research and education is biomedicine in which sciences such as biology, physiology and anatomy are considered to be the ‘basic sciences’. Communication between clients and health professionals is a frequent event in health care systems and the importance of effective communication is well known in this setting. Using the findings of two fields of research, namely hypnosis and placebo, the chapter attempts to show that relationality is a central concept in health systems. Hypnosis is a known tool for treatment and its effectiveness for the treatment of a variety of health condition has been validated by research. As mentioned, sociocognitive theorists believe that the trance state is not a necessary component for formation of hypnotic phenomena. Instead, in their view, two elements are crucial in the development of these experiences: imagination and expectancy. Recently there has been an increased interest in research about a related concept which is the placebo effect. By definition, placebo is an inert intervention such as a pill or sham procedure which is prescribed for the patient’s condition. While the therapist is aware that the intervention has no therapeutic effect, the patient is told that it is helpful. It has been empirically shown that placebos are really effective in treatment of different diseases. As it is already known that placebo as an intervention is inert, it can be argued that the healing response seen after placebo prescription is the result of the psychosocial factors involved. Accordingly, the placebo response has been dubbed as a ‘meaning response’ as it is believed that the healing experience is related to the meaning that the patient assigns to the components of treatment. Attempts have been made to clarify the underlying mechanisms of placebo response formation. Some researchers believe that there is an overlap between these mechanisms and the ones that are functional in hypnotherapy. Similar to hypnosis in

placebo response, the interpersonal relationships, patterns of communication and performative elements are important. In his dramaturgical model, Goffman emphasized the importance of the performative components of health care and highlighted different instances to show the importance of the quality of the role that is played by health professionals in various contexts. This notion has been emphasized by others such as Balint (1957) who has suggested the idea of ‘doctor as a drug’ and also others who have emphasized the role of rituals in different settings in the health system. Considering the importance of performance, some researchers have tried to reinforce the performative skills of medical students by teaching techniques of role playing. They have been found to be beneficial in several ways. One of the key responsibilities of health professionals is to teach the patients especially the ones with chronic health conditions to adjust their lifestyles and control the habits which are detrimental to their health. For this goal, it is necessary for the patients to internalize the message related to lifestyle modification and incorporate it to their internal conversations. To achieve this goal the carer should be familiar with the voices present in the internal world of the patients. In terms of research, according to the fact that placebo response has been defined as meaning response, to understand the dynamic of healing response formation in the relational context it is necessary to grasp the meaning of components of intervention and the context in which treatment takes place for the patients. This is not possible with quantitative methodologies and there is a need for qualitative designs for this aim. The Chapter concludes that taking a relational approach can result a significant change in practice and construct a new space for research and education in health care systems.

In this introduction I have tried to show the trajectory of this project and provide the reader with a map of ideas explained in this work. At the end of the thesis, I will summarize the main conclusions resulting from this research and possible ideas for further research in this field.

## **Chapter 2: Self, Identity and the Relational Approach in Sociology and Psychoanalysis**

Although it is generally assumed that the notion of consciousness is a topic in psychology and psychoanalysis, on closer examination its importance becomes clear from a sociological point of view as well. For example, to tackle the well-known problem of structure and agency in social theory, the sources of motivations and drives of social and collective behaviour are important and the fact is that many of these could be outside conscious awareness. As Prager (2006) states, gaining knowledge about the psychic life of the social agent is necessary for all social scientists who are unsatisfied with the reductionist views of orientations such as constructionism and postmodernism and who search for an understanding deeper than those offered by theories such as rational choice theory, evolutionary psychology and neurosciences. In fact, any social theory needs a theory of consciousness and unconscious and as Chancer (2013) argues, the founders of sociology such as Durkheim, Marx and Weber had their own formulations of unconscious in their theories. She also notes that in modern social theory, authors such as Bourdieu and Foucault used concepts like discourse and habitus in their formulations which practically describe the effects of unconscious forces on social agents. While these theorists are disinclined to use the assumptions of classical psychoanalysis in theory making they implicitly believe in the presence of the unconscious and its effects on social life.

One of the earliest and most prominent efforts made to connect psychoanalysis and social theory was made by the members of the Frankfurt school of critical theory. At the time of the formation of critical theory the relationship between the Frankfurt school and psychoanalysis was more than theoretical. The classes of the Frankfurt Psychoanalytical Institute and the Institute for Social Research were held in rooms in the same building and the public talks of eminent psychoanalysts were sponsored by critical theorists (Whitebook, 2004, p. 75). Max Horkheimer, the director of the Institute for Social Research was also one of the members of the board of the Psychoanalytic Institute and Eric Fromm, an eminent critical theorist, was a trained psychoanalyst and member of both

institutes. The consequence of these collaborations enabled the institute to conduct an influential and innovative research project about the family and authoritarian personality which was the first interdisciplinary empirical research based on a psychoanalytic theoretical framework (Whitebook, 2004, p. 75). Over time, members of the Frankfurt school took different approaches toward psychoanalysis. After the Second World War, Adorno and Horkheimer came to distrust the emancipatory function of rationality and applied the Freudian analysis of civilization to explain what they considered to be wrong with modern rationality (Whitebook, 2004, p. 76). Fromm believed in the possibility of the emancipation of the independent rational agent from the repressive forces and the suppressive society by self-knowing. In his view, the insights provided by psychoanalysis presented the opportunity for the agent to overcome these restrictive forces (Tauber, 2012, p. 8). Marcuse's program (1969) was basically more compatible with Adorno and Horkheimer's project but he tried to revise some of Freud's assumptions about desire according to the social order in which the person is living. As a result he redefined the reality principle as 'performance principle' and repression as 'surplus repression' (Marcuse, 1969, p. 44) (as opposed to necessary repression) to bring social factors into his theories (Tauber, 2012, p. 13). The early study of Freud in *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1972), by Habermas, the leader of the second generation of critical theorists, was a meticulous philosophical analysis of psychoanalysis, but later in his works, he moved away from psychoanalysis and became more interested in the psychological theories of Piaget and Kohlberg (Whitebook, 2004).

The methodological approach of the critical theorists, based on interdisciplinary work in both sociology and psychoanalysis designed to gain a comprehensive understanding of social phenomena, is still relevant and there is much to be learned from their critical approach to inquiry and evaluation of concepts and ideas. Clearly, they tried to merge the best available theories in different disciplines to develop new ones and the ones they used were their choice among different alternatives. Consequently there is still the need for further effort to find the better elaborated and compatible theories to improve the understanding of the social life phenomena. As Basaure (2011) states, the reason that critical theory is still alive could be explained by the "dynamic of continuity through rupture" (p. 99) meaning that critical theorists have always been involved in a process of self-criticism. In the transition from the first to the second generation, Habermas used some of the ideas of the first generation thinkers and discarded others. Today, his disciple,

Axel Honneth is the representative of the third generation of critical theory. Again, in developing his framework he has applied the ideas of the founders of this school of thought and second generation thinkers, especially Habermas, wherever appropriate but in some places, he has taken his own path and generated new concepts as well. One of the key concepts in his philosophy is the concept of recognition (Honneth, 1996) which is developed to explain the process of identity formation. The development of this concept has been on the basis of Hegelian philosophy, the pragmatists' theories of self (especially Mead's ideas) and object-relations psychoanalysis. In terms of the place of psychoanalysis in his works, he finds the post-Freudian schools of psychoanalysis, especially the object-relations traditions of Winnicott and Loewald, more fruitful than the traditional assumptions in psychoanalysis (Honneth, 1999). In fact, in the theoretical framework of both the second and third generation of critical theory thinkers, intersubjectivity and relationality are particularly important and their ideas will be considered in more detail later in this work.

In spite of the strong links between the two disciplines of sociology and psychoanalysis, sociologists have always been reluctant to use traditional psychoanalytic ideas in their analysis. Several reasons have been proposed for this lack of interest. One reason is that although psychoanalysis by its nature is a form of interpretative and hermeneutic knowledge, Freud throughout his life insisted that it is a science and tried to introduce it as a science similar to other branches of natural sciences such as physics and chemistry (Clarke, 2006). The scientific training of Freud and his belief in possibility of reducing psychic phenomena to biological interactions made him a determinist. But his humanism resulted in considering the human as a conscious and free agent who is able to master her or his own life. These contradictory ideas represent a picture of humans who are 'determined yet free' and he never addressed and resolved this conflict in his theories (Tauber, 2012, p. 4). The other issue is the consequence of biological determinism present in Freudian psychoanalysis. Considering biological instincts as drives for social relationship is not acceptable for sociologists and social constructivism developed as a reaction against this kind of reductionism (Chancer, 2013; Clarke, 2003). Considering the context in which psychoanalysis has been developed Walls (2004) portrays the different intellectual and political strands which influenced the orientations of Freudian psychoanalysis. First he finds psychoanalysis compatible with liberal individualism which in his view is the supporting philosophy of capitalism. Liberal individualism gives priority

to individual needs over social relationships and considers the individual as a separate centre of action and experience, always engaged in struggle to reduce the inevitable conflicts resulting from participation in different social groups. The second strand is Darwinism. Inspired by the Darwin's ideas, Freud (1963, p. 34) conceptualized human instincts as innately in conflict with the society. In its most extreme form, Social Darwinism, some societies are naturally superior to others and are legitimized to have authority over them. Even in a single society, in a Social Darwinist view, the domination of one group of people over others is justified. In this context, Freudian psychoanalysis took a conservative political position and instead of making the people aware of their social and political sources of sufferings, medicalized them, and defined the causes as conflicts of the forces at the intra-psychic level. The last point is related to the Freudian conception of self and its deep psychological structures which are represented mainly as static and the consequence of events which happened in early development. In this approach, the possibility of subsequent transformation of identity as a result of interpersonal interactions is not emphasized (Frosh & Baraitser, 2008). This essentialism and static conception of self is uncongenial for sociologists. For example in American sociology, Erving Goffman (1961, pp. 171–321) considered psychoanalysis to be essentialist and even oppressive and tried to develop his own version of analysis at the individual level which represented a major contribution to the formation of symbolic interactionism tradition (Chancer, 2013, p. 454).

Interestingly, there is an anti-essentialist tradition developing in both sociology and psychoanalysis and both have adopted the term “relational” for their approach. In fact, as well as the similarity in their names, they share common axioms that make them compatible and complementary to each other. Here these two traditions are overviewed briefly.

### **Relational sociology and relational psychoanalysis**

Since the emergence of psychoanalysis, many new developments have been made in this field of knowledge and many new ideas have been incorporated in to it. One main consequence of these developments is that many psychoanalysts do not believe in the individualistic and reductionist assumptions of early psychoanalysis and have taken a relational stance. As a result, as Prager (2011) describes it, modern psychoanalysis has become a science of intersubjectivity and concepts such as drives, fantasies and transference are viewed from the perspective of the interactions between self and other

instead of being conceptualized as the product of the individual self. He also explains (Prager, 2006, p. 286), that in contrast to the way that traditional psychoanalysis conceptualizes the individual as an isolated, instinct driven organism, the post-Freudian theories such as the Loewaldian approach (Loewald, 1978) give primacy to intersubjectivity, a view in which the person becomes separated and differentiated from the undifferentiated field of the self-other over time.

Relational Psychoanalysis (RP) is actually an effort to put together the common assumptions of the post-Freudian schools of psychoanalysis and develop a unified alternative to Freudian psychoanalysis. It was originally developed by Jay R. Greenberg and Stephen A. Mitchell (1983) and was further developed by Mitchell (1988, 2000). In *Object Relations in Psychoanalytic Theory* (1983), Greenberg and Mitchell tried to gather ideas from different schools of psychoanalysis such as the theories of Klein, Winnicott, Kernberg, and Kohut and produce an alternative to one-person drive theory, namely the traditional Freudian approach. Also, the advocates of the relational tradition were influenced by the philosophical background of theories which emerged in late nineteenth century America, notably the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce and the thoughts of other pragmatists such as William James and George Herbert Mead (Borden, 2000; Harris, 2011).

There are some key postulates in RP that its proponents describe which differentiate it from the traditional approach. Regarding drive theory, they reject the idea that our need for connection to others is secondary to the need for gratifying instinctual drives; rather, they see the need for relatedness as primary and an end in itself. In other words, they believe that human beings are programmed to be social and it is in contradiction with survival if this need for relationship is not properly addressed (Perlman & Frankel, 2009). The other notion is that for relationalists, dissociation, instead of repression, is the main mechanism for the development of the unconscious. In the Freudian tradition, through repression, memories of unpleasant events, which are mainly related to early development, are transferred to the unconscious mind and the content of the unconscious imposes its effects on the actions and behaviours of the individual throughout life. In the relational conception, although repression is considered to be a kind of dissociation that results in forgetting unwanted memories, dissociation is the main mechanism. In different engagements with social life, multiple 'self-states' are developed and in each engagement one self-state comes to the front and remain partially dissociated

from others. The self becomes unified and coherent with the help of self-referential mechanisms such as internal conversation. In spite of that, the person always remains unconscious to, or dissociated from, a huge number of feelings, emotions, memories and perceptions that have emerged through interactions with the (social) world (Harris, 2011; Perlman & Frankel, 2009). Accordingly, the concept of mind that is defined in the relational view is a process in constant re-formation in interaction. Mind is not a 'thing' or an 'entity' but a process in the relational context (Holmes, 2011). Perhaps this is the strongest point of connection between relational psychoanalysis and Relational Sociology (RS).

In the broadest sense, relational sociologists take social relations as the point of departure for their investigation and this emphasis results in particular theoretical and methodological consequences. In fact, different sociologists in recent decades have developed social theories with the label of 'relational' but there is no consensus among them and there are controversies over the meaning of some concepts. In Powell and Dépelteau's (2013) view the main reason for this heterogeneity is the disagreement concerning the concept of relation. Various conceptions of social relations have resulted in different ontological, epistemological and methodological consequences and resulted in the emergence of different versions of RS.

In Donati's version of RS (2010), the fundamental assumption is that the social relation is not an emergent property of social phenomena but it is the cause of their formation. In other words, the task of sociology is not to study the relations between social facts but 'to study the social facts as relations' (Morandi, 2010, p. 212). In this conception, social relations are ontologically real and not reducible to other factors. This view, described by Donati (2007, p. 163) as 'relational realism' avoids the different types of conflation (upward, downward and central confluents) which have been described by Margaret Archer (1995) as the central problem of current theories about the relationship between structure and agency.

In the other approach that was originally elaborated by Emirbayer (1997), RS challenges any solid and rigid conception of the components of society. In this view, the notions such as social agent and structure are not fixed entities but are dynamic, unfolding processes. This also applies to other concepts such as power and agency. Power, for example, is not a fixed entity present in an agent, but instead the dynamics of power can only be understood in the context of relationships between different people (Crossley,



2011; Dépelteau, 2008; Emirbayer, 1997). Agency, in Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) view, is dialogical and relational in nature, as basically the agency is always toward an 'other' and is built upon the engagements and disengagements of the individual with others in the society. In Crossley's (2015) view, culture is also relational, meaning that it is only understandable intersubjectively and in the dynamic of relationships between actors. It is not enough to think of culture in terms of a group of people with the same beliefs and ideas as the culture only arises through the relations and interaction between the people involved in the formation of cultural phenomena (p.6). As a result, these theorists reject any form of essentialism in theory making and believe in a dynamic and relational formulation of social phenomena. To emphasize this dynamicity, Emirbayer (1997) uses the word 'transaction' to describe the relationship between social entities. To Crossley (2011, 2015) the relational approach in sociology rejects both holism in its different forms such as functionalism and structural Marxism, as well as varieties of individualism. Instead, he defines society as the network of interactions in which the individuals are not isolated atoms but agents in relation and interaction with others. The properties of networks that emerge from these relations and interactions is not reducible to the actors involved (2011, pp. 7–22). In his view consciousness is also relational and the individual is always conscious of something or somebody and it is not just located in the head (2011, pp. 71–88). Based on these conceptualizations he then tries to explain how to avoid individualism and holism by adopting a relational approach and how to develop a conceptualization of society which is not solid and static but appreciates its dynamic and processual nature.

Although Donati claims that his version of RS is different from Emirbayer's approach, believing that it is 'based on a relativistic pragmatism that fully belongs to postmodernism, placing itself opposite to critical realism' (Donati, 2007, p. 164; Donati, 2015, p. 88), he finds the Archerian approach to an individual's agency (Archer, 2003) compatible with his relational theory. In fact, Archer has taken her ideas regarding the mediatory function of internal conversation from American pragmatism, especially Peirce's theory of the dialogical self. Accordingly, based on Archer's theory about reflexivity and internal conversation, Donati builds his concept of 'relational reflexivity' in which the person relates to himself or herself through the process of self talk (Donati, 2011). This reveals the affinity between Donati's RS and RP, and the ideas of American pragmatism especially Peirce theories.

Discussing RS at the level of the individual, Emirbayer (1997) also conceptualizes self and identity in a similar way to RP. He explains:

... relational perspectives also make possible the recasting of long-established lines of theorization regarding *intrapsychic processes*. In the psychoanalytic literature, for example, the standard view is that of drive theory, which conceptualizes the individual actor as a separate, monadic entity with physically based urges that seek out psychological expression in the form of sexual and/or aggressive desires. These desires, which are preconstituted, conflict with the demands of both human civilization and the natural world; psychological life builds around “compromises” between them and the defenses that control and channel them. By contrast, a new school of thought in psychoanalysis empathically rejects this essentialist perspective and proposes instead a theory of “relational individualism”, one that sees transactions with others, and not pre-given drives, as the basic units for psychological investigation (p. 297).

In this context, he introduces two important trends in the formulation of a new understanding of human subjectivity (Emirbayer, 1997, p. 297). One is the RP which considers the experience of desires in the context of a matrix of relationships and defines mind as a relational configuration, and the other is non psychoanalytic theories of the internal world. He points to the work of social theorist Norbert Wiley in *The Semiotic Self* (1994), who, in this and other works (2010; 2006a, 2006c) has tried to define a concept of self based on the ideas and theories of the American pragmatists. But among them, he finds the works of Peirce central and fundamental. Here the place of Peirce’s works in this context will be briefly overviewed.

### **Peirce, human subjectivity and the unconscious**

Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) was the originator of the important philosophical tradition of American pragmatism. Although the term ‘pragmatism’ is also associated with the names of philosophers such as William James and John Dewey, Peirce’s ideas were foundational in the development of pragmatism and both James and Dewey stated their indebtedness to him. In contrast to other pragmatists such as James, Peirce was not very well known during his lifetime and his reputation gradually increased after his death (Copleston, 1994). The term pragmatism was coined by Peirce but it appeared in print for the first time in the writings of James. In the course of the development of pragmatism Peirce became dissatisfied with the interpretations of other

pragmatists of his ideas and to differentiate his own version of pragmatism from others, as he puts it, he announced ‘the birth of the word pragmaticism, which is ugly enough to be safe from kidnappers’ (Peirce as cited in Pihlstrom, 2004, p. 28). In spite of the common belief that Peirce considered his philosophy to be fundamentally different from that of other pragmatists, Pihlström (2004, p. 28) argues that, by ‘kidnappers’ he did not mean the other pragmatists and that he was actually speaking about the usage of the term in literary journals. While Peirce disagreed with some ideas of others like James and Dewey, he did not consider his philosophy to be essentially different from theirs. In Pihlström’s (2004) view the main disagreement was over the pragmatist maxim. Peirce explains the maxim as follows: ‘In order to ascertain the meaning of an intellectual conception one should consider what practical consequences might conceivably result by necessity from the truth of that conception; and the sum of these consequences will constitute the entire meaning of the conception’ (Peirce as cited in Copleston, 1994, p. 311). Pihlström (2004, p. 38) argues the formulation and application of the pragmatism maxim was different. While Peirce emphasizes pragmatism as a logical principle and views it as applicable to collectivity and the tendency for habit making in nature, James had a psychological orientation and developed an individualistic formulation.

As Wiley (2006b) states, the Peircean philosophical framework has a crucial place in the foundations of American Sociology. Although he acknowledges the fact that Peirce did not contribute directly to the formation of American sociology, he took the view that Peirce made a significant indirect contribution via figures like William James, James Mark Baldwin, Josiah Royce and the later John Dewey. He believes that two of his ideas, semiotics and the dialogical self are the most important ones. Peircean semiotics provided the necessary freedom to explain cultural differences. Without discarding realism, Peirce presents an interpretative picture of how knowledge about the world is acquired, that acknowledges the differences between societies without the need to assume that any of them are better or more valid compared with others. Accordingly, different cultures are different ways of understanding or interpreting reality and none of them is superior or more accurate. The other notion is the dialogical self. Although the idea of thought as inner speech has been familiar to philosophers from ancient times, as Wiley observes (2006b, p. 37), in earlier versions it was considered to be abstract and inexpressible and it was the Peircean innovation that introduced inner speech as a conversation which happens in ordinary and daily life language. Also, earlier philosophers assumed thought only as self

talk. The idea of inner speech as a dialogue between two or aspects of the self was suggested by Peirce for the first time in western philosophy.

A later social theorist interested in the notion of internal conversation is Margaret Archer. She is known for her contribution in social theory by developing the morphogenetic approach to explain the relationship between structure and agency. As she states (2007, p. 39), this theory was an attempt to provide an alternative framework to other theories which conflate structure and agency in different forms: ‘upward conflation’ (methodological individualism), ‘downward conflation’ (methodological holism, whether Marxist or functionalist in orientation), and ‘central conflation’ (Giddens’ Structuration theory). She believes in a stratified social ontology in which conflation is avoided and there is an analytical distinction between structure and agency. Her interest in internal conversation originated in her attempt to explain the mediation between agency and structure. In fact, both Archer (2003; 2007) and Wiley consider internal conversation to be the mediator of individual agency.

Although American pragmatists were interested in the process of internal conversation, each of them described it differently. In his review, Wiley (2006c) summarizes the different viewpoints of these thinkers: William James introduced the concept of stream of consciousness in which all phenomenological experiences such as feelings, sensations and ideas are found. He made a distinction between I and Me components of self but did not emphasize the linguistic component of the inner stream of consciousness. In fact, James provided the necessary foundations for the development of the idea of inner speech by other pragmatists (Wiley, 2006c, p. 7). Peirce viewed internal conversation as the main instrument for self determination, control of action and change of habits. To Mead, inner speech is the means for problem-solving especially in everyday life. Dewey considered it as a kind of mental experimentation to examine different ways of doing a task or dealing with a situation. In Cooley’s view it is an extension of the child’s imaginary companion into adulthood. And Blumer, like Peirce, emphasized the relationship between inner speech and agency and its importance for our choices and decisions in life (Wiley, 2006c, p. 15).

Among these different versions Archer (2003, pp. 78–92) found the Peircean perspective the best one for her theory making. She is critical of Mead’s approach because she believes that it is a too socialized conception of the human interior world. In Mead’s perspective, the formation of the internal conversation is the result of internalization of

dialogue with others and the different voices of inner speech are just the internalized voices of the external features present in the individual life. But Archer believes that although the process of internalization of external conversation is necessary for the formation of inner dialogue, when it is formed, it provides a private internal space of subjectivity that functions independent of other people in social life.

Regarding the issue of the unconscious life, there is no consensus among different social theorists. As mentioned, Emirbayer (1997) finds the Relational Psychoanalysts' ideas compatible with RS. But as Colapietro (2010) argues, Wiley and Archer have different views towards this. While Archer is reluctant to incorporate unconscious and other psychoanalytic ideas into her theory, Wiley is open to this project. In Colapietro's view, Archer's resistance and Wiley's openness to psychoanalysis both originate from a fear of reductionism. Archer is afraid to reduce human agency and conscious decision making to unconscious forces and Wiley's concern is not to reduce human mind to consciousness.

The aim of Archer in her theoretical endeavours is to reclaim human agency and rescue social theory from postmodernism and its attack on self and subjectivity. To achieve that, she tries to define agency in a way that not only does not represent the voluntarism of Enlightenment man and similar approaches like Rational Choice Theory but also does not require a passive and receptive role for the social agent, shaped only by sociocultural forces. Hence, instead of reviving Enlightenment man, she takes an important step and argues for the importance of the individual's embodied experience and the primacy of action over language-based self formation, and the priority of the former in the development of the sense of self in the person (2000, pp. 22–23). She also finds internal conversation to be an important tool for the formation of the private life of the individual and mediating her or his agency in social life. But in this – as mentioned by Colapietro – there is a danger of reducing all phenomena happening in internal conversation to consciousness. Archer (2003) has taken the idea of inner speech as the mediator of agency from pragmatists, especially Peirce. But what do the Pragmatists, especially Peirce, actually think about the unconscious and psychoanalysis?

Colapietro (2006) argues that in spite of their contemporaneity and overlapping concerns, psychoanalysis and pragmatism have generally been ignorant of each other. In view of both of these movements, human experience and action are not reducible to conscious voluntary agency. Peirce describes it in these terms: 'The deeper workings of

spirit [or psyche] in their own way without our contrivance' (Peirce as cited in Colapietro, 2006, p. 109). In fact Colapietro believes that Peirce has a pivotal role as mediator between psychoanalysis and pragmatism and although his conception of unconscious is not the same as Freud's, there are overlapping ideas which could connect these two traditions.

In 'Notes for a Sketch of a Peircean Theory of the Unconscious' Colapietro (1995) has tried to show how Peirce thinks about the unconscious life. He explains that Peirce did not develop a theory targeting unconscious life but it is possible to see his ideas in various places and understand his framework for thinking about that. He believes that to provide a comprehensive understanding of his perspective, the Peircean conception of unconscious should be regarded in the broader context of his general theory of signs and compared with other approaches to unconscious such as those of Freud, Jung, Lacan and others.

To understand Peirce's view, the way he discriminates between mind and consciousness is very important. In fact, to him, the main topic of experimental psychology is not the nature and quality of consciousness but the mechanisms underlying the formation and maintenance of habits. Accordingly, the mind has an innate tendency to form and lose habits. At the time that a new habit is forming, the individual's consciousness is needed, but gradually, as the habit becomes established the consciousness of it subsides. Consciousness is also evoked at the time of breaking a habit. Also in the Peircean view, there is a more complex relationship between habits and consciousness in which, because of the presence of certain habits, the person is more attentive to some particular details of the environment – for example, walking through the woods, a musician better grasps the musical quality of random sound coming from different directions (Colapietro, 1995). Usually because there is no need for concentration and focused attention in doing a habitual action, unconscious habits make us competent in doing a wide range of different activities efficiently and rapidly and many of our interactions with the world around happen at a preconscious level. But some of these habits could form and not only do not help the individual but also interfere with her or his happiness. In this case, these habits should be recognized and eradicated. In fact, as Peirce describes it, we are blind to our blindness and inability to see and understand the working of our unconscious habits. To overcome this, we should gain conscious awareness of how our unconscious is working in different forms and guises (Colapietro, 2006). As seen, the kind of activities which are formed as a result of habit formation that could be performed

with minimal need for attention can be categorized as pre-conscious activity. Apart from this, clues can be found in Peirce's writings that show he also believes in the presence of the unconscious similar to that described by Freud. For example he says: 'Reason is of its very nature egotistical .... Men many times fancy that they act from reason when, in point of fact, the reasons they attribute to themselves are nothing but excuses which unconscious instinct invents to satisfy the teasing 'whys' of the ego. The extent of this self-delusion is such as to render philosophical rationalism a farce' (Peirce as cited in Colapietro, 1995, p. 490).

According to the above discussion, Peirce does not draw a sharp line between conscious and unconscious; these two are mingled in different degrees in various activities. Also, Peirce does not believe that unconscious forces could take over control of the person and he sees self-control and self-determination as possible (Colapietro, 1995). As mentioned he considers reflexivity to be the main source of self-control and internal conversation to be the most important form of reflexivity.

The issue of the possibility of reconciliation of habits and reflexivity is an ongoing debate in modern social theory. Different attempts have been made to develop theories to put habit(us) and reflexivity together: for example Adams (2006), Elder-Vass (2007), Fleetwood (2008) and Sayer (2010). But Archer (2010b) believes that none of these efforts has been successful. Paradoxically, Archer uses the Peircean framework of thinking to explain the importance of internal conversation as the key tool for self-governance and self-control. But, as discussed, to Peirce, habits and habit-making are the essential property of mind and are fundamental in his philosophy. Considering this issue, Kilpinen (2009) argues that the concept of habit in pragmatism and especially in Peirce's philosophy is different from the one that is usually used in social theory. He explains:

It is not simply so that the classic representatives of pragmatism make frequent use of this term [habit]. It is much more important to note that they also perform a *conceptual transformation* in its usage. In their usage it does not refer to repetitive mindless routine, where the acting subject's consciousness, intentionality or rationality are supposed to play only a small role or perhaps none at all. Instead of taking the habit concept in this garden variety meaning, the pragmatists have developed it further, into a model for which I have dubbed a name: *reflexive habituality* (p.102, italics original).

He argues that the presence of habits and the automatisms of some mechanical actions are necessary because of the principle of the parsimony of consciousness which means that the individual's consciousness is not wasted for the tasks that could be done mechanically and by effortless automatism. In spite of that, the individual is not only capable of reflexively monitoring his or her actions during the course of a particular action but also can review the action after its termination (Kilpinen, 2009).

The other aspect of unconscious, which is related to the Freudian formulation of it, in fact, deals with the memory of past events and the way that they could interfere with the conduct of person in daily life. In traditional psychoanalysis, repression is the key mechanism responsible for the formation of unconscious by which some of the unpleasant memories of the past (mainly from the childhood period) are pushed away from conscious awareness and forgotten. Considering the importance of remembering repressed memories in the course of psychoanalysis Prager (2009) has tried to examine the process of remembering in the light of new understandings in the psychology of memory. Focusing on the debates about the phenomenon of false memory and the controversy regarding the authenticity of memories of incest and sexual abuse remembered in psychoanalysis clinics, he argues that viewing remembering an event as a backward movement in time and recollection of the facts is an oversimplified conception of this process. Instead he views remembering as reconstruction of the past according to the context in which the incidents are remembered. In other words, remembering occurs through the social and cultural environment in which the individual is embedded. It is also an embodied process means that the individual feelings and bodily desires which originated in the past can influence the manner in which past memories are reconstructed. Beyond this, he also points to the fact that our perceptions in the present moment are built based on our past knowledge and experiences. Therefore, there is a dynamic and unstable relationship between past and present. This complex interaction is not compatible with simplified understandings of memory such as the neuroscientific conception which places it in the brain. In the process of remembering, not only the body-mind system of the person is working as an integrated whole but also the sociocultural context is a determining factor and influences its function.

In a similar way, but in the broader context of social memory, Connerton (1989) finds two components essential. These are commemorative ceremonies and embodied practices. To define the connection of these two he states:



If there is such a thing as social memory, I shall argue, we are likely to find it in commemorative ceremonies; but commemorative ceremonies prove to be commemorative only in so far as they are performative; performativity cannot be thought without a concept of habit; and habit cannot be thought without the notion of bodily automatisms (p.5).

So, he argues that social memory is an embodied process for which a special kind of memory that he calls habit memory is essential. Habit memory is different from cognitive memory of rules and codes and is basically related to successfully converting and performing the rules and codes (p.36). He also observes that there is no separation between individual memory and social memory and these two are closely related (p.37).

In a more recent work focusing on the issue of forgetting (Connerton, 2008) he argues that it is generally assumed that remembering is a virtue and forgetting is failure. But he brings several categories of forgetting which not only are not considered as failure but also are helpful and constructive. Among these different types one is related to new identity formation. In his view, forgetting could be helpful in the development and organization of a new identity. He explains:

Forgetting then becomes part of the process by which newly shared memories are constructed because a new set of memories are frequently accompanied by a set of tacitly shared silences. Many small acts of forgetting that these silences enable over time are not random but patterned: there is, for instance, the forgetting of details of grandparents' lives that are not transmitted to grandchildren whose knowledge about grandparents might in no way conduce to, but rather detract from, the effective implementation of their present intentions; or there is the forgetting of details about previous marriages or sexual partnerships which, if attended to too closely, could even impair a present marriage or partnership; or again there are the details of a life formerly lived within a particular religious or political affiliation that has been superseded by consciously embracing an alternative affiliation....So pieces of knowledge that are not passed on come to have a negative significance by allowing other images of identity to come to the fore. They are, so to speak, like pieces of an old jigsaw puzzle that if retained would prevent a new jigsaw puzzle from fitting together properly. What is allowed to be forgotten provides living space for present projects (p. 63).

According to the above discussion, remembering is not merely a return to the past and recollection of fixed and rigid events. It is instead a contextual and embodied process in which according to the current situation we selectively and interpretatively reconstruct what has happened in our past life. This conception has an important consequence for the notion of identity formation because as discussed in the process of identity formation, there is a dynamic interaction between the reconstruction of a past event according to the current situation and perception of the present time according to past knowledge and experiences. Furthermore, the individual only remembers the events that are compatible with and helpful for the construction of the new identity and puts away and forgets the memories which are not useful for this purpose. This view of self formation is in tune with the assumptions of RP as it conceptualizes self as fluid and processual. To theorize self, some relationalists such as Bromberg (1996, 2009) and Davies (1998) believe that dissociation is a key mechanism. They argue that in each social context the individual takes a social self and each person has different self-states. Normally these selves are connected to each other via self-referential processes and the coherent and unified self result from the balanced dynamics of dissociation and self referential processes. In psychopathology, this balance is disrupted and the healthy self is not maintained. Trauma is the main cause of such disturbance and the prototype of the failure of self-referential processes is seen as dissociative identity disorder (DID) in which, because of the effects of chronic trauma especially in the childhood period, different self states of the individual are unable to connect to each other and the person adopts different personalities in various periods of time. Considering the fact that the most important self-referential process for maintenance of the self is internal conversation, dialogue between different self states is the main tool by which the coherence and integration of the self is achieved. In modern psychology, this view has been well developed by Hubert Hermans (1996, 2001, 2003, 2014) in his dialogical self theory. As he (2014) states, this theory has developed based on the views of two main theoretical frameworks. One is the American pragmatism particularly the self theories of William James and George Herbert Mead. The other contributing tradition is Russian dialogism, especially the ideas of Mikhael Bakhtin and his polyphonic theory of mind. In essence, Hermans views the dialogical self 'as a dynamic multiplicity of I-positions in the society of mind (p. 428).' Others have tried to develop an alternative conception of unconscious based on this theory. In the next section, this conception would be briefly reviewed.

## **Dialogical unconscious**

Taking a dialogical approach to describe the self, Hermans (2002) describes self as a society of mind in which multiple relatively autonomous I-positions with different and even opposing perspectives are present. The I fluctuates between these different positions and in this manner various voices come to a dialogue with each other in the internal world of the person similar to the characters of a story whose voices interact and become involved in a process of question and answer, and agreement and disagreement (p.148). Taking Hermans' dialogical self as a starting point, Burkitt (2010a, 2010b) has tried to develop a dialogical conception of the unconscious. In the first instance, he (2010a, p. 306) criticizes Hermans' picture of the society of mind in which there are multiple voices with the same intensity. Instead, in his view, the social context in which the individual lives, the evaluations by others of the person's actions and behaviours affect and shape the internal conversation or micro-dialogue of the person. Furthermore, the communication between these voices is not always clear and straightforward. He argues that in daily life people might encounter miscommunication and misunderstanding in their interactions with others which can originate from ethical, ideological and personal differences and these are projected in to the microdialogues of the person in his or her private mental life. This can result in conflict in the dialogue of different voices in the internal conversation. Apart from the miscommunications and misrecognition at a particular moment in time, conflict may happen between what has been brought to the moment from past interactions and the current state of the individual (Burkitt, 2010a, p. 308). From the perspective of power relationships, he observes that, similar to the way in which dominant voices in the society are more likely to be heard, even to the point of suppressing others which are less strong, internal voices are not the same and one or some may be dominant. In daily interactions with others the confirmation of one aspect of the self results in the empowerment of that aspect while non confirmation of it results in the silencing or weakening of its voice. Consequently, even when the dominant voice is speaking in the internal conversation, the latent and suppressed voice is implicitly present within it. Thus, he believes that in confession, the person reveals and openly expresses a voice that had been silenced and suppressed before and brings this voice into a dialogue with another (Burkitt, 2010a, pp. 316–317).

In this conception, unconscious is not an entity such as a single psychological process which could be psychologically or sociologically defined and described. Instead it

refers to those aspects of the self which are hidden and unexpressed in the relational matrix of interactions because of interpersonal, ideological and ethical conflicts. In this view, there is no strict boundary between conscious and unconscious and it is continuously formed and reformed in the dynamic of interactions. To summarise, Burkitt (2010b) defines the dialogical unconscious as:

the influence that the voices and vocal intonations of others have in forming our own self and micro-dialogue, creating an “otherness” within us—a voice or tone—that is not associated with speaking as “I” or “me” (the self as conscious knower or known object). This is the otherness that has formed who we are through the vocal tones in which we regard ourselves and the world, a micro-dialogue and field of perception infused with the voices and evaluative tones of others that can intrude in unwanted, unplanned, and surprising ways, and can also be split and divided (pp. 322, 323).

In his contribution, Adams (2010) tries to find the place of the ‘unspeakable’ in dialogical self theory. He argues that in this theory, the self is structured via the dialogue of different “voices” and voice is the cornerstone of this conceptualization. Considering the formation of the dialogical self in a developmental context he argues that the non-verbal dialogue of the early life period is the prerequisite and foundation for the development of voiced internal dialogue later in life. Consequently, there are parts of experience which are central to it and cannot be expressed in words. He believes that reducing the self to the process of dialogue between voices would eliminate this important part of the self from theory. Drawing on the Butlerian tradition (Butler, 1997a, 1997b, 2005) he also argues that there are limits for the narrativization of self as the self is basically is the result of discursive forces and unconscious interpersonal relationships which have happened prior to the formation of reflexive self. Finally, he looks through the lens of methods of self development such as Zen Buddhism meditative practices, in which too much self narration is regarded as disruptive and destructive for a healthy self and where the attempt to get in touch with the core and essential self and its associated unspeakable experience is through avoidance of self narration and internal dialogue. Considering the above discussion, without ignoring the importance of narration and internal dialogue in self formation, he states that there is a need for more attention to be paid to the unspeakable and unvoiced experience in dialogical self theory.

In a related discussion, relational psychoanalyst Donnel B. Stern (1997, 2002, 2003, 2009) speaks about the ‘unformulated experiences’ and the process by which they become formulated. He believes (2002, p. 245) that in encounters with the world, experience is shapeless and unformulated. This unformulated experience can only gain shape and become incorporated to the self structure of the person if it is compatible with this structure. Otherwise, it remains unformulated and never targeted to self reflection and scrutiny. He also believes that the way that the individual gives shape and meaning to unformulated experiences depends on the relational context in which this meaning assignment takes place. Experience becomes meaningful when it is expressed and explained linguistically. The views of Sterns will be considered in more depth in the next chapter.

We have seen that these theorists emphasize the embodied origins of the dialogicity of mind. Clearly, this is essentially rooted in the pre-reflective and pre-linguistic experience which as mentioned is present since early years of infant life. This notion places the body and embodied experience at the core of both RS and RP.

### **Body and embodiment**

The body and embodied experiences are central issues in both RS and RP. In RP embodiment is the necessary concept for nonverbal and preverbal representations which are the basis for early memory and it is a concept closely related to attachment in early life which is the ground for later relational abilities. Fonagy and Target (2007) argue that the fields of psychoanalysis and attachment studies converge in the domain of embodied thought. Both psychoanalytic studies and new findings in cognitive science support the idea that production of symbols is tightly related to the bodily experiences in the relational context of interactions with caregivers. There are also some researchers such as Allan Schore (1994, 2002) and Wilma Bucci (1997, 2001, 2007, 2011) who have tried to make a bridge between psychoanalysis and related neuropsychological understandings and develop new theories to define the place of bodily states and embodied experience in the relational context. In the next Chapter these connections will be explored in more detail.

In sociology, body and embodiment have moved to the centre of attention recently. Relationalists such as Crossley (2001b, 2006) have focused on the role of the body in the social life of agents. For instance, in his work on the social body, Crossley (2001b) has tried to transcend the mind body dualisms present in traditional social theories

and develop new theories in which the place of embodied experience is better defined. Drawing on the works of philosophers Ryle (1949, 1969) and Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1965), he has tried to construct an understanding of the mental life of people ‘in terms of an interaction of purposive behaviours, intelligent dispositions, meaningful configurations of sensation and the contexts of action and interaction in which these are embedded’ (p. 161).

In her project, Archer (2000) seeks to oppose the view of postmodernists in which the self is considered as a construct of language systems, by emphasizing pre-linguistic embodied experience and self consciousness which is the result of perceiving the feeling and sensations from our bodies. Arguing against the essentialist conception of the self which considers it as a ‘thing’ or ‘entity’ she introduces a relational alternative and says: ‘What I am arguing for, is the self as an emergent relational property whose realisation comes about through the necessary relations between embodied practice and the non-discursive environment (p. 123)’.

Drawing on the philosophy of Merleau-Ponty she first considers the fact that the sense of self is primarily the result of embodied interactions with the natural world, which is prior to any interaction with the social world around (2000, p. 128). In addition, she points to the unique function of the body which is capable of sensing and perceiving itself, having the capacity of self-consciousness prior to any social interaction (p.130). She discusses the importance of bodily or procedural memory in maintaining the sense of self. Together with eidetic memory it provides the necessary resource for having a continuous sense of self (p.152). And finally, she argues that pre-linguistic practical action is the basis for the formation of logical reasoning and consequently practical activity is not terminated with acquisition of language (p. 153).

The embodied conception of self is compatible with the Peircean dialogical self theory. Although the linguistic internal conversation is crucial for formation of self in his theory it is not the only component. In fact, the internal dialogue in the Peircean view is a semiotic dialogue in which different forms of signs, namely iconic (images and pictures), indexical (feelings and sensations) and symbolic (words and other symbolic signs) could be present (Wiley, 2006a, p. 321). Accordingly, the Peircean conception of self is not only cognitive and linguistic; internal dialogue is a semiotic conversation which encompasses different signs coming from the individual’s embodied experience.

It follows from the above discussion that any social theory ignoring the place of body and embodiment is inadequate and to acquire a comprehensive understanding of the embodied self in the developmental and relational context there is a need for interdisciplinary dialogue. It is evident that emerging relational theories in psychoanalysis and sociology are compatible and complementary.

### **Discussion and concluding remarks**

To deal with core concepts in social theory such as agency, there is a need for theories about consciousness and the psychic life of the social agent. In response to the attribution of excessive power and authority to ‘modernity’s man’ in the Enlightenment era, new theories such as social constructivism and postmodernism emerged in which the self is considered to be the product of social and cultural discourses. To salvage humanity and subjectivity, some theorists such as Margaret Archer are trying to define the independent and causally effective place of human internal psychic functions in their social theories. But here again, reducing human psychic life to consciousness makes these theories incomplete and there is need for dialogue between social theory and psychoanalysis to develop a comprehensive theory of agency to explain the functions of the social agent and its influence on the structure of the society. Previous attempts were made by social philosophers such as the members of the Frankfurt school of critical theory. They mainly used Marxism and Freudian psychoanalysis to develop their ideas. In spite of these efforts, many sociologists do not find Freud’s ideas and his social theories useful and are reluctant in using them in their conceptualizations. But after Freud, different new psychoanalytic schools emerged in which some of the core Freudian assumptions were reassessed and revised. In relational psychoanalysis the common axioms of these alternative schools are put together and a new framework is synthesized. This resultant modern psychoanalysis is a science of intersubjectivity and relationality is central to it. This branch of knowledge has also been fortified by new findings in related disciplines such as neuropsychology, neuroscience and cognitive and developmental psychology. On the other hand, in sociology some theorists have called their version of social theory as ‘relational sociology’. In fact, these theorists have tried to take a fresh look at the concept and meaning of (social) relationship and its ontological and epistemological importance and its significance for the definition of other key concepts in sociology such as power and agency. The ideas of these different theorists are not homogeneous and there are some disagreements over certain conceptualizations. One of the fundamental notions that some

of relational sociologists emphasize is the dynamic and processual nature of social phenomena and the fact that considering these as things or rigid entities is a mistake. This rule applies to the notion of self and identity as well. While providing a fluid and dynamic conceptualization of self has not been regarded as compatible with the self in traditional psychoanalysis, relational sociologists find the self theory of RP compatible with their theories. Both of these relational traditions (RP and RS) are influenced by the ideas of American pragmatism and Peirce especially has a pivotal role in this context. Different parts of his philosophy are useful for constructing a theory of subjectivity for social sciences. His dialogical self theory and the notion of internal conversation provide the necessary components for theorizing the private internal world of the social agent through which personal agency is mediated and his semiotic theory is sufficiently comprehensive to encompass the embodied experience of the individual in the sociocultural context of his or her everyday life. Also his distinction between mind and consciousness and his categorization of conscious, preconscious and unconscious are other vital contributions in his philosophy. As noted above, some efforts have been made to depict the Peircean understanding of unconscious. Others have also tried to develop a dialogical and relational conceptualization of unconscious based mainly on the dialogical self theories developed by the psychologist Hubert Hermans. In a similar way in RP, there have been attempts to redefine the unconscious. One important technical step is to consider dissociation instead of repression as the main psychic mechanism involved in the formation of the unconscious. These new contributions can all fortify relational sociology and make the theory of subjectivity and self more comprehensive and precise. In this Chapter I have tried to make the necessary connections between different traditions and bring the relevant concepts together. But as we have seen, there is much more elaboration needed to make the concepts well developed and mature. For example, the very concept of relationality needs much more exploration and the resultant understanding could shed more light on other important and necessary concepts such as relational and dialogical unconscious. I believe that a marriage between the relational schools of sociology and psychoanalysis will be fruitful and should open new windows toward the notion of subjectivity in social sciences and provide new resources for more creative and innovative research in this field. In the next Chapter the concept of dissociation will be considered and its pivotal role for the process of self and identity formation will be explored.



## **Chapter 3: Recovering the value of the concepts of dissociation and unconscious for social theory**

One of the basic challenges of sociology, especially from the last decades of twentieth century, has been the relationship between the self and society and the meaning of selfhood and identity. New developments in traditions such as cultural studies, feminism, post-structuralism and other relevant areas, renewed the interest in self and identity formation. Also the emerging phenomena of globalization and progress in information technology have modified the forms of interaction between the individual and the social world (Callero, 2003). These changes in the modern world have revived the dilemma of how to deal with individual differences and similarities in sociocultural worlds and how to reconcile them. Not only are people different in terms of their sex, body, ethnicity, and nationality, but also in their psychological makeup, their attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and thoughts (Calhoun, 1995, p. 44). This diversity has always impelled sociology to be in a dialogue with psychology and psychoanalysis and has brought concepts like 'self' and 'identity' to the foreground of attention among social and cultural theorists.

As mentioned in the previous Chapter, sociologists have not always found it straightforward to engage with ideas from psychoanalysis, especially when the Freudian approach has dominated the basic assumptions of the discipline. In spite of that, in social theory, attempts have been made to make connections between sociology and psychoanalysis. In Chapter 2 the contributions of critical theorists were discussed. The use of psychoanalytic ideas also can be seen in other theories such as the system theory of Talcott Parsons and feminist theory of Nancy Chodrow (Craib, 1990). In modern social theory, sociologists are less interested in Freudian ideas (Clarke, 2003, 2006; Frosh &

Baraitser, 2008). Not only are some sociologists reluctant to accept these assumptions, but also there are psychoanalysts who are not in agreement with some of Freudian postulates.

Historically, these disagreements with Freud have led to the development of new directions in psychoanalysis which have different formulations of the nature of the human psyche and its relationship with the social world. Recently, some psychoanalysts have tried to put the common conceptions of these alternative frameworks together to develop 'relational psychoanalysis'. American clinical psychologist and psychoanalyst Stephen A. Mitchell (1946 –2000) is considered to be the founder of this movement which is still developing and evolving. The common aspect of all these different alternative psychoanalytical schools including British Object Relation Theory, Self Psychology and Interpersonal Psychoanalysis is that they assign primary importance to interpersonal relationships instead of instinctual drives. They disagree with Freud that the discharge of biological drives is the motivator for making connections with other people. Instead, they believe that the need to have relationships with others is basic and fundamental to being human and is not determined by biological and instinctual drives. In other words, in their view, intersubjectivity should be regarded as a distinct motivational system and interpersonal relationships are not a derivative of the drives system. (Harris, 2011; Mitchell, 1988, 2000; Perlman & Frankel, 2009). According to the critical importance of instinctual drives in Freudian psychoanalysis, the concept of repression is the cornerstone of his theory of mind. As a result the Freudian perspective is basically an intra-psyche one. The origin of drives lies in the body and relationships with others are regulated in a manner that maintains the internal equilibrium (Minolli, 2004). In relational psychoanalysis, instead, there is no mind on its own and the mind is always defined in a relational context. Hence the mind in relational psychoanalysis is not a thing but a dynamic process which is always evolving in relationship with others (Harris, 2011; Hollan, 2000; Holmes, 2011). Also, there is a different conception of the unconscious for relational psychoanalysts. While in a Freudian approach the main mechanism involved in development of unconscious is repression, in relational psychoanalysis dissociation is considered to be the mechanism involved. In fact dissociation is a broader concept and repression could be considered as a form of dissociation and considering dissociation as a property of mind could result in development of a dynamic unconscious (this issue will be considered in more detail later in this Chapter). To explain this notion, first the concept of dissociation should be clarified.

## **Dissociation and the relational context**

The concept of dissociation was used in psychoanalytic writings from the very beginning. Freud in his seminal work with Breuer about hysteria (Breuer & Freud, 1895) used the concept to describe hysterical phenomena as hypnoid states in which dissociation occurs in the patient's consciousness. Later, Freud discarded the idea of dissociation and focused on repression as the basis for psychoanalysis. In fact it was the French psychologist and philosopher, Pierre Janet, who further developed the concept of dissociation and its relationship to psychological trauma (Blizard, 2003; Ellenberger, 1970). As Tarnopolsky (2003) explains, the concept of dissociation has been associated with different terminologies in the writings of prominent psychoanalysts: Freudian repression, which is the absence of some components of mental life like memories, thought and affects from consciousness, could be considered as a special form of dissociation in which certain psychological components become dissociated from the main body of consciousness. Later Freud used the term "splitting" to describe the division that might occur in personality in the context of mental problems like psychosis. Again here splitting is a kind of dissociation in which the divide may happen in the whole personality.

After Freud, scholars from different schools of psychoanalysis paid attention to this psychological phenomenon. Michael Balint (1896-1970), Harry Stack Sullivan (1892-1949), Melanie Klein (1882 – 1960) and Ronald Fairbairn (1889 –1964) among others were aware of the importance of dissociation in the organization of mind and mental life. They not only described the role of dissociation in the pathological mind states, but also believed that dissociation is the mechanism that occurs in the normal functioning mind as well (Bromberg, 1996).

Perhaps it was the studies on and exploration of multiple personality disorder – or as it is called more recently, Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) – that has shed light on the nature of this psychic phenomenon. In DID, which is the result of chronic and severe psychological trauma, several personalities inhabit a single body. The person lives with a personality for a period of time and suddenly shifts to another. There is a so called 'amnesic barrier' between the personalities which means that each personality is unaware or forgetful of the presence of other personalities (Aron, 2000; Kluft, 2000; Manning & Manning, 2007; Tarnopolsky, 2003). Dissociation in this condition has been described as a defence mechanism in order to avoid the destruction of the personality by painful memories. In fact, some regard what is seen in DID as an exaggerated form of what

naturally happens in the healthy mind (Bromberg, 1996; Davies, 1998; Manning & Manning, 2007). The difference between the two is that there are self reflexive mechanisms functional in a healthy mind that maintain its integrity. In other words, in our daily life we have different 'self-states' which are connected to each other by self reflective mechanisms (Mann, 2008). Accordingly, dissociation is not something that happen only as a defence mechanism in the context of psychopathologies, but there are many situations in daily life in which the person may become dissociated and these are referred to as normal or 'normative' dissociative experience (Butler, 2006; Rafieian, 2011). While psychological trauma is the effect of a deep emotional engagement with an event which has disastrous and catastrophic meaning to the person, in a similar way, any emotional engagement can result in some degree of dissociation. Common examples can be found in everyday life. For instance, when you are deeply absorbed in the story of a movie you might become dissociated from the other events happening in the room like the door bell or the call of your friend.

Discussing the example of watching a movie, Wiley (2006a, pp. 332–333) tries to explain how the contents of the movie become incorporated in the inner dialogue of the person. As a result of the deep engagement of the person, the movie can enter to their core consciousness; the story seems to be going on inside the individual. It means that with a high degree of absorption the dialogues of the film could be incorporated in the internal conversation of the person as if the person is talking with him or herself privately. The difference between the experience of watching a movie and dreaming is the possibility of disengagement for a film watcher which is not available for a dreamer. In other words, a movie does not become incorporated in inner speech as naturally and tenaciously as a dream. If the movie becomes boring or confusing or the story becomes implausible, the individual does not experience it as something happening inside but begins to perceive it as happening outside. If it continues to be engaging there are similarities between this and dreaming in terms of the mechanisms involved. Wiley explains:

But if the movie holds its grip on us, the whole thing is as though it were happening within us, and, in a way, to us. The movie becomes our daydream, and it goes in the place of daydreams. Saying we are conscious of the movie is not enough. In a way the consciousness of the movie is our consciousness. Normal consciousness gets suspended or peripheralized, and movie consciousness becomes us. At the same time the split consciousness, with the self still inhabiting inner

speech, allows the self to carry on its own internal conversation parallel to the one in the movie. For a movie requires constant interpretation, to fill in the gaps, explain the seeming discrepancies, and contextualize the experience (perhaps by comparing it to other movies). Even when totally absorbed by a movie the processing and interrogating goes on. We still look at the movie from above and use inner speech to figure it out (2006a, p. 333).

In fact the phenomenon that Wiley is describing here is what is called dissociation in psychology and psychoanalysis. Qualities such as deep absorption, narrowing of attention, a heightened sense of reality and inaccessibility of self-reflective, perceptual, affective, and behavioural information are all seen in the experience of watching a riveting movie and because of that it is considered to be a dissociative experience (Butler & Palesh, 2004). In her contribution, Butler (2006) not only categorizes dreaming and the experience of watching a movie as normative dissociation, but also includes many other familiar experiences such as dreaming, sex, engagement with different hobbies, highway hypnosis during long distance driving and even the peak experience of creative people under this umbrella. Although Butler has coined the term normative dissociation to differentiate these experiences from the other category which contains the pathological conditions such as dissociative identity disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which are usually the result of severe psychological trauma, it is very difficult to draw a line between normative and pathological dissociative experiences. Seligman and Kirmayer (2008) have tried to consider dissociation from different perspectives and develop an integrative model. They argue that dissociation is a topic of interest for psychiatrists and psychologists on one hand and anthropologists on the other hand. Psychiatrists and psychologists usually take the adaptive approach to dissociation. In this view, dissociation is a defence mechanism which protects the person from the effects of unpleasant emotional crisis as a result of psychological trauma. In anthropology, dissociation is studied in the context of experiences such as possession, spiritual and religious practices and healing rituals (Budden, 2003; Huskinson, 2010; Krippner, 1997). The emphasis here is mainly on the sociocultural context in which these phenomena are developed and the web of meaning related to it. In this understanding dissociation provides an opportunity for the person to suspend her or his normal self and express novel, creative and sometimes forbidden aspects of inner life while they are experienced being related -and attributed by others- to other agency. They criticize the conceptualization of dissociation in both fields as being

inadequate for certain reasons. First, because in both fields dissociation is studied only in extreme forms such as the severe consequences of trauma in DID and possession experience in anthropology. As discussed, dissociative experiences are seen in many different daily life situations without interference with the normal functioning of the person. The phenomena of narrowing of attention, concentration and absorption in which cognitive resources are mainly devoted to some special internal or external object(s) and suspension of awareness of the surrounding environment, self-awareness and critical thought, all occur very frequently and the resultant variation in the state of consciousness is pleasant most of the time. Secondly, they consider both approaches as being reductionist. The psychiatric-adaptive approach is ignorant of the sociocultural context and the meaning of the events in the individual's life context and the semantics of dissociation. On the other hand, anthropologists mainly focus on the discursive and contextual issues related to dissociation and in spite of the convincing evidence showing the relationship between trauma and dissociation and the problematic consequences of experiencing excessive and out of the context dissociation which is not functioning as a defensive and adaptive mechanism, do not include these findings in their formulations. Accordingly, Seligman and Kirmayer express the need for a comprehensive and integrative view which encompasses these different aspects. They conclude that:

Every complex human experience emerges from an interaction of individual biology and psychology with social context. In an effort to describe this interaction, we have outlined an approach to dissociation that integrates the neuropsychological notions of underlying mechanism with sociocultural processes of the narrative construction and social presentation of the self... Dissociation reflects the culturally and neurobiologically patterned regulation of attentional mechanisms. Under the guidance of a cognitive expectation or cultural script, individuals can learn to actively inhibit or suppress specific perceptual and cognitive processes (2008, pp. 54, 55).

Hollan (2000) also finds the concept of dissociation and the dissociative theory of mind useful as it provides the necessary framework to explain the interactions between the individual and culture. He believes that this conceptualization is helpful in several ways. First the adaptive ability of consciousness to become divided is especially helpful in premodern or tribal societies in which people are heavily dependent on relationships with others as they would be able to preserve their own interests and views. Second, it provides

an explanation for the experiences that remain unconscious but could not be categorized as repressed according to classical psychoanalysis. These experiences never become incorporated in the structure of self because of the emotional pain or conflict that could be produced in this process (this point is similar to Stern's notion of unformulated experience discussed in the previous chapter). Lastly, he claims that applying the constructivist model of mind based on dissociation theory results in the conceptualization of 'relational consciousness'. In this view the organized self-like structure of the unconscious does not have a rigid boundary with the conscious and the relationship between the conscious and unconscious is organized based on the relational context in which the individual is living.

The cornerstone of dissociation theory since the time of the earliest research studies in this field is hypnosis. Historically, the pioneering researchers of this field such as Pierre Janet (1859-1947) and later Ernest Hilgard (1904-2001) conducted many studies on hypnosis (Cardeña, 2014). Like other dissociative experiences, hypnosis is a complex phenomenon and attempts to explain hypnotic phenomena only at a psychological level or in terms of brain mechanisms have failed. Recently, some researchers have developed sociocognitive theories of hypnosis in which there is an emphasis on the interpersonal, relational and contextual aspects of hypnotic experience (Lynn, Kirsch, & Hallquist, 2008). Hypnosis is of particular interest because it is an experience in which interpersonal interactions can result in a profound change in perception and behaviour. The microsociological study of hypnosis can shed new light on some aspects of the mechanisms of the emergence of the phenomenological experience of the social agent and the development of self in social interactions. In Chapter 6, hypnosis will be considered and explored from this point of view.

One of the important experiences seen in dissociative phenomena such as hypnosis and automatic writing is the sense of involuntariness and automatic behaviour (Cardena, 1994; Kihlstrom, 1999). This notion is well connected to one of the most influential theories to explain the relationship between the structure and agency, namely Bourdieu's theory of practice. Central to this theory is the concept of habitus. The aim of Bourdieu in developing this concept was to explain the continuity of subjectivity and objectivity in the social world. Together with the two other main concepts of capital and field, he set out to show how past experiences of the individual in a certain social position are sedimented in the individual's body and provide the necessary tools to act in different situations without the need for conscious planning. Bourdieu does not deny the possibility of creativity and

novelty in the actions of social agents but believes that the agent's habitus results in regulated improvisations in their conducting everyday life. In spite of that, some critics believe that habitus theory is deterministic and others find that some of its assumptions are contradictory (Chandler, 2013; Crossley, 2001a). Chandler (2013) claims that one of the main reasons for these confusions and perhaps misunderstandings is that Bourdieu has not provided a satisfactory social psychological basis for his theoretical framework. Attempts have been made to clarify the social psychological mechanisms present behind the formation of habitus (Lizardo, 2004, 2007, 2009). The research findings in the field of dissociation and psychological automatism could further clarify some aspects of this theory and provide a better understanding of the concept of habitus. An in depth analysis of this notion will be made in Chapter 4.

In their theorization of agency, Emirbayer and Mische (1998) describe the quality of consciousness that they describe in agentic social engagements as being compatible with a dissociative theory of mind. In the first instance they emphasize the fact that agency, like consciousness, is always relational; the person always has agency towards something or somebody. They consider three main elements for agency: the iterative, projective and practical evaluative elements. In the iterative element the emphasis is on the repetitive and recurring nature of the routine life and the reactivation of the patterns of action and behaviour at the time of encountering the familiar situations of daily life. In describing the internal structure of iteration they distinguish three sub-elements which are selective attention, recognition of type and categorical location. They explain that 'at any given point in the flow of transactions, social actors are able to focus attention upon only a small area of reality (p. 979)'. Drawing on the Schutzian phenomenological sociology (Schutz, 1967) they argue that at any particular time there is only a small vivid and clear field of knowledge which is surrounded by margins of vagueness and ambiguity. The direction of attention and its changes are determined by the system of relevancies which is the result of biographical histories and past collective experiences (p.979). This conception is similar to the above discussion about everyday (normative) dissociative experiences in which attention and the direction of the field of consciousness is regulated by the sociocultural context.

Relational psychoanalysts have found the concept of dissociation useful for development of a theoretical framework to explain the dynamics of interaction in an interpersonal encounter. Although their main aim has been to theorize the dynamics of



interactions in a psychoanalytic session, many of their formulations can be generalized to other daily relationships as well. Bromberg (2009) believes dissociation is needed for a flexible relationship between different self-states that a person inhabits in his or her daily life and the use of normal dissociation provides the freedom for engagement in continuously shifting life contexts. Dissociation is an adaptive mental functioning that allows the person to adopt a sub-personality appropriate for a special situation. The healthy mind has the ability of 'standing in spaces' (Bromberg, 1996), meaning that it is able to stand between different realities without losing any of them or being able to have the feeling of oneness while retaining those many realities as well.

To further improve this conception, psychoanalytic and cognitive science researcher Wilma Bucci (1997, 2001, 2002, 2007, 2011) has developed a model to explain the interactions between body and mind and the role of dissociation and self reflection in formation and maintenance of self and communication. In this model which is called 'multiple code theory' (2007, pp. 169–174), she has categorized the codes used in communication into symbolic and subsymbolic ones. The subsymbolic codes come from the motoric, visceral and sensory systems such as sensations, smells, voices and colours. The symbolic codes could be verbal or non-verbal. The nonverbal system is composed of images and pictorial symbols. The subsymbolic and non-verbal symbols are common between human and other species but the verbal system is recent and unique to human beings. Subsymbolic systems (motoric, sensory and visceral processes) usually operate outside conscious awareness and this makes it possible that several parallel processes function simultaneously, but it is also possible to control them consciously. The subsymbolic thought system has its roots in the body and sensory system and has a key role in emotional experience and communication in the form of the person's own experiences of feeling and emotions in the body. The corporeal memory of skills such as skiing and driving are part of this system. The subsymbolic codes could be experienced at the conscious and/or unconscious level. These codes could be translated to other codes in symbolic systems: for example, a feeling in the body could induce a picture in the individual's imagination or give rise to a verbal expression of that feeling. Symbols may be translated into subsymbolic codes induce feelings and emotions. It is not always possible to translate an experience from one coding system to another. For example, a person is sometimes unable to find words to describe an emotional experience or to describe what is seen in a dream. In this manner these different systems of codes are

connected to each other by referential process and maintain the consciousness and the sense of self but the process of translation from one system to the other is not always perfect. As will be shown later, these formulations could provide a better picture of self and identity formation for social theory.

### **Self and dynamics of identity formation**

As Calhoun (1995, p. 44) states, the problem of the majority of modern social theories is that they implicitly assume that an individual inhabits a single social world at a time. In other words, they believe in a unitary internal world for the individual which cannot be divided or fragmented. Evidence does not support this idea but rather supports the fact that there is a continuous tension in the internal world of the individual. In these theories the human described 'inhabits multiple worlds simultaneously and even to grow as a person by the ability to maintain oneself in connection to all of them (p. xix)'. As mentioned, relational psychoanalysts are aware of this fact and have tried to consider it in their theories; but also, outside psychoanalysis different theorists have tried to theorize this conflict of the internal life. For example, drawing on the works of Dostoyevsky, Mikhail Bakhtin (1973) has tried to display this tension. The different voices of a character or in a broader view, the voices of the different characters which are, each, one of the self states of the writer, depict the complexity of the psychic life. In American pragmatism inner tension is known and well elaborated. Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914) described the internal dialogue especially between the self at the present moment or 'I' and the self in the future or 'you'. William James (1842-1910) also speaks about internal conversation but he describes it as the dialogue between self at present moment ('I') and the self that has been shaped in the past ('me') (Aron, 2000; Barker, 2005; Rafieian, 2012). George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) speaks specifically about the possibility dissociation of personality in which the unitary self of the person becomes fragmented in to its components which 'respectively correspond to different aspects of the social process in which the person is involved, and within which his complete or unitary self has arisen' (Mead, 1934, pp. 143-144). He also points to the conversation between self at the present moment or 'I' and the self shaped in the past or 'me'. In his view, 'me' is formed thorough the developmental process of internalization of the 'other'. More recently, Hermans (1996, 2001, 2003) has tried to put these different theories together and develop the dialogical self theory. He describes the internal structure of the individual as the 'society of mind' in which different voices are in dialogue and the self comes out of and is shaped and reshaped by this

ongoing dialogue. In modern sociology, Margaret Archer (2003; 2010) has tried to incorporate the pragmatists' view on internal conversation in her social theory. She considers internal dialogue to be the main tool by which people shape themselves and reshape the social world, and reflexivity to be the mechanism which modulates the individual's social behaviour.

Freud's aim in making his theories was to explain the roots of conflicts in the internal life of human beings. Attempts have been made to use Freudian psychoanalysis as a basis for developing a conception of self and identity in social theory, but some scholars find that problematic. Frosh and Baraitser (2008) argue that Freudian psychoanalysis is infant centred, and the structures discussed are mainly formed in early development and have a static nature. Also as mentioned, overemphasis on the instinctual drives and the biological component of the individual forms a distorted picture of human mind. Although paying attention to unconscious phenomena can enrich the understanding of social life, the Freudian unconscious is preformed and too static to accommodate the dynamics of identity formation. As Hollan (2000) observes, assumptions about the structure and formation of the mind and the ways in which it interacts with culture and society are basic issues for conceptualization of the sociocultural world. Relational psychoanalysts draw a constructivist picture of the mind. In their view, the individual actively constructs their consciousness of the world around and only a fraction of the input from the world is used for this construction. It means that a significant amount of the data received remains unformulated and/or outside the individual's conscious awareness. In the social world, it is the interpersonal relationships that determine the contents of consciousness and it is the real or imaginary person or object in the relational space of the individual that determines what is thought about. The individual's consciousness is constructed by selected data coming from their engagements with the environment in the relational context while he or she remains unconscious to the rest.

As psychoanalyst Aron (1996, p.17) states, the pioneers of relational psychoanalysis were more interested in the term 'relational' over 'interpersonal' because the latter confines the mechanisms involved in the formation and development of the mind's structure to external interactions with other people. Instead, in their view, relationships with internal imaginary others or objects are important, as well as interactions with external subjects. Relational psychoanalysts do not deny the importance of conflict in individual social conduct but instead of seeking its origins in biological drives they

conceptualize it as relational in both the intrapersonal and interpersonal sense. In this view, the individual freely floats between internal and external dialogue. In a conversation with an 'other', there are times at which the person is engaged with this external real 'other' and other times at which he or she has become dissociated from the external environment and is in dialogue with an internal imaginary 'other'. In any of these engagements, the person is absorbed in the dialogue and dissociated from the rest and remains unconscious of a significant amount of the information received. Consequently, the experience is the assemblage of different bits and pieces which come together one after the other.

Drawing on Hermans' dialogical self theory with its emphasis on a Bakhtinian approach, Burkitt (2010a) describes the process of transformation of the self during self-other interaction similar to the above formulation. He argues that there is an 'I for myself' which is different from the image of me in the mind of the other or the 'I for the other'. In a dialogue the person is continuously trying to clarify the other's image of her or himself. Hence, there is a repetitive switch between inner speech or imagination and conversation with the other. He explains:

In any joint activity, then, we can constantly switch between micro-dialogues and interpersonal interchange, because we exist as "I for myself," "I for others," and there are "others for me." Indeed, we may experience this simultaneously while engaged with others in dialogue, being constantly aware of our own feelings or how we might be appearing to others, while they will be forming impressions of us, just as we are of them (p.314, 315).

In a similar manner Calhoun (1995) explains that identity is always 'fragmented, contradictory and incomplete' (p.199). In the process of constructing national identity, he remarks, although the illusion of continuity is always present, forgetting and historical distortions and errors are routine. Because of that, any historical study could be a threat to national identity (p. 235). He also notes that this form of discontinuity and forgetting is seen in all levels of identity politics and constitution and at the personal level, identity is constructed by highlighting some events and ignoring or even forgetting others according to the context of interpersonal relationships in which they are happening. In the context of cultural studies, Hollan (2000) argues that as the subjectivity, consciousness and self-states of people living in the same cultural context are different and each individual internalizes

cultural events in a unique way, the same events can have different meanings and significance for different people.

In addition to the notion of self and identity formation, the other issue that is important in this context is the place of the body and emotions in modern social theory. Recently, a group of sociologists have paid attention to the missing place of the body and emotions in social theory and are trying to develop theories in which the role of embodied social agents is well defined (Crossley, 2001b; Shilling, 1999; Stets, 2010; Turner, 2009; Williams & Bendelow, 1996; Williams, 1998). These new theories encompass a variety of issues such as the philosophical underpinning of the mind-body relationship and criticisms of dualistic assumptions (Crossley, 2001b), incorporating affects and feelings into social theory (Williams & Bendelow, 1996), formulating embodied theories of agency (Shilling, 1999) and transcending mind-body dualism in the sociology of health and illness (Bendelow & Williams, 1995; Bendelow, 2010; Williams, 2006). In this context, Calhoun (1995, p. 33) criticizes modern social theories for being ignorant of the importance of social practice and the embodied nature of knowledge in their formulations of social interactions and identity construction. For example, he finds the Habermasian theory of communicative action (Habermas, 1984, 1987) too cognitive. The social agent in this theory inhabits a single horizon of experience, is disembodied and characteristics like gender, race and the historical context are not considered. Also, the self in this theory is predefined and already shaped and formed when the subject enters the social interaction. These critical views have been echoed more recently in the works of others such as Susen (2011) and Gardiner (2004). Susen argues that Habermas ignores the fact that the permeation of the power relations in the public sphere is similar to the society as a whole. Hence the dominant discourse of the public sphere is mainly in favour of the interests of the most powerful groups in the society which is usually the ‘discourses of educated, wealthy, mostly white, and predominantly male elites (p.53).’ He also believes that Habermas’ theory of the public sphere is gender-blind, overly rationalistic and promotes a universalistic view of public interest which means that it fails to consider the diversity and multiplicity of public spheres, which are present at the same time and compete with each other. Gardiner (2004) also expresses similar views and finds his approach as excessively cognitivist and believe that Habermas ‘fails to grasp adequately the significance of the embodied, situational and dialogical elements of everyday human life (p. 30).’ As an

alternative, Gradiner thinks that the Bakhtinian dialogical model is preferable and is better able to explain the relationship between public and private worlds.

In terms of the effects of psychoanalysis on the development of his theories, Habermas's interest in Freud's ideas has different aspects. Although he is a critic of Freud's view of psychoanalysis, in *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1972) he still makes use of Freudian psychoanalysis to develop his theory. There he criticizes Freud for his 'scientific misunderstanding' in considering psychoanalysis to be a natural science and instead argues that knowledge produced in psychoanalysis is the result of using a hermeneutic and interpretive method. In his view, self-reflection is the core of psychoanalysis and it is an activity that cannot be done without the help of the other (Bocock, 1991; Clarke, 2006). The problem with the Habermasian conception is that, although he pays attention to the interpretive and hermeneutic nature of psychoanalysis, he uses Freudian unconscious in his theory-making, which deals mainly with memories of childhood and events that have happened in early life. Because of that, he is unable to develop a fluid conception of self and identity formation and his theory does not consider the dynamics of ongoing unconscious in peoples' interactions in everyday life. The alternative view, as Calhoun (1995) notes, is that dialogue in social context is an embodied practice which cannot be reduced to discourse and any understanding is the result of mutual engagement in a common social practice and is identity altering (p. 218).

This alternative view corresponds well to the model developed by relational psychoanalyst Donnel Stern (Holmes, 2011; Stern, 2009). Taking the concept of understanding from the Gadamerian tradition, Stern believes that the goal of a psychoanalytic session is to reach a 'fusion of horizons' and it is only in this situation that the client feels understood. This understanding is not just an intellectual activity in nature, but a process in which both declarative (facts and events) and procedural (bodily and skills) memories are involved. It is a verbal and non-verbal interaction that ends up in a situation in which both participants can express as 'being on the same wave length', 'getting the message of me' or 'understanding where I am coming from' (Holmes, 2011, p. 306). To him, psychopathology is primarily the result of dissociation and not repression. Although he acknowledges the presence of normative dissociation as the mechanism for trafficking between self-states, he believes that in the presence of severe conflict in the relational network some aspects of self can be regarded as 'not-me' and placed out of the reach of referential processes. The relational space between client and therapist provides

an opportunity for ‘what one has refused to think about’ (Stern, 2003, p. 844) to be reflected upon and take shape. Summarizing Stern’s view, Holmes (2011, p. 312) states that in a psychoanalytic session, ‘through mutual enactments, latent meanings – “unformulated experience” becomes embodied and therefore potentially accessible to reflection. Stern sees the origins of meaning as an unfolding ‘continuous emergent process’.

Perhaps the theoretical framework of Wilma Bucci is better able to clarify the dynamics of interactions in this context. As discussed, relational psychoanalysts explain that by normative dissociation, an individual can shift from one self state to the other and have creative engagements with the world and make it possible for the person to inhabit and live in several social worlds. As mentioned, Bucci believes that translation of codes between three basic coding systems is the key mechanism in interpersonal communications and maintenance of the sense of self. In the context of emotional communication, Bucci (2001, 2011) focuses on the embodied experience of emotions in interpersonal relationships. Based on the evidence coming from cognitive science she explains that ‘conscious processing is the tip of the psychic iceberg. Virtually all storage of information in long-term memory, and virtually all types of information may be stored and processed outside of the focus of awareness, in verbal and nonverbal modalities’ (Bucci, 2001, p. 46). From a developmental perspective, she uses the concept of ‘memory schema’ to explain the emotional communication process. Memory schemas are durable patterns of memory which are developed in the course of repeated interactions with others especially primary caretakers. Subsymbolic processes have a key role in the development of a special kind of memory schema which she calls emotional schema, which are basic to the organization of all memory schemas and the organization of the self. The important difference between emotional schemas and other memory schemas is that the subsymbolic components, namely sensory, somatic, and motoric representations and processes, are their basic elements and they constitute the affective core of these schemas. The affective core of the emotional schema is activated during an interpersonal interaction and provides a basis for the formation of new memories of people, places and events. The translation of codes happens according to the relational context in which the person is engaged and only the group of codes which is relevant to that context is represented to the individual’s consciousness. She or he will remain unconscious to other codes registered. Also the translation process is not always perfect and it is not always easy to translate these

subsymbolic codes and non verbal symbols into verbal symbols. For example, it is not always possible for individuals to describe what they are feeling inside or the pictures they are seeing in their imagination. The pathology occurs when the affective core of a painful emotional schema remains active and it is not possible for the patient to give meaning to it or to translate it into verbal symbols. In the relational context, emotional communication occurs both in conscious verbal form and unconscious sensory and motoric forms like in body gestures, muscular twitches, and facial expressions. During a therapeutic session the subsymbolic system of the therapist is activated in response to the emotional communication of the client. In this situation the therapist experiences something but does not know what it really is. In time it becomes possible for the therapist to translate and express this unknown experience verbally, either directly or by mediation of images (dreams or mental imaginary), and help the client to give meaning to her or his unformulated internal experience. In an interpersonal encounter, all these conscious and unconscious data contribute to the formation of the individual's total impression. Attention just selects a series of these inputs and assembles them to make the phenomenal conscious experience.

Putting Stern's and Bucci's concepts together makes it possible to understand how relational psychoanalysts describe the dynamics of interactions in psychoanalytic contexts. They both emphasize the role of the therapist in helping the client to give meaning to unformulated experiences, the subsymbolic and pictorial symbols that form in the internal world of the individual as a result of her or his interactions with the world around. But can these formulations be generalized to explain the social interactions of the people in everyday life as well? Perhaps it might be possible to generalize some of the assumptions described to develop a picture of interpersonal relationships in everyday life. In a daily social encounter, an affective core is activated according to the relational context and the translation of codes in coding systems makes the communication possible. Not only does the person remain unconscious to a significant amount of information registered during the interaction, but also the process of translation is imperfect and a part of emotional and embodied experience remains unformulated and no meaning can be assigned to them by translating them to verbal codes. It is appropriate to consider criticisms of Habermasian theory here (Calhoun, 1995; Gardiner, 2004; Susen, 2011). As mentioned, Calhoun believes that Habermas posits unitary internal world for the individual which does not allow for a fragmentary and non-homogenous account of life, and consequently his theory



also defines a unitary public sphere. In contrast, Calhoun believes that there is not only one public sphere but multiple public spheres. For example, he argues that a particular concern like the problem of domestic violence is a real issue for women and best understood from a woman's standpoint. Consequently, a woman can only benefit from speaking about her emotional burden and phenomenal experience of violence to people who have a shared experience because these events are meaningful and real concerns in the context of their everyday life (p. 182). It is therefore impossible to think about a unitary public sphere in which all the concerns of citizens can be addressed and discussed. In this view, each individual in the society has unformulated experiences, experiences at subsymbolic and nonverbal symbolic levels, that have not been translated to verbal code and have had no meaning assigned to them. The engagement of the person in a common social practice within a public sphere allows some of these unformulated experiences to take shape and new aspects of self and identity to be constructed in this process.

Up to this stage the process of self and identity formation has been depicted from the perspective of relational psychoanalysis and the place of concepts such as self-states and dissociation in this context has been shown. It is possible to think of parallels between the process of shifting between self-states and taking different roles in the dramaturgical theory of Erving Goffman as well as Judith Butler's theory of performativity. Here these two conceptualizations will be briefly compared.

### **Self states, Erving Goffman's dramaturgy and Judith Butler's performativity**

Different theorists such as Erving Goffman (1992), Victor Turner (1974, 1986) and Judith Butler (1988, 1990) have found performance to be a useful tool for describing interpersonal interaction. Although they have all used the same metaphor, there are important differences in the way that they conceptualize social interaction. Here I focus on the theories of Goffman and Butler and compare their ideas about self, identity and microsocial dynamics with the concepts discussed above.

In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1992) Goffman develops the idea that everyday life is like a stage on which the person acts like a performer. Based on this formulation he meticulously describes different components of this real life performance and analyzes the role of these components in the process of social interaction. In terms of the belief in the role the person is playing, he argues that the more the individual believes in the role they are taking the better they can convince their audience about the reality of the part they are playing. In time and under ideal conditions, the conception of a role could

become a part of the person's personality. Considering this special situation in which the person is totally convinced that the role they are taking is the one and the only reality, they can come to become their own audience. He explains:

... He comes to be performer and observer of the same show. Presumably he introjects or incorporates the standards he attempts to maintain in the presence of others so that even in their absence his conscience requires him to act in a socially proper way. In these cases it will have been necessary for the individual in his performing capacity to conceal from himself in his audience capacity the discreditable facts that he has had to learn about the performance; in everyday terms, there will be things he knows, or has known, that he will not be able to tell himself. This intricate manoeuvre of self-delusion constantly occurs; psychoanalysts have provided us with beautiful field data of this kind, under the headings of repression and dissociation. Perhaps here we have a source of what has been called 'self-distantiation', namely, that process by which a person comes to feel estranged from himself (pp.86, 87).

Here Goffman is trying to explain the psychological mechanism underlying the process of role taking in a social context. He points to the fact that the person consciously or unconsciously conceals some aspects of the self and reveals others in daily life interactions and the self is reshaped according to the relational context in which he or she has been engaged. Also in its most extreme form, 'self-distantiation' could be compared with pathological dissociation in a person in which a part of the personality becomes dissociated and not accessible to referential processes which would allow it to be incorporated into the whole.

In the context of gender studies, Judith Butler defines a different version of role theory to explain the process of identity formation. She criticizes Goffman's view in which the subject possesses a self and comes to the social world to take roles. Instead she believes that the self is defined by the very process of dramatizing and enacting the roles imposed by social and cultural convictions (Butler, 1988). To make a clear distinction between two conceptions, she calls the former performance which presumes a subject and, the latter, performativity which 'contests the very notion of the subject' (Butler, 1996, p. 112). Drawing on the Foucauldian approach and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of body, she argues that the body is an historical idea which is not composed only of concrete materiality. Instead, the body is a kind of materiality which has the possibility of being

reshaped by social and cultural meaning. The identity is formed when the individual becomes repeatedly engaged in a set of sociocultural rituals and the body by its nature, has the flexibility to enact the meanings related to these rituals. Accordingly, she observes that gender becomes consolidated in the body through repeated enactments of the roles that are dictated to the person by the sociocultural context (Butler, 1988; McKinlay, 2010). As discussed, relational psychoanalysts do not accept the centrality of instinctual drives which is seen in Freudian theory. Similarly, here Butler contests the corporeal essentialism which is seen in gender conceptualizations and regards the relational context as the key element in the formation of gender identity in everyday life.

In spite of the differences between the theories of Butler and Goffman, there are some important assumptions which are common to both which can be compared with the ideas derived from relational psychoanalysis. First, corresponding to the approach of the relational tradition, both Goffman and Butler consider the relational context to be the key element in the formation and reformation of social identity. Although Butler criticizes Goffman for supposing the presence of a self before entering the social drama, he was clearly aware of the ever present internal conflict of the person and the fluidity of identity in social interaction. The other issue is the role of body in their theories. Goffman considers the properties such as posture, speech pattern, bodily gestures and facial expressions to be sign vehicles which are crucial in the course of interaction (Goffman, 1992, p. 34). In a deeper sense, Butler pays attention to the especial flexibility of body that makes the enactment of meaning possible and makes it capable of taking a new shape according to the meaning which is assigned to it in a sufficient period of time. Clearly, different self states can develop in a person as there are different relational contexts available for them to become engaged with in daily life. To describe this notion in the terminology of relational psychoanalysis, different self-states or personalities of a person develop in different relational contexts and a self-state or personality could be defined as: ‘a group of interconnected psychological and bodily- systems of signs which function together for a certain period of time.’ (Rafieian, 2012, p. 86). According to the social context in which the person is involved, a self-state or a personality is presented which will undergo change when a shift in the context occurs. Discussing the situation in which a person can come from one social performance to a different one Goffman explains:

By proper scheduling of one’s performances, it is possible not only to keep one’s audiences separated from each other (by appearing before them in different

front regions or sequentially in the same region) but also to allow a few moments in between performances so as to extricate oneself psychologically and physically from one's personal front, while taking on another (Goffman, 1992, p. 138).

In this description, psychological and physical extrication from the personal front could well be compared with shifting from one self-state to another. In fact, in Goffman's conception, the totality of the body-mind system of the individual is involved in social performance. This notion has been often ignored in social theory, resulting in misunderstanding and a misconception of social performance as a kind of faking which renders inappropriate the use of theatre as an analogy in social sciences (Võsu, 2012). It follows that using terms such as dissociation and self-states can better describe what happens in everyday life.

## **Conclusion**

For the individual living the modern life there is a high probability of encountering different social and cultural contexts and becoming engaged with diverse practices and activities. Mobility and information technology have brought people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds together and there are more opportunities for intercultural dialogues. It is easier to become familiar with other people's traditions and beliefs. In this context, there is a renewed interest in the concepts of self and identity in social sciences.

In this Chapter, drawing on the assumptions of relational psychoanalysts, current cognitive science and modern social theory, I tried to develop a broader and more dynamic conception of the unconscious which may be more compatible with the dynamics of self formation and the politics of identity in modern life. From the view point of relational psychoanalysts, the individual remain unconscious to and dissociated from a significant amount of registered data in her or his engagements with the (social) world and normative dissociation is considered as an adaptive tool that makes the transition from one engagement to the other possible. In addition, the embodied experience of feelings and emotions and also the pictorial symbols of imagination provide a source of knowledge that cannot be always translated into a meaningful narrative in the context of a person's life. In this perspective, unconscious is not limited to the repressed; it is much wider and its boundaries encompass all dissociated experiences. Dissociation provides the ability to shift from one social world to another and in each engagement there is an opportunity for the person to assign meaning to some of the unformulated experiences in the unconscious and develop new aspects of his or her identity. As I have shown, this conception can be taken

further to develop some of the best available theories of the self, public and private interaction – such as role theory and the theory of public sphere. New findings in related disciplines such as anthropology, social and cognitive psychology and social neuroscience are further clarifying the obscure aspects of the complex dynamics of agent-society interactions.

A non-pathologizing conception of dissociation provides us with a framework in which multiplicity of self and fluidity of identity can be better explained and a better formulation of individual behaviour in the globalized social world can be developed on the basis of this framework.

## Chapter 4: Habitus and Psychological Automatism

Pierre Bourdieu is one of the most influential and most controversial sociologists of the final quarter of the twentieth century. One of the important aspects of his career is that although sociology for him was a distinct discipline with its own intellectual autonomy, he also made an impact across a number of disciplines and influenced scholars in different subjects such as anthropology, marketing, geography and psychology (Silva & Warde, 2010).

In social theory, Bourdieu was not satisfied with the available descriptions of the relationship between individual and society when he developed his theory of practice. In fact, there were two background influences in this respect. One was the individualism and voluntarism of philosophies such as Sartrean existentialism which allows an excessive freedom for the subject, and the other was the approach of theories such as structuralism and social physics which offer a deterministic conceptualization of social practice and deny any competent and active agency. He tried to develop a new theory and to transcend the dichotomy of individual and society (Crossley, 2001a). For this purpose, he developed a number of key concepts such as field, capital and habitus which are closely interconnected and are the basis for the design of his theories. In this context, habitus has often raised controversy and has not been clear as the other elements. The aim here is to shed more light on the nature Bourdieu's theories, especially the concept of habitus, using research findings about psychological automatism. First the concept of habitus is considered briefly.

## **The concept of habitus**

Habitus is one of the key concepts of Bourdieu's theory of practice which, together with the concept of field, is central to his aim to transcend subjectivism and objectivism. In fact in his theory, he tried to explain the dynamic of interactions between the agent's socialized body and the sociocultural world. As Swartz puts it, the central question for Bourdieu in formulating his theory of practice is 'how does action follow regular statistical patterns without being the product of obedience to rules, norms or conscious intention'? (Swartz, 1997, p. 95).

In his book *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977) he defines the concept of habitus to address this problem. This concept helps to explain how individuals in the society internalize structure during the process of socialization and reproduce it again via their action. In this view, habitus is a set of internalized structures which originates from external structure and produce the behaviour of the individual in his or her interaction with the environment. Later, in another work (Bourdieu, 1990) he defines the habitus as:

Systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor (p. 53).

Bourdieu observes that society is governed by rules and regularities and essentially the aim of sociologists is to find out these rules and regularities. On the other hand, the development of these regularities is not possible if all actions and behaviours of people are based on their arbitrary choices. Hence there should be mechanisms installed in the social agent that regulate their practice in coordination with the existing social structure. These mechanisms provide the ability for the agent's mind-body system to become organised according to the present social structure ('structured structures') and also for the structure to be reproduced via the practice of the agent throughout their life ('structuring structure'). This generator and organizer of behaviour inside the agent acts in a manner whereby there is no need for 'conscious aiming' and also no need for (conscious) 'obedience to rules'. In other words, this structure inside the individual should work at the unconscious level.

In fact, Bourdieu tries to explain that how the structure is passed from one generation to the next through time and also how agents have an active role in the process of this reproduction. As Wacquant (2006) observes, habitus is both the product of the structure and the producer of it. He also points that:

Habitus is also a principle of *both social continuity and discontinuity*: continuity because it stores social forces into the individual organism and transports them across time and space; discontinuity because it can be modified through the acquisition of new dispositions and because it can trigger innovation whenever it encounters a social setting discrepant with the setting from which it issues (268). The process of socialization has a critical role in the development of the self in the individual. Among others who interact with the child during his or her development parents are the most important. Through early development, the child internalizes gestures, emotions, feelings and concepts and the self becomes developed. In fact as Wiley (2003) explains, when the infant comes to the world, she or he has no identity and self. In spite of that, parents treat him or her like a person who has self. In this manner Wiley considers the self as a self-fulfilling prophecy because parents treat the child like a person who already has a self and ultimately he or she achieves it. In other words they act like the midwife who assists at the birth. The midwife helps to bring the baby's body into the world and the parents or primary care givers help to bring the self into the social world.

The process of internalization does not finish at any point in the life of the individual. It is via this process that social facts and rules become meaningful for the person. Each person comes to the world in a family that belongs to a social class and the social relationships of that family, the schedule of daily activities and even hobbies and entertainments are defined in this framework. In Bourdieu's view, the child grows up in a field that provides certain positions (Wacquant, 2006). These positions are repeated in routine life again and again. As Wacquant (2006) explains:

In lieu of the naive relation between the individual and society, then, Bourdieu substitutes the *constructed relationship between habitus and field(s)*, that is, between "history incarnate in bodies" as dispositions and "history objectified in things" in the form of systems of positions. The crucial part of this equation is "relationship between" because neither habitus nor field has the capacity unilaterally to determine social action. It takes the *meeting* of disposition and position, the



correspondence (or disjuncture) between mental structures and social structures, to generate practice (269, italics original).

The family in which the child is born is in interaction with a network of people which (generally) belongs to a social class with similar habits, tastes and concepts. The child internalizes these in his or her mind and body and when encountering a social cue, the related task is performed semi-consciously and without need for thinking and deliberation.

In a chapter titled 'Is a disinterested act possible?' Bourdieu (1998) explains that, in contrast to what is often assumed in sociology, the practice of an agent in social context is not directed to a goal in the sense of a rationale or an economic or financial outcome. Instead, people in social context become involved in different 'games' in various social fields like the scientific, business and artistic fields and the agents involved have the feel for that game. He uses the term 'pre-perceptive anticipation' to describe the feeling of the way that the agent practices in a certain field. He then explains:

They [pre-perceptive anticipations] are the fact of the habitus as a feel for the game. Having the feel for the game is having the game under the skin; it is to master in a practical way the future of the game; it is to have a sense of the history of the game. While the bad player is always off tempo always too early or too late the good player is the one who anticipates, who is ahead of the game. (pp. 80, 81)

Using the example of a game player Bourdieu tries to clarify the meaning of habitus and in this manner brings the body into his theory. It is the coordination between the habitus and the field here that is very important here. As Bourdieu (1998) explains:

it [the habitus] is a socialized body, a structured body, a body which has incorporated the immanent structures of a world or of a particular sector of that world - a field – and which structures the perception of that world as well as action in that world.... [W]hen the embodied structures and the objective structures are in agreement, when perception is constructed according to the structures of what is perceived, everything seems obvious and goes without saying" (p. 81).

In developing his theory, Bourdieu stresses the bodily and cognitive underpinning of practice and tries to explain the internalization of social norms and rules without missing the possibility of creativity and innovative action. In other words, he considers the individual habitus as the primary and fundamental grammar necessary for generating innovative forms of practice. In this view the individual's action in the social context is

described as regulated improvisation (Crossley, 2011). In spite of Bourdieu's efforts to develop a theory of practice in which the agentic power of the social actor is appreciated, his theory has been found by some social theorists to be deterministic. For example, Jenkins (1982) in his paper which is a critical examination of Bourdieu's theory claims:

...the habitus is the source of "objective" practices but is itself a set of "subjective" generative principles, produced by the "objective" structures which frame social life. In essence, it must be recognised that such a model constitutes no more than another form of determination in the last instance (p. 272).

This criticism has been repeated in the works of others as well (Alexander, 1995; King, 2000). Some theorists believe that the theory of habitus is not deterministic in essence and the reason that sociologists find it deterministic is because its social and cognitive psychological underpinnings are not well understood or they are not well clarified (Lizardo, 2004). In this context Lizardo (2004, 2007, 2009) has tried to shed light on the psychological aspects of Bourdieu's theory in which he finds antecedents in the works of the French philosopher and developmental psychologist Jean Piaget. Here this influence is briefly overviewed.

### **Psychological origins of habitus**

Lizardo (2009) believes that the emergence of Bourdieu's theory of practice can be seen as a part of an effort by certain theorists to develop a 'practice turn' in modern sociology. This turn was a reaction to the overemphasis of dominant social theories of this era - such as the Parsonian system of social action - on norms and values and a process of socialization considered to be the transmitter of these norms and values through explicit and conscious processes of verbalization and linguistic expression. In other words, culture was considered to be a repertoire of propositional and semantic facts transferred from one generation to the other. In contrast, the alternative approach conceptualizes the process of enculturation as primarily embodied and based on unconscious mechanisms. One important characteristic of Bourdieu in developing his theories was his notion of openness to interdisciplinarity and the fact that he did not hesitate to bring facts from and cite the findings of other relevant fields such as psychology and anthropology. Lizardo (2004, 2009) claims that in the development of his habitus theory Bourdieu was specially inspired by the works of Piaget, especially his genetic structuralism. In contrast to some interpreters who attribute the origins of habitus to Merleau-Ponty's embodied phenomenology, Lizardo (2004, p. 379) finds the roots of the concept of habitus mainly in Piagetian theories and

states that this influence has not been well appreciated and explored by social theorists. In this context, Piaget's ideas about knowledge and knowledge acquisition are particularly relevant. To Piaget (1971), knowledge essentially refers to cognitive structures which are continuously transformed in interactions with the environment and help to transform the environment as well. The process of knowledge acquisition is always social and rooted in practice and he rejects the conceptualizations which describe this process as purely cognitive, symbolic and linguistic. Based on his research in developmental psychology and his studies of children interacting with the world he considers different steps in cognition. The first step is gathering data through the sensory apparatus in the form of perceptual stimuli. The second step is the transformation of these data into abstract representations of the world which are called schemata or schemas. They are not composed only of sensory data which are stored in a memory with a short lifespan. Instead they are transferred into body memory which is much more durable. In the last step, the child begins an action sequence with the aim of responding to or transforming the environmental representation constructed on the basis of the sensory stimuli received. In fact Bourdieu borrowed the term bodily schema from Piaget, and his definition of habitus as being both structuring structure and structured structure is compatible with Piaget's theory of the process of knowledge acquisition in interaction with the surrounding world. In this perspective because understanding and constructing the world happens simultaneously and there is a restructuring of both cognitive structure and the environment in the same process, there is always compatibility between the agent and the environment in which he or she is developing (Lizardo, 2004).

The other two concepts of Piaget's theory which are relevant here are assimilation and accommodation. To manage the interaction with the environment, the individual uses the repertoire of knowledge accumulated from the past which is composed of the set of useful competences, both categorical and procedural in nature. These competences help to shape the data received from the perceptual system and they are also reshaped by these environmental stimuli. Piaget defines the process of application of action schema to novel situations as assimilation. It means that the person is able to apply a specific action schema in a similar situation and ultimately categorize all the situations in which that action schema can be applied in one category. The agent is also able to modify an action schema to be applicable to a new situation and Piaget refers to this as accommodation. In this view the cognitive development of the child takes place through continuous assimilation and

accommodation of the pre-existing knowledge structure to make them useful and applicable to the needs emerging in new situations (Lizardo, 2004, pp. 386–388). This view clarifies two important characteristics of habitus as described by Bourdieu. First, the presence of a subjective harmony and objective coordination between the internal and external world of the agent and second, the fact that practical actions originate from the repository of motor schema which are stored in the cognitive unconscious of the individual. Furthermore, this model makes it easier to understand the meaning of structured improvisation as a description of the way that people apply their agency in the social context.

Lizardo (2007, 2009) has also tried to further elaborate the psychological basis of habitus using the findings of modern neuroscience and neuropsychology. Recent findings in the neurophysiology of practice revive the importance of unconscious imitation in transmission of practical knowledge needed for the social conduct of the individuals. Discovery of the mirror neurons and their function in macaque monkeys was important in this context. Mirror neurons are located in the pre-motor cortex of the brain and are particularly interesting for neuroscientists because they fire not only when the animal performs a particular function, but also when it is observing that function performed by other embodied agents (other animals or the experimenter). Lizardo (2009, p. 719) argues that the function of motor neurons provides satisfactory neuropsychological mechanisms by which the actors in the social context become attuned to others at a subconscious embodied level. Through a process called ‘embodied simulation’, unconscious imitation of the actions of others is triggered by observation of their actions which results in the formation of shared ‘bodily automatisms’ and leads to shared social practices.

Although Lizardo’s attempts to provide the psychological underpinnings for habitus have clarified some of the ambiguous aspects of this theory, there are other aspects that need more contemplation. Considering the fact that in Bourdieu’s theory the process of enculturation and learning practical skills of social life happens through subconscious simulation and imitation, it can explain the reproduction of structure and culture very well. But in terms of the transformation of structure, his theory does not provide a robust explanation and perhaps it is the reason behind the fact that some theorists find his theory deterministic. To clarify this aspect I think focusing on the notion of psychological automatism and the psychological basis of automatic behaviour would be helpful. To show this, first I will provide a short historical overview of the emergence of the concept of

automatism in different disciplines and the ensuing controversies. Finally, the connection between these findings and concepts and Bourdieu's theory of practice will be discussed and critically assessed.

### **Psychological automatism**

Historically, automatism was first described by physiologists. They were familiar with the reflex arc present in the spinal cord. This kind of reflex was first described by Descartes and its presence was later proved by physiological studies. Some physiologists like Thomas Laycock (1812–1876) postulated that this kind of reflex could be present in higher levels of the nervous system and might not be confined to the spinal cord. Later, another physiologist William Carpenter (1813–1885) spoke about 'unconscious cerebration' and the activities which are done by the cerebrum without consciousness. Thomas Huxley (1825–1895) was the other commentator on this issue in the field of physiology. He believed that as humans are the result of evolution and animals can be considered as automata, human volition can be attributed to molecular changes in the brain. After him there was an ongoing debate about this issue and many further commentaries (Crabtree, 2003).

In psychology, it was Frederic W. H. Myers (1843–1901) who dealt with the concept of automatism. He stated that a physiological approach is not sufficient to explain automaticity in humans and there is a need for a psychological perspective on the subject. In his view, the controversy surrounding the issue of automatism among physiologists originated from the wrong assumption that there is only one consciousness in the individual. Instead he believed that there are multiple centres of consciousness in a person and that, apart from the ordinary consciousness, there is another centre of consciousness (or several) that works inside the person and 'is unconscious only in relation to ordinary everyday consciousness' (Crabtree, 2003).

The French physician and psychologist Pierre Janet (1859-1947) provided the empirical evidences for the idea of psychological automatism. He was interested in the treatment of hysteric patients and to for this purpose did many studies on hypnosis because he believed that the mechanisms involved in the formation of hysteria and hypnotic phenomena are the same. He also conducted experiments with automatic writing and further developed the concept of automatism in collaboration with Myers. The phenomenon of automatism and mechanisms involved in the formation of automatic behaviour were further explored by other psychologists like Max Dessoir (1867-1947),

Alfred Binet (1859-1911), Boris Sidis (1867-1923), Theodore Flournoy (1854-1920), Morton Prince (1854–1929), and William James (1842-1910) and these works have been the basis for today's traumatology and dynamic psychiatry (Crabtree, 2003; van der Hart & Horst, 1989).

The emergence of reductionistic tendencies in twentieth century resulted in the change of direction in psychology sciences like other branches of science. There was an attempt in biological sciences to explain life phenomena by biochemical and physical explanation and psychology dismissed the internal life and consciousness as a topic of study, trying and explain psychological phenomena only by concepts such as reflexes and associations. The foundations of this project can be traced back to the works of Jacques Loeb (1859–1924) in biology and physiology and his concept of animal tropism which considered animal behaviour to be mainly a combination of reflexes, the studies of Russian physiologist and psychologist Ivan P. Pavlov (1849–1936) on conditional reflexes and Darwinism (Greenspan & Baars, 2005). In America in the 1920s and 1930s these ideas provided the background for the development of a movement in psychology by John B. Watson (1878 to 1958) and Burrhus Frederic Skinner (1904–1990) called Radical Behaviourism, which dominated American psychology for four to five decades. In their view the private mental and subjective conscious states of the individual are irrelevant for the study of behaviour and only public, physical and observable events are useful for this goal. The studies conducted by behaviourists were mainly on animals and in their view there is continuity between animal and human behaviour. Human and nonhuman behaviour were considered as a single topic for research and the results of their studies on non human models were extrapolated to human behaviour (Mandler, 2002). With a model of stimulus and response, behaviour was defined as a mechanistic and reflexive reaction to environmental changes and the ideal form of psychology was an experimental science without concepts such as motivation, intention and purposive action. Skinner, who actually used and affirmed the term 'radical behaviourism' did not believe in free will and autonomy and denied the possibility of self-responsible decision making. Apart from scientific work, he also tried to express his views about a utopian society in books *Walden Two* (1948) and *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (1971). His utopian society was governed by behaviour modification technologies such as operant conditioning (Wieser & Sluneko, 2014). The ambitions of the radical behaviourists remained unfulfilled because of their failure to answer important questions in psychology and gradually research interest in

concepts such as consciousness, motivation and agency revived in the discipline (Mandler, 2002).

Arboleda-Florez (2002) discusses the modern state of the concept of automatism in three fields: psychiatry, neurology and law. In psychiatry, automatism happens when the ego loses its mastery over the internal environment and this is seen in conditions like schizophrenia. It has also been described as the activation of thoughts or acts without the control of will. These thoughts or acts may not be registered in the memory and there is a discontinuation of the history of mental life when automaticity happens. This automatism should be differentiated from the habits of everyday life which are done in a subconscious manner. In neurology, epilepsy is the disorder related to automatism. In an epileptic seizure the stereotypic, non-purposeful movements happen for a few minutes. This may accompany the sense of depersonalization and derealisation. In law, automatism is 'a term used to describe unconscious, involuntary behaviour, the state of an individual who, although capable of action, is not conscious of what he is doing' (p. 574). In other words, from a legal point of view when a behaviour is considered to be automatic it means that it was an unconscious and involuntary act and it is a complete defence. If it is proved that the crime has been committed in a state of sane automatism the result will be a full acquittal of the person. Committing a crime in a severe emotional crisis is one of the examples of the type of case that might be proven to be psychological automatism.

In summary, under special conditions like brain pathology, psychopathology or severe emotional crisis, it is possible for a behaviour, action or movement to become activated automatically, and escape from the control of the conscious will. In these situations it seems that the activated action is dissociated from the mental life of the person and no memory is registered of that event.

After this background introduction automatism can now be considered in the context of modern research in cognitive and social psychology and its findings which are relevant to this thesis. In psychology, the definition of an automatic behaviour remains a controversial issue (as will be discussed later). Bargh and Chartrand (1999) consider four criteria for any conscious process. The mental act is considered conscious if the subject is aware of it, intends it in the sense that it begins with an act of will, effort is required for its fulfilment, and is controllable in the sense that he or she is able to terminate it at any stage before accomplishment. They state that there are types of behaviour that lack these criteria and which can be considered as automatic.

Research in social psychology shows that apart from pathological conditions, automaticity is present in the everyday life of normal people and plays a role in the interactions of the individual with the environment, especially in social interaction. The assumption underlying the issue of automaticity is that behaviour is controlled by a hierarchy of interactive sensory motor schemas. There is a central control system or supervisory attentional system at the top. The duty of this controller is to select and bias the acts that should be done. This central controller is the consciousness or intentionality located at the highest level of the hierarchy. At a lower level the source schemas are placed. A source schema activates and monitors a series of component schemas. Each component schema could be a source schema itself and composed of a subgroup of component schema. For example, driving to a familiar place can be considered as a source schema which is composed of component schemas like turning to the right and left at specific places and each of them in turn could be a source schema itself composed of components like adjustments in speed and direction which should be monitored when they are activated. The consequence of this hierarchal model of control of action is that much of our behaviour in our daily life is done automatically. The source schemas are activated by social and environmental cues and once they become activated they are fulfilled with little or no need for attention. This capacity of the cognitive system is adaptive because it allows us to become engaged in multiple tasks at the same time. It is possible to devote attention to one task while another task is performed automatically. However, the possibility of failure and mistakes is increased with this mode of control. Experiences of these kinds of failure or slips are familiar in our daily lives. For example, driving to a familiar address instead of the actual destination or calling a routine number instead of the one we aimed for are some instances of confusion in automatic behaviour (Kirsch & Lynn, 1997).

Social psychologists have conducted much empirical research to show the nature of automatic behaviour and its consequences for social life. Here these findings are briefly reviewed.

### **Psychological unconscious and social life**

Recent studies in cognitive and social psychology have revealed the neural bases of automatic and subconscious social actions. In fact, brain research has shown that in general there are two pathways, one for action and the other for consciousness, both present in the brain and capable in many instances of becoming dissociated. For example, in studies on patients with damage in the brain area related to the recognition of visual objects, it has



been shown that although these patients cannot recognize the object placed in their visual field, they can reach it when they are asked to grasp it. This separation between recognition and action pathways has also been shown to occur in healthy subjects in different studies. It means that it might be possible for the person to manipulate an object or do a task without being attentively engaged with it (Morsella & Bargh, 2011). From another perspective, as a person has a limited attentional capacity and there are many instances in daily life in which the person should perform multiple tasks, it is possible for a task to be done without attentional resources. These kinds of tasks are generally repetitive ones which we do again and again in our lives. They become automatic after a while, in the sense that, once activated, they are performed in a determined manner and with minimal effort and attention. In social life, a process in the action pathway could become activated by a cue from the environment and a task could be fulfilled without the need for conscious awareness (Kihlstrom, 2008).

The way that an automatic behaviour becomes activated by an environmental cue (a physical cue like an object, colour, smell and etc. or a social one like a gesture or a facial expression) is another issue that has been explored in social psychology (Ferguson & Bargh, 2004; Kihlstrom, 2008; Morsella & Bargh, 2011). In fact the activation of these behaviours takes place by a process which is called priming. In priming, a stimulus activates the memory of a lot of semantically and lexically related information. In other words in priming people infer more information from the information given than it is physically present. For example, when the word bird is said to a person other words like trees, wing and nest might be remembered and concepts like flying and singing may come to mind (Ferguson & Bargh, 2004). Jacobs and Sack (2012) define priming as ‘the facilitative or inhibitory effect on the behavioural response to a stimulus by a previously presented stimulus’ (p. 226). It has been shown that priming can change the behaviour of a social actor in different ways. On many occasions people are not aware of this effect of priming on their behaviour. For example, when stimuli associated with ‘library’ were presented to people they were more quiet afterwards, when people were primed with hostility they became more aggressive and when words associated with the stereotype of ‘old’ were presented, the subjects walked more slowly (Morsella & Bargh, 2011). Similarly, many studies has shown that priming people with words and objects associated with lexically and semantically related concepts can change their behaviour accordingly (Ferguson & Bargh, 2004).

Apart from the stimuli that the people are aware of, there are other stimuli which are perceived but remain below the threshold of people's awareness. These are called subconscious stimuli and although they cannot be captured by the conscious awareness, they exert their effect on the behaviour and this has been corroborated by research. In subconscious perception the stimulus does not reach beyond the threshold of consciousness but is processed by the sensory system. These stimuli may be of different kinds: visual, auditory or verbal. In fact, visual stimuli when presented in a period of time between 200 to 500 milliseconds (depending on their character) are not registered consciously by the subject but can still be processed. Similarly, auditory stimuli can be processed in spite of not being perceived consciously (Bob, 2003, Berlin, 2011). In addition, interestingly these stimuli have the ability to prime a behaviour in a person. Different studies have shown this so called subconscious priming in people. They have demonstrated that subliminal priming by words and digits can exert influences on the perceptual, lexical and semantic level (Berlin, 2011). For example, in 1957 the effect of subliminal perception was shown in a study on an advertisement by a private market researcher James Vicary. During a movie, two subliminal verbal messages were presented which were 'drink Coca-Cola' and 'eat popcorn', which resulted in a significant increase in the sale of Coca-Cola and popcorn (Bob, 2008; Wortman, Loftus, & Marshall, 1992). Although this study was never published and there is some controversy over his claims, some recent scientific studies have supported the idea that subliminal advertisements can influence the customer choices at least under special circumstances (Karremans, Stroebe, & Claus, 2006; Strahan, Spencer, & Zanna, 2002).

In daily interpersonal social interactions priming could be seen in the form of automatic imitation. People automatically and unconsciously imitate the posture, facial and emotional expression and the speaking style of others. This unconscious imitation of the behaviour of other acts as a social glue by increasing the attraction and bonding between two interacting people (Morsella & Bargh, 2011).

As shown, there are many supraliminal and subliminal stimuli present in our surroundings that shape our behaviour in our daily lives. These findings have urged some social psychologists to suggest a deterministic interpretation and deny the presence of free will. But there are others who reject this understanding and there is a controversy regarding this as it will be shown briefly.

## **Automatism, agency and determinism**

As Kihlstrom (2008) states, in social psychology, there was a significant rise in the number of articles about automaticity after 1989, showing that it gained popularity among researchers in this field. Originally, actions performed in daily life were considered to be a mixture of conscious and unconscious behaviour. In his contribution, Bargh (1989) discusses the nature of control over automatic behaviours:

If by 'control' over responses is meant the *ability* to override preconsciously suggested choices, then the answer is that one *can* exert such control in most cases.... But if by 'control' is meant the actual *exercise* of that ability, then the question remains open.... My own hunch is that control over automatic processes is not usually exercised.... [I]t would appear that only the illusion of full control is possible, as the actual formation of a judgment or decision.... A fitting metaphor for the influence of automatic input on judgment, decisions, and behaviour is that of the ambitious royal advisor upon whom a relatively weak king relies heavily for wisdom and guidance. (pp. 39-40)

As time elapsed, social psychologists working in this field gave more and more weight to the role of automaticity in social life, up to the point where they have recently claimed that there is practically no real choice or free will in our daily activities and our behaviours are determined by social and environmental cues. It is practically a revival of behaviourism in a new guise. Bargh and Ferguson (2000) write:

[T]he failure of behaviourism in no way constituted the failure of determinism. We... present the case for the determinism of higher mental processes by reviewing the evidence showing that these processes, as well as complex forms of social behaviour over time, can occur automatically, triggered by environmental events and without an intervening act of conscious will or subsequent conscious guidance. (p. 926)

In summary, they claim that we are unconscious automatons in our lives and the sense of wilfulness is just an illusion. Kihlstrom (2008) advances several reasons that show this claim is not justified. First, the theoretical basis for the concept of automaticity is becoming unravelled. For example, the attentional capacity of an individual is not limited and even if it were, the limits are very wide. Also, the repetition of a task does not make it completely effortless. In addition he points to the context in which the concept of automaticity has developed. The emergence of this concept was in parallel to the formation

of theories like balance theory, cognitive consistency theory, cognitive algebra, and attribution theory. In these theories social interactions are performed by a rational, conscious agent. It can be assumed that the emphasis on automaticity was a reaction to these perspectives in social psychology.

It can be concluded that, in psychology, like social theory, there is an ongoing debate between the advocates of deterministic theories such as structuralism and others who defend non deterministic views such as critical realists. Social psychologists who claim that we are totally controlled by social and environmental cues via automatism in our daily lives have arguably gone too far, but it is not deniable –as their research has shown– that automaticity has an important role in our social existence. As discussed in the first part of this chapter, there is a controversy about the concept of habitus in Bourdieu's theory and it is believed that its ambiguities originate from an inadequate understanding of the social psychological underpinnings of habitus. In the next section the concept of automatism is discussed in the context of Bourdieu's theory and his concept of habitus in particular.

### **Habitus and psychological automatism**

As Camic (1986) argues, in spite of the fact that habit has had an important place in the theories of classical social theorists such as Durkheim and Weber it is a neglected concept in modern social theory. Historically, one reason behind this was the emergence of behaviourism early in the twentieth century in which – as discussed – habitual action was defined as biological reflex and a mindless and mechanical reaction to social and environmental cues. To develop a discipline distinct and independent from psychology in which behaviourism was the dominant approach, sociologists excised the term from the vocabulary of sociology. For example, in Parsonian sociology, the concepts are redefined in a way that, in contrast to the classical theories, denies habit as not an important and useful term for sociologists. There are other theorists and philosophers such as Merleau-Ponty (1962; 1965) and pragmatists like Dewey (1958, 1988) who have tried to offer a non-mechanical version of habit different from the one suggested by behaviourists. Bourdieu's theory of habitus is one of the influential and well known alternatives. Bourdieu has tried to reconceptualise the concept of habit and instead of considering it as a mechanical and repetitive response to the environment and he develops a concept of habitus as dexterity which 'captures purposive and intelligent dispositions which belong to the repertoire of practical reason' (Crossley, 2013, p. 145).

As mentioned, in Bourdieu's theory, habitus and field are two key concepts and the individual is considered as an embodied agent in continuous interaction with different sociocultural environments, or fields as he calls them. By developing the habitus theory, he has tried to emphasize the fact that the structure penetrates into the agent's body. For this purpose he has taken the Piagetian theory as a basis and, using his concept of body schema, explains that sociocultural norms and regularities are internalized subconsciously, without the need for conscious intention and effort. This inscription of cultural memory into the body allows the reproduction of social structure by agents without the need for their conscious involvement in this process. As discussed, researchers in the field of psychological automatism have provided the empirical evidence for these kinds of activity and findings in the field of social neuroscience have clarified the related pathways in the central nervous system. These data support the idea that it is possible for two or more cognitive processes to function in parallel and one or more of them can proceed without the need for attention and conscious deliberation. But as mentioned there are only certain situations such as psychopathologies like schizophrenia, neurological conditions like seizure and extreme emotional crisis in which an automatic process becomes inaccessible to conscious monitoring, independent and completely dissociated from other cognitive faculties of the individual. In spite of that there are some social psychologists who believe in a new version of behaviourism, claiming that all behaviours of the individual are shaped by the social environment and denying the presence of active agency and conscious and free decision making. As explained above, there is an ongoing debate in social and cognitive psychology about this issue.

In social theory, the controversy about habitus, I think, has similar origins. While some theorists believe that habitus draws a oversocialized picture of man in which the agent is shaped and constrained by the structure penetrating in to the body, others find it realistic, non deterministic and adequate for explaining the mutual interactions of the individual and society. The key notion here is the relationship between the socialized body and the individual consciousness. As Crossley (2001a, p. 94) notes, considering the individual the same as the habitus results in determinism and to avoid this, the possibility of control and mastery over the habitus should be appreciated. In other words, although social life is facilitated by automatic behaviours and their presence allows the consciousness to be engaged with more important activities, the individual is not a collection of automatic behaviours and these are continuously monitored and their control

can be overtaken by the supervisory attentional system of healthy people in their routine daily life.

In this respect, as Bottero (2010) states, there is a notion in Bourdieu's theory which is not well addressed and it is the concept of reflexivity. She argues that Bourdieu emphasizes the dispositional nature of identity formation and the process of reflexivity in its wide range of meanings 'from the routine monitoring of conduct; to the need for agents to provide accounts of their actions to themselves, and others; to more "self-conscious" habitual activity generated by particular types or contexts of interaction (p.12)' is not adequately explored. In fact, Bourdieu speaks about reflexivity in his theory but he believes that the function of reflexivity is limited to the times of 'crises' namely those occasions in which there is a mismatch between habitus and field and in which individual reflexively contemplates the situation. He explains:

The lines of action suggested by habitus may very well be accompanied by a strategic calculation of costs and benefits, which tends to carry out at a conscious level the operations that habitus carries out in its own way. Times of crises, in which the routine adjustment of subjective and objective structures is brutally disrupted, constitute a class of circumstances when indeed "rational choice" may take over, at least among those agents who are in a position to be rational (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 131).

Critics believe that this minimal place of reflexivity in Bourdieu's theory is reductive and he assumes too much compatibility between habitus and field which does not correspond to the everyday life reality (Bottero, 2010). On the other hand, the relationship of the individual with the social structure is determined by his or her complex interactions with the matrix of intersubjectivity which is much more complex than the field conceptualized in Bourdieu's theory. In Bottero's (2010, p. 14) words:

Bourdieu's tendency to emphasize the correspondence between social structures and mental structures presents practice as the outcome of the relations between habitus and objective conditions, rather than the outcome of negotiated relations between variously disposed individuals. As a result, Bourdieu tends to overstate the uniformity of group dispositions in generating joint practice, and to understate the adjustments, constraints, and calls to account, that all joint practice necessitates.

Accordingly, there is a need for a formulation in which not only the ability of the agents for reflexive monitoring of their practice is appreciated, but also the place of reflexivity in interactions between people is better defined. In her social theory, Margaret Archer (2000, 2003, 2010b; 2007) has devoted a central role to reflexivity. In her view, people in the society have personal projects and it is in the context of pursuing these projects that structural constraints and enablements become meaningful. In other words, there are no constraints and enablements per se but it is only in relation to a goal that the structural order and properties become constraining or enabling (Archer, 2003, p. 5). In this context, reflexivity is the main tool for planning and designing projects to attain their goals and it is the mediator between structure and agency. Drawing on the ideas of pragmatists, especially Charles Sanders Peirce, Archer identifies ‘internal conversation’ as the form of reflexivity that people use to fulfil their personal projects (Archer, 2010a). Consequently, providing a better place for reflexivity results in a fluid conceptualization of identity and a better understanding of the power of social agents to transform their own identities and the social structure as well. In the Bourdieusian framework, identity formation is basically a dispositional, involuntary and pre-reflective process and reflexivity is just an exception that only happens at the times of mismatch between habitus and the field (Bottero, 2010). In contrast, in the Archerian approach, people have reflexive engagement throughout their lives and it is the main tool by which they can pursue their goals and address their ultimate concerns (Archer, 2003). As Archer notes, the discovery of the importance of ‘internal conversation’ by Peirce as the most important mode of reflexivity in the life of the social agent was a big step forward in the philosophy of social sciences. Internal conversation is an activity that begins in the early years of life and continues throughout life. This internal dialogical process is crucial for the ability of the individual for critical evaluation of the situation, planning and pursuing the personal project. The relationship between habitus and the reflexivity is an unresolved issue in modern social theory and the question is whether it is possible to develop a theoretical framework in which habitus and reflexivity have their own place. There have been attempts to reconcile or hybridize habitus and reflexivity (Elder-Vass, 2007; Fleetwood, 2008; Sayer, 2010). But here my aim is to discuss the possibility of the presence of habitus and reflexivity together from the perspective of the above discussion regarding psychological automatism.

The above presentation shows that psychological research supports the presence of various forms of psychological automatism in social life. As a significant proportion of the activities that the individual is engaged with consist of routine tasks that are repeated on a daily basis, automatism is a helpful mechanism by which these tasks are usually fulfilled without any problem. The advantage of the presence of automatism is that the use of attentional resources for performing these tasks is minimal. As mentioned, the reflexive process of internal conversation is always functional and automatism helps this process to carry on without interruption. The structure of the human cognitive system is such that it is possible for more than one process to be active at the same time and it is an adaptive mechanism. This allows the individual to become engaged with internal conversation whenever it is needed without interrupting the routine activities of daily life. It means that on the occasions when it is necessary for the agent to 'sit back' and reflexively assess a situation, there is no need for the termination of the routine activity that she or he is engaged in. A classic example of this phenomenon is long distance driving. The experience of so called 'highway hypnosis (Butler, 2004) is common in this situation and in parallel to driving the person might become involved with internal conversation, daydreaming and other imaginative processes. Obviously, this mechanism is not perfect and sometimes fails. For example, a driver deeply involved with imagination may get to a routine destination instead of the one that he or she actually intended to reach. The other familiar experience is when during reading a text the mind becomes engaged with internal conversation and although the words are captured by the eyes and several sentences are read, the person ultimately does not grasp the meaning of the those sentences. But in general, habitus provides the necessary freedom for social agents to become internally involved and evaluate their actions and behaviours reflexively, mainly via internal conversation even at the times when they are busy with the activities of routine life. Only in the situation in which the habitus and field are fitting well is it possible for the individual to be reflexively involved because otherwise the attentional resources are needed to deal with the requirements of performing an external task. For instance, in the example of driving, it is not possible for a driver who is driving to a new place, needing to check signs and names, to become engaged with internal conversation. It should be noted here that the possibility of reflexive involvement during automatic and routine behaviours does not exclude reflexivity on occasions in which the person is involved with a non-routine activity. One important example is when the person is in dialogue with another.



Here there is a frequent shift between the dialogue with the other and internal dialogue. In other words, the flexibility of the cognitive system allows the internal and external movement of attentional resources but automatism provides further freedom by allowing the process of socialization and internalization of culture to proceed without interruption while reflexivity is taking place in parallel.

## **Conclusion**

Bourdieu's influential theory of practice has been widely debated and one of the most controversial concepts in his theory is habitus. As shown, Lizardo's attempts to uncover the psychological origins of habitus in Piaget's genetic structuralism have shed new light to this concept and the dynamics of enculturation and socialization of the embodied agent. Also the evidence he has brought from social neuroscience supports the importance of unconscious imitation and embodied simulation in transmission of social behaviour and culture from one generation to the next. But as seen, these data cannot adequately answer the claims of some critics of Bourdieu who believe that habitus theory is deterministic and does not appreciate the agency of people in their interactions with society. In this context, focusing on the underlying mechanisms of psychological automatism, it was shown that the structure of the human cognitive system is such that it is possible for two or more processes to function in parallel and one or more of them to function in an automatic manner with minimal need for conscious monitoring. In spite of that, the independence of an automatic behaviour is only partial, and complete dissociation of an automatic behaviour only happens in pathological conditions and especial situations of emotional overload. Although some social psychologists have proposed a new version of behaviourism in which the loop of reflex is placed at the cortical level, there are others who do not believe in the possibility of reducing all human behaviour to automatic behaviour. In fact, in social theory the avoidance by social theorists of the concept of habit originates from their fear of falling into a mechanical and mindless conceptualization of social behaviour. Regarding the concept of habitus, the main weakness of Bourdieu's formulation is that there is a limited place for reflexivity and in his view the individual becomes reflexive only when there is a misfit between habitus and field. As shown, in the Archerian approach, reflexivity in the form of internal conversation has a central place and is considered to be the main tool for people to fulfil their personal projects. In this context I have tried to show that psychological automatism is an adaptive mechanism in the human cognitive system that allows agents to remain reflexive at times when they are performing

the activities of routine life. Considering this, there are other aspects of the relationship of habitus and reflexivity needing more exploration. For example, according to the fact that habitus formation is an embodied process and internal conversation is discursive, how do they interact? And what are the other modes of reflexivity apart from internal conversation? These issues deserve to be the topic of further research in this field. The next chapter sets out to clarify some of the elements of this theoretical task.

## Chapter 5: Dissociation, reflexivity and habitus

Since the emergence of the discipline of sociology different theorists have tried to address one of the core problems, namely the relationship between structure and agency. In theorising the structure-agency relationship it is necessary to refer to the underlying mechanisms by which the agents act in the society. Considering that, stronger theories in about concepts such as mind, subjectivity and consciousness help the sociologists to better understand the dynamic of structure-agency relationship. As argued in the previous chapter, the habitus theory of Bourdieu (1977, 1990) builds on an understanding of practice in which the reproduction of structure is not the result of intentional and conscious actions of the people. Focusing on the unconscious embodied mechanisms of transmission of sociocultural repertoire he considers the possibility of formation of habitus through the agents' interactions with different fields (such as academic or political fields) and reproduction of both via this process (Swartz, 1997). Although the habitus theory was very well received by sociologists, some critics claim that it is deterministic and the agentic power of the individual is not adequately addressed (Crossley, 2001a; Jenkins, 1982; King, 2000). The other important concept is reflexivity. In theories of reflexivity the focus is on the power of individual for reflexive deliberation and conscious evaluation of the situation. Drawing on pragmatist theories, especially those in Peircean philosophy, Archer (2000, 2003) describes internal conversation as the most important mode of reflexivity. In her view, people use internal conversation to design projects to reach the goals defined according to their ultimate concerns in their lives. In contrast, Bourdieu devotes a minimal place to reflexivity and defines identity construction as mainly dispositional and the result of unconscious and unintentional interactions of habitus and field (Bottero, 2010). On the other hand, Archer (2010b) rejects the need to give place to habitus or habit in her theories and believes that it is possible to develop an adequate theory of the structure-agency

relationship without the need for the habitus concept. In this context, there are other theorists who believe that both habitus and reflexivity are necessary for a comprehensive formulation and who have made attempts to reconcile (Elder-Vass, 2007) or hybridize (Adams, 2006) them. In this chapter my aim is to show the usefulness of the concept of dissociation for providing a better understanding of the reflexivity and habitus relationship. First of all the place of the concept of reflexivity in modern sociology is briefly reviewed.

### **Theories of reflexivity in modern social theory**

American pragmatism is the important tradition in social philosophy in which the concept of reflexivity is well explored. The mode of reflexivity that pragmatists are particularly interested in is internal conversation. In fact, they assign a central role to inner speech in their theories of self but each exponent of pragmatism has his own conceptualization of this process. To Mead (1934) the self is evolved as a result of the dialogue between the 'I', the self in the present moment, and 'me' or the 'generalized other' which is the socialized aspect of the person that emerges through the person's interactions with the social world and is developed by internalization of the rules and norms of the society. To Peirce (1933, p. 421), the internal dialogue takes place between the 'I', the self in the present moment and the imagined self of the future or what he calls the 'you' (Wiley, 2006c). To develop a more comprehensive theory of self based on the process of internal conversation, Wiley (1994) has tried to merge the above mentioned theories and develop a triadic model of self development in which the self is formed in the process of the triadic dialogue between 'I', 'Me' and 'you'. In this model, self development encompasses all interactions of the self at the present moment with the self which has emerged through the all past encounters with the society, and the imaginary and emerging self of the future (Rafieian, 2012). This synthesis has been influential in social theory and can be considered as a productive development. For example, in a special issue of the *American Sociologist* journal devoted to his works, commenting on Wiley's model of self, Barker (2005) states:

Each and every human being, according to Wiley, has a self that is a reality sui generis and that exists in time. The notion of self is not just a label or a name. The self is a sociological reality. We experience our individual selves as a continuous stream of consciousness consisting of our sense of our "me," "I" and "you." That is, at any one moment the social agent is aware of his or her "me-I-you." The semiotic self is the self understood within the Pragmatist perspective

associated with Peirce and Mead. Mead contributed the theory of the “I” and the “me.” Peirce implicitly contributed the “I” and the “you.” The “you” in Peirce’s theory of the self is not the other human being but our own “mirror image.” It is a future “looking glass self.” That “you” can also be discussed as a “Thou.” Each of us has a sense of our past, present and future in the present moment. The reality of the self is that awareness, including the notion that the “I” is double-sided. On the one hand the “I” keeps changing, but on the other hand the “I” becomes a kind of solid, inner core of the self, an inner gyroscope, our core identity (p.188).

In this pragmatist view, reflexivity is an ever present process which has a key role in self development. Similarly Giddens (1990, 1991, 1992) appreciates the fact the reflexivity is important for self formation as we continuously monitor our actions and behaviours. He also believes that there is a strong connection between modernity and reflexivity. To him, the key to reflexivity is the nature of knowledge in the ever changing societies of late modernity. People constantly re-evaluate their personal lives and give order to them based on the way that they narrate their personal stories. In modernity, with the loss of the salience of tradition, the self also loses its unquestioned and solid context and today the self has become a ‘reflexive project – a more or less continuous interrogation of past, present and future (Giddens, 1992, p. 30)’. This viewpoint about the uncertainty in post-traditional societies and the role of reflexivity in shaping the self in modern world is shared by other theorists such as Ulrich Beck, Scott Lash (Beck et al., 1994) and Manuel Castells (1996, 1997).

As mentioned above, in his theories Bourdieu (1998, 1977, 1990) mainly emphasizes the unconscious and dispositional aspects of identity formation and uses the concepts of habitus and field to explain the ways in which social identity is constructed, cultural heritage is transmitted and structure is reproduced without the need for the conscious aiming of the agents. In his view, the agents become reflexive only at times of crisis in which there is a mismatch between the field and habitus. Consequently, reflexivity does not have a fundamental place in his theories about the relationship of structure and agency (Bottero, 2010).

In contrast to Bourdieu, Archer considers reflexivity to be central in defining the structure-agency relationship and she believes that reflexivity in the form of internal conversation plays a mediatory role between agency and structure. Regarding habitual and routine action, she does not see any need to give a significant place to these concepts in her

formulation and believes that all attempts at hybridization or reconciliation of reflexivity and habit(us) have failed to provide an acceptable framework (Archer, 2010b).

Here I focus on the relationship of habitus and reflexivity and the advantages and inadequacies of different theories in relation to these concepts.

### **Habitus, reflexivity and unconscious**

Critics of Archer believe that her emphasis on reflexivity is too great and does not correspond to the conduct of real agents in society. They state that ignoring habit and habitual action makes her theory of agency inadequate and the overemphasis on reflexivity results in a reductionist conceptualization of this concept (Akram, 2013). Archer's aim is to challenge the theories that consider the human subject as the product of social and structural forces and because of that, as Colapietro (2010) argues, she is fearful of reducing human agency to unconscious forces and repetition of habitual actions.

On the other hand, as mentioned, Bourdieu's approach is found to be deterministic because of his overemphasis on unconscious and dispositional aspects of identity construction the agents in his theories use their reflexive consciousness only at the times of crisis and not during their routine activities in everyday life. His critics claim that he has exaggerated the match between the habitus and field in daily life and the need for reflexive engagement is more than he has shown in his theories (Bottero, 2010; Jenkins, 1982; King, 2000).

As can be judged from the above discussion, the core notion here is the place of consciousness and the unconscious in theories about structure and agency relationship. In fact Giddens (1979) has appreciated this need and states:

... a conception of the unconscious is essential to social theory, even if the resultant schema I shall develop departs in some way from classical Freudian views. But the unconscious, of course, can only be explored in relation to the conscious: to the reflexive monitoring and rationalisation of conduct grounded in practical consciousness. We have a guard against a reductive theory of institutions in respect of the unconscious: that is, against a theory which, in seeking to connect the forms of social life to unconscious processes, fails to allow sufficient play to autonomous social forces. But we must also avoid a reductive theory of consciousness: that is, one which in emphasizing the role of the unconscious, is able to grasp the reflexive features of the action only as a pale cast of unconscious processes which really determine them (p. 58).

While he has tried to incorporate the unconscious into his general theory, he is aware of the inadequacy of the Freudian approach (Giddens, 1984, pp. 6–8) and in his formulation he borrows ideas from post-Freudian schools of psychoanalysis such as ego-psychology and object-relations theory (Groarke, 2002). In developing his approach he defines three basic elements in his conceptualisation of agency which are discursive consciousness; practical consciousness; and unconscious motives/cognition (Giddens, 1984, p. 7). The function of discursive consciousness is rationalisation of actions and it is about 'what agents are able to say about the conditions of their action' (Giddens, 1979, p. 57). Practical consciousness is the knowledge related to dexterity and competencies in doing practical things and he defines it as 'tacit knowledge that is skilfully applied in the enactment of courses of conduct, but which the actor is not able to formulate discursively' (Giddens, 1979, p. 57) as well as unconscious motives/cognition which he describes as 'those forms of cognition and impulsion which are either wholly repressed from consciousness or appear only in distorted form' (Giddens, 1984, pp. 4–5).

One advantage of Giddens' theory over the Archerian and Bourdieusian frameworks is that he has considered a place for unconscious motivations in his formulations. He has never focused on the details of the underlying mechanisms of repression and its function in the social life of the agents but drawing on Erik Erikson's stages of psychosexual development (Erikson, 1963, 1967, 1968) he has developed a theory of identity in which trust and security are core notions (Groarke, 2002). To him, security is 'the confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of the surrounding social and material environments of action' (Giddens, 1990, p. 92). Accordingly the continuity of social life and the presence of daily routines are crucial for providing social agents with the necessary sense of trust and security and removing anxiety from their lives (Giddens, 1984, pp. 60–64).

The concept of practical consciousness in Giddens' theory that refers to the agent's competency in applying skills and performing practical tasks is essentially similar to Bourdieu's habitus and his idea about the possibility of the embodiment of culture and structure (Akram, 2013). Basically in Giddens' view, reflexivity is the monitoring of social conduct and this capacity is defined as 'characteristically involved in a continuous manner with the flow of day-to-day conduct in the contexts of social activity' but he also appreciates that 'reflexivity operates only partly on a discursive level' (Giddens, 1984, p. xxii-xxiii). Although both Giddens and Bourdieu have their particular version of

reflexivity in their theories, they have failed to conceptualize personal agency with effective causal power. Here I consider this criticism in more depth.

Both Bourdieu and Giddens state that their aim in theorising is to transcend the structure and agency dualism or the subjectivism and objectivism dichotomy. Archer has coined the term 'central conflation' for the approach of these theorists and believes it to be a mistaken position. She, in contrast, defends the dualism of structure and agency and argues that in these theories, structure and agency are 'mutually constitutive' and consequently it is impossible to analyse their 'reciprocal influences' and impossible to separate the powers and properties of the practitioner from the forces and properties of the environment in which the practice is happening (Archer, 2000, p. 6). In other words, Archer believes the private internal world of the agent can function independently from the structure and internal conversation is the process through which this function operates. Hence, for Archer, internal conversation is 'genuinely interior, ontologically interior and causally efficacious' (Archer, 2003, p. 16).

Sawyer (2002) describes the theoretical framework of Giddens as a process ontology in which there is an inseparability of individual and society and compares it with Archer's emergentist theory in which the individual and society are distinct entities. He observes that although Giddens believes in the duality of individual and society, it does not solve the problem because it is only dualism that allows for analysis of interactions between the two. Commenting on the problem of this inseparability in structuration theory he states:

In structuration, there can be no individual experience that is not socially mediated; the self is purely sociological. Thus structuration rejects that action is motivated by internal intentions; intentions and reasons for actions are not properties of individuals but are 'instantiated in that activity'. In sum, structuration cannot explain specific instances of human behaviour because inseparability rejects explanations both in terms of internal motivation and in terms of structural influences (p.290).

He also points to the fact that even the researchers who believe in the inseparability of individual and society at the theoretical level, empirical research in practice takes a dualistic approach by analysing individual properties and considering them as characteristics independent of the forces and causal factors coming from the sociocultural world of the agent (Sawyer, 2002).



According to the above discussion, in the Archerian approach, reflexivity provides for the social agent a private internal subjective world which interacts with the sociocultural world. This private internal is developed through the interactions with other and with maturation and especially with formation of the internal conversation, the individual can have internal deliberations without the help of others and the reflexivity can take place independently from society. In this context, the important and critical function of reflexivity in the form of internal conversation is to address the agent's ultimate concerns and to design and refine their projects to reach their goals (Archer, 2003, pp. 40–41). In the following sections, I want to re-examine different aspects of reflexivity in the light of the theory of dissociative mind and also explore the dynamic of reflexivity and habitual action in this context.

### **Dissociative theory of mind**

As discussed in Chapter 3, studies of dissociative experiences –irrespective of whether they are normative or pathological – have shown the quality of consciousness in humans and have revealed that at a particular moment in time, consciousness and attentional resources are directed towards internal or external objects disconnected from other entities in the internal and/or external world of the individual. In the dissociative theory of mind there is also an emphasis on the natural tendency of different psychological faculties of individual to dissociate and an important role is given to the relational context and self referential processes in the integration and organization of these different psychological components. From a developmental point of view, proper communication with primary caregivers and healthy attachment in the early years of life are critical for development of self-referential mechanisms, and coherent and stable integration of psychological components. In view of that, insecure and disorganized attachment and problematic parent-infant interaction result in disruption in the development of the mechanisms needed to unify components of the self. Such individuals are predisposed to suffer from different mental problems, especially dissociative problems, in later life. Explaining the implications of new research findings about attachment for the dissociative theory of mind Liotti (2006) states:

The prevailing contemporary theories of neonatal consciousness suggest that in the self-organizing brain of newborn infants integrative processes that *tend* to create a unitary sense of self and later on a unitary self-representation are already operant, but only at the implicit, radically intersubjective level of mental processes.

During the first year of life, the self-organizing brain realizes such a tendency and yields a unitary self-representation only in securely attached infants and, to a lesser degree, in organized insecure attachments. In DA [disorganized attachment], the tendency to integrate multiple information into a unitary self-representation fails. This implies that a dissociative mind emerges, at the beginning of life, in conjunction with operations of the attachment system, not in moments of the infant-caregiver interactions that are regulated by a motivational system different from attachment. Dissociative phenomena never arise as a function of the only other inborn interpersonal system that, alternating with the attachment system, is active since the very beginning of life: the cooperative and intersubjective system regulating parent-infant play and proto-conversations (p.67).

In this view, the sense of self is the product of interpersonal interactions between infant and care givers. In the early stages, these interactions are in the form of non-linguistic and embodied communication which help the proper integration of various sensory data coming from various channels and the formation of the sense of unitary self (Liotti, 2006, p. 67). In later stages, with the development of language, the child internalizes the linguistic conversation with others and internal conversation is formed. This process takes place in the context of complex interactions of the individual with the social world in which dialogue with the other becomes internalized and results in the formation of inner speech. In fact this process which was described by Vygotsky (1986) begins in early childhood when children speak aloud to themselves until gradually this activity is performed silently. With the development of inner speech and engagement of the individual with different social contexts, related thoughts, emotions sensations and feelings are combined in each social context. With enough repetition of experience of that particular social context, they become organized in the form of a particular self state or personality. Different self states or personalities are connected with each other via self referential processes and internal conversation is the important tool for maintaining the dialogue between different self states. Normative dissociation is the necessary mechanism for a smooth shift from one self state to another (Bromberg, 1996; Rafieian, 2012). In fact, as discussed in the previous chapter, the adaptive organization of human cognitive and psychomotor system is such that it is possible for two or more processes to carry on at the same time and this allows the individual to be engaged with internal conversation while performing the routine activities of daily life. This mechanism is adaptive because the

routine activities can occur with minimal need for attention and concentration and the conscious resources can be devoted to internal conversation. This view of reflexivity in daily life is broader than the conceptualization of Giddens, as reflexivity in this sense – while it may include them – is not only limited to monitoring or commenting on the actions and behaviour done by the agent. It may also take the form of conversation between the I-you-me described above and perform the task of maintenance and management of the self of the person as a whole. It means that this kind of reflexivity at a meta level deals with the big picture of an individual's life in which the past experiences are a resource for the imagination of the future. It is not merely concerned with the activities that the person is engaged with at a limited period of time. This level of reflexivity which deals with agents' ultimate concerns and their personal projects is not explored by Giddens or other theorists who reject the dualism of subjectivity and objectivity. Archer believes that this lack of interest originates from their central conflationism (Archer, 2010a). She explains:

By definition, reflexive deliberation depends on maintaining a clear subjective–objective distinction. It can neither work nor be examined if there is any tendency to conflate the two by eliding the properties and powers pertaining to 'structure' and to 'agents'. Reflexivity depends upon a subject who has sufficient personal identity to know what he or she cares about and to design the 'projects' that they hope (fallibly) will realize their concerns within society. Equally, it depends upon the objectivity of their social circumstances, which, under their own (fallible) descriptions, will encourage them to follow one course of action rather than another. Deliberation consists in people evaluating their situations in the light of their concerns and evaluating their projects in the light of their circumstances. Any form of conflation fundamentally precludes examination of this interplay. It is submitted that the concept of 'institutionalized individualism' as the new structure of late modernity, could not be more conflationary in its clamping together of structure and agency (Archer, 2010a, p. 6).

In fact, the theoretical framework I am trying to develop in this project, provides the place for routine and habitual action which is missing in the Archerian theory. It is also compatible with Giddens' views about the necessity of routine life for providing security and confidence. Normally the agent performs the tasks of routine life with minimal need for attention and consciousness and is engaged in internal conversation in parallel. It is only in occasional situations of failure of a particular routine task that consciousness

should be directed towards the task to fix it; otherwise the resources of consciousness will be devoted to more important activities such as internal conversation. But if the person is placed in a situation in which the environment is totally unfamiliar, conscious resources should be used for performing the tasks of daily life and not used for reflexive maintenance of the self. This results in the failure to maintain a coherent self, threats to the integrity of identity, and formation of anxiety.

Regarding the nature of internal conversation, Archer finds the synthetic triadic pattern of me-I-You developed by Wiley helpful and adequate for encompassing different aspects of the self from past to future (Archer, 2010a). But drawing on the Vygotskian and Bakhtinian conceptualizations, Fernyhough (1996, pp. 51–53) explores the process of inner speech from a different perspective. He argues that from a developmental point of view, healthy interaction of the child with caregivers and others results in development of the dialogical mind. This results in the formation of higher mental functions which have certain characteristics. First of all, they incorporate different perspectives of reality which might be conflicting. These perspectives are not necessarily perceptual but could be ontological, axiological, or motivational. They are not necessary beliefs and are derived from the interaction of the child with others in a particular cultural system. The other notion is that the temporal order of external dialogue is not preserved in internal dialogue. As he explains: ‘The dialogical nature of the higher mental functions stems from their ability to accommodate a “simultaneous unity of difference” rather than from any necessary resemblance to the “give and take” of conversation’ (p.52). The dialogue in the mind is open-ended and continues throughout the life and the individual is always ready to incorporate a new voice in to his or her internal conversation. He claims that this openness of inner dialogue explains the proneness of the agent to be influenced by suggestions. He also observes that in its advanced form, the dialogical process of thinking is composed of abbreviated internal conversation or the interplay of different perspectives without the defined give and take structure of conversation. Development of the dialogical mind at this level results in the ability of the person to simultaneously adopt multiple orientations to reality (p. 52).

Emphasizing the critical role of care-givers in the development of a dialogic mind, Fernyhough argues that the ability to adopt multiple orientations toward reality develops at those times when care-givers collaborate in solving a problem and internalize a perspective on reality during external conversation. He uses the example of constructing a jigsaw

puzzle in which the parent teaches the child that the result should be identical to the model and the child internalizes this fact and uses it in similar cases in her or his internal conversation. In this manner, by drawing the child's attention to different aspects of the problem, the child gradually acquires the skill of taking alternative perspectives and gains the ability to apply this method to solve range of similar problems. In addition, Fernyhough provides evidence that supports the relationship between healthy attachment in early childhood and the proper development of a dialogic mind. This evidence shows that securely attached children perform better in different tasks that require dialogic thinking, where it is necessary to hold two conflicting orientations to reality at the same time.

Based on qualitative empirical research Archer (2003, 2007a) categorizes different modes of reflexivity and defines four different types of reflexivity, namely: communicative, autonomous, meta and fractured reflexivity. She defines these modes of reflexivity as follows. Communicative reflexivity is the mode of reflexivity in which 'internal conversations need to be confirmed and completed by others before they lead to action, thus fostering normative conventionalism'. Autonomous reflexivity is the mode of reflexivity in which 'internal conversations are self-contained, leading directly to action and characterised by instrumental rationality. Meta-reflexivity is the mode of reflexivity in which 'internal conversations critically evaluate previous inner dialogues and are critical about effective action in society, in promoting value rational action'. Fractured reflexivity is the mode of reflexivity in which 'internal conversations cannot lead to purposeful courses of action and only intensify personal distress and disorientation, leading (temporarily) to 'passive agents' (Archer, 2010a, p. 9).

Commenting on her empirical research about the relationship between different modes of reflexivity and social mobility Archer explains that 'The present study makes its contribution less in relation to the social origins than to the social consequences of endorsing a particular mode of reflexivity as the dominant one, particularly in defining subjects' trajectories of social mobility' (Archer, 2007, p. 97). This statement applies to her other empirical works as well as she has not explored the process of formation of reflexivity in early childhood. However, these different modes of reflexivity can be seen through the lens of developmental psychology and the concept of dialogic mind. From this perspective, the formation of each of these modes of reflexivity is the result of different levels of maturation of the dialogic mind and in the case of fractured reflexivity it could be

said that the dialogic mind has failed to develop properly and there is inadequacy in the establishment of self-referential mechanisms. In other words, in each mode the level of skills and the competency of the individual needed for elaboration of the problems is different. For example, engagement with meta-reflexivity in which the person ‘critically evaluates previous inner dialogues’ (Archer, 2010a, p. 9) requires higher mental ability compared with autonomous reflexivity. In this context, the critical role of care-givers in helping the child to develop these skills and abilities should not be ignored. One area of research related to this notion is intergenerational transmission of trauma in which the traumatic experiences of the parents are transmitted to the children. This process has been explored by researchers in the fields of Psychoanalysis (Bradfield, 2011; Bradfield, 2013; Brothers, 2014) and psychoanalytic sociology (Prager, 2003). In his research Bradfield (2011; 2013) has shown empirically that traumatic experiences in the parents result in disorganised and traumatic attachment between the child and primary caregivers, which leads to disruption in the development of the dialogical self and improper formation of reflexive mechanisms. The above discussion poses important theoretical and empirical questions. For instance, is it possible to prevent the transmission of trauma and help the children of a generation who experience traumatic events to develop dialogic mind? Or in the case of disruption in the development of dialogic mind, is it possible to take steps and use techniques at the personal or social levels to compensate the deficits and repair the defects in the dialogical and reflexive processes? These and similar questions are the topic of interdisciplinary research and need the collaboration of researchers from multiple fields.

The other related point worth considering in this context is the limits of internal conversation as a tool for being reflexive. Although internal conversation is important for mediation of agency, in some situations inner speech is not helpful and causes a problem. In fact, so called rumination, which is the intrusive and unwanted and uncontrolled repetition or intrusion of particular thoughts or voices is seen in psychopathologies. In a depressive patient, as Nolen-Hoeksema (2008) and her colleagues state, rumination appears in the form ‘of responding to distress that involves repetitively and passively focusing on symptoms of distress and on the possible causes and consequences of these symptoms (p.400). This activity not only does not help the person to solve the problem, but also can make the situation worse. In addition, it has been empirically shown that certain types of inner speech associated with proneness to auditory hallucinations and dissociation is the mediatory mechanism in this process (Alderson-Day et al., 2014). As a

consequence, the internal conversation can function as a tool for mediation of agency only if there is a healthy development of dialogical mind. Otherwise inner speech could be the producer and/or intensifier of psychopathology in the individual.

Even in the case that internal conversation is functioning optimally there are some aspects of practice which are located outside its territory. The Giddensian concept of ‘unintended consequences of action’ (Giddens, 1984, pp. 8–14) is helpful for exploring this notion. He argues that although agency means essentially that the individual is doing an action intentionally, sometimes that particular action has consequences which were not intended by the agent. These consequences may be recognized later and affect further courses of action or they might be the by-product of intentional action. For example, the consequence of speaking and writing English correctly by a native English person is a contribution to the reproduction of English language but it is not something that they originally intended and it is not considered in their internal conversations. As a result, although internal conversation is the mediator of agency and important in the reproduction and transformation of structure, there are certain consequences of actions which are not captured by internal conversation.

In the last section the relationship between internal conversation and practical consciousness will be explored. As mentioned, the concept of practical consciousness in Giddens’ theory is similar to habitus in Bourdieu’s theory. It is not possible to discursively express the embodied knowledge and practical skills needed for everyday life and this sort of knowledge is gained through practical engagement with the tasks of everyday life. But the question here is whether reflexivity in the form of internal conversation is independent from practical consciousness and, if not, what is the relationship between these two? Here I will try to address these questions.

### **Habitus and internal conversation**

In the first instance I think it is important again to focus on the developmental process of internalization of language and formation of internal conversation in early childhood. As Mead (1934, p. 156) states, in this period the child takes the role of others around and imitates the gestures of others in their role playings. At this primitive stage, the child takes the role of a person at one moment and speaks aloud in one character, and later takes another role and responds to the first character in the role of the other. Gradually, the child learns to have this kind of dialogue silently in his or her mind. Hence, internal conversation is an embodied process and it is not just voices talking in the head. New

findings in psychology support this idea. The evidence shows that in internal dialogue, like external conversation, there is a close relationship between speech musculature and respiratory movements and the pattern of breathing changes with the changes in emotional state of the person and the quality of inner speech is changed in coordination with those variations (Chapell, 1994). The involvement of speech musculature is such that one the methods of studying inner speech is to detect and measure the contractions in this group of muscles during this process (de Guerrero, 2005).

In a related discussion Holms (2010) criticises theories of reflexivity for their inadequacy in addressing emotions. In the case of Archer's theory, she argues that Archer admits that designing and defining a personal project which is done via a long-running internal conversation is based on emotions as the individual finds a certain project more attractive and worth pursuing. Archer emphasizes that ignoring emotion in this context is a serious error (Archer, 2003, pp. 101–102) but Holms believes that emotions have a more central role in shaping and reshaping the self and their role is not confined only to helping in defining the personal project. She points to the fact that emotions are embodied experiences and reflexivity should not be considered as a rational calculation of the value of our performance and the state of our relationship with other. Instead, she views reflexivity as being coloured and infused by feelings about our actions in the relational context of interaction with others. In a similar way Burkitt (2012) criticizes the Archer's theory of reflexivity and claims that although she states that emotions are critical for internal conversations and are key elements of internal life they are described mainly as commentaries on our concerns (Archer, 2004). He summarizes her view thus: 'So if we fail to live up to one of the ideals that rank highly in our order of concerns we feel bad or angry with ourselves, and if we fail to live up to a central tenet of our beliefs we may feel guilty (p.463)'. He believes that this perspective does not put emotions at the centre of reflexivity. In his alternative view, he sees the emotional engagements of people with others as the motivator of reflexivity in their private reflexive deliberations in which the voice and image of others are present. In other words, 'emotions are not only elements present but they are basis and motives of reflexivity (p. 469)'.

This view of internal conversation as an embodied process in which the voices are not disconnected from emotions, feeling and bodily experiences is also important for providing a better understanding of the relationship between internal conversation and habitus. Here I focus on this notion and try to clarify the way that these two interact.



Emphasizing the primacy of practice and embodiment, and the fact that thought and language are developed through embodied actions, Archer appreciates that there is a connection between discursive reflexivity and embodied practice (Archer, 2000, pp. 151–152) but as habitual action and its place is not well covered in her works she has failed to develop a satisfactory theory to explain the interactions between these two. Giddens (1979, p. 57) considers consciousness in both its discursive and practical forms and the fact that reflexivity can be present at both levels of consciousness in the form of continuous monitoring of actions (using practical consciousness) and in the form of commenting on and expressing what the agent is doing at the level of discursive consciousness. In his view, although it is possible for the agents to describe the conditions of their actions, the tacit knowledge and the embodied skills which belong to the category of practical consciousness cannot be formulated discursively. The problem of his theory is that he does not adequately explain the details of possible interactions between discursive and practical consciousness.

In their contribution, Noble and Watkins (2003) in a critical reading of Bourdieu's theory have tried to address this issue. They argue that the reason why habitus theory has been found to be deterministic is because Bourdieu has ignored the importance of consciousness. In a reaction to the cognitive bias of theories of his time he formulated a theory which overly relies on unconscious components of practice.

As noted in Chapter 4, the metaphor that Bourdieu frequently used to describe habitus is 'feeling for the game' and he was particularly interested in sports and discussed the relationship between sports and social class. In *Distinction* (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 20) sport is considered to be a form of capital which has a symbolic function in defining people's social class. Taking this issue, Noble and Watkins have focused on the process of training in athletics and tried to clarify the function of consciousness in this context. They argue that to develop the player's feel for the game and before the individual becomes a masterful player there is a long process of training and a lot of time devoted to practice. To reinforce his theory, Bourdieu just focuses on the experience of the expert player in his formulation and overlooks the process of practice and the function of consciousness in discursive and practical forms in the process of learning and training. Regarding the interactions of coach and trainee Bourdieu claims that the trainer speaks directly to the body (2000, p. 144) and believes that the body could not be thought by theoretical discourse (1977, p. 19). Noble and Watkins (2003, p. 528) criticize this view and state that

it is a distorted picture of what happens in reality. As they observe, in sports training, the discursive dimension has an important role and the activities such as explanations demonstrations and giving feedback all rely on discursive consciousness. In the process of learning a new technique, it is necessary to deconstruct it in to simple components and reconstruct it again to synthesise coherent and effective play. Theoretical discourse is needed for this sort of analysis. Also the feedback of the coach which is mainly in the form of spoken words is crucial in the course of adjustment and coordination of the player's body and its action during the game. Noble and Watkins accept Bourdieu's point that people do not think like philosophers in their everyday lives (Bourdieu, 1981) but they argue that this notion does not rule out the need for consciousness in practice. The fact that practice takes place primarily at a sub-conscious level does not mean that there is no interaction between practice and consciousness (2003, p.529). To further clarify this they focus on the complex nature of consciousness. They observe (p. 530) that consciousness is not a single and simple category and is present in different forms and qualities. In their view, Bourdieu's mistake is that he does not discriminate between calculation and consciousness in social practice and in his theory there is no discrimination between consciousness of action and consciousness in action as it is clarified in Giddens' theory in terms of the distinction between practical and discursive consciousness (1984, pp. 4–7) and in Archer's theory in terms of the distinction between practical (or procedural) and discursive (or reflective) knowledge (2000, p. 162). From this point of view they define different levels of awareness to explain the complex interactions of consciousness and embodied practice in sport training, namely agentic reflection, bodily attention and practical sense or automaticity. These are considered here briefly.

Based on Giddens conceptualizations Noble and Watkins define agentic reflection as the 'discursive practice in which we consider our behaviour and its principles, which involves the monitoring of conduct which can be brought to discourse (p. 531)'. In the context of sport training this form of reflection is seen frequently in both forms of analysis and synthesis of actions in which past actions are reviewed and deconstructed into their components. Then to embody the revised version of these actions, they are reconstructed by imagination and new projects for actions are defined and designed based on these imaginations and projections of future actions. The second level, bodily attention, is placed between reflection and automaticity. This involves the players' ability to monitor their performance by feeling their actions. Interestingly, they point to the fact that at this level

mastering selective attention and control of shifting attention from one object to the other is crucial and internal dialogue is a tool that players use to regulate their attentional control (p. 532). The last level is practical sense or automaticity and is the one that is emphasized by Bourdieu. Nobel and Watkins are in agreement with Bourdieu about the fact that automaticity is the cornerstone of achieving success in sports but they also find the other two levels of awareness necessary for reaching the level of automaticity and reject the possibility of obtaining this level without many hours of training in which discursive consciousness has a critical role.

Finally, they conclude by pointing to the importance of the web of intersubjectivity in the process of coaching and training. They argue that many athletes have admitted that their success would not have been possible without the help of their coach. In modern sport this process has become even more complex and there are teams of experts involved in the training of sportspeople. In this sense they argue against the theoretical position of Bourdieu in which the habitus and conscious are opposed and define a framework in which discursive and practical consciousness are in complex interaction with each other.

The other quite different setting in which the interaction between habits and consciousness in its different modalities can be studied is hypnosis. As Branier and her colleagues (2008) state, in hypnosis the hypnotist can produce dramatic experiences in the subject only by using words (p.141). One of the main characteristics of hypnotic phenomena is the sense of involuntariness. It means that while a hypnotic phenomenon is experienced, the individual has no sense of authorship over it and feels that the action or behaviour has happened by itself as a consequence of the suggestions given by the hypnotist. This automaticity is not only experienced during hypnosis, but also after hypnosis in response to post hypnotic suggestions. In this situation the individual experiences the automatic activation of a certain action or behaviour in response to a cue which has been described and assigned to that particular behaviour during hypnosis. In fact, automaticity is a resource that makes hypnosis a useful modality for helping people in different ways. One function of hypnosis is to help people to control their bad habits such as substance abuse or eating too much. Beyond that, hypnosis is used to treat conditions in which there is a deregulation of bodily functions which are not normally under the conscious control of the individual such as respiration (asthma), bowel function (irritable bowel syndrome) and skin sensory system (itching/scratching –eczema) (Heap & Aravind, 2002). In fact, in hypnosis the consciousness is directed as a result of suggestions in such a

way that some actions, behaviours and/or physiological processes are facilitated which are not easily activated in normal daily life.

In term of the process of hypnosis and interactions between the hypnotist and subject, there is a widespread misbelief that the hypnotist imposes his or her will over the hypnotized. Challenging this idea, Musikantow (2011) argues that in the modern conceptualization of hypnosis the importance of the subject's role and the necessity of their agency have been realized and that it is a prevalent idea among hypnotists that 'all hypnosis is self hypnosis'. Musikantow claims that even this conceptualization is outmoded because it is linear and prefers an alternative view in which 'either the hypnotist is perceived as the causal agent or the client is perceived as the causal agent. What is missing from this description is what I refer to as an interactional view of human communication, with its conception of circular causality (p.84)'. In this view, the power is neither solely with therapist nor with the subject is but it shared between two. The construction of experience is the result of cooperation between both participants.

One interesting possibility for experiencing hypnosis is self-hypnosis. One of the pioneers of hypnosis research, Erika Fromm (1909-2003) and her colleagues at Chicago University conducted numerous studies and developed the Chicago paradigm of research on self-hypnosis (Fromm & Kahn, 1990). In self-hypnosis, hypnotic phenomena are induced by the person either by repeating suggestions that have been learnt from a hypnotist or in a more creative form by the suggestions and imagination originating from the subject's own internal world. Comparing self-hypnosis and heterhypnosis (the hypnosis in which a hypnotist is involved) Kahn and Fromm (1992) argue that regarding the involvement of the self and other, the experience of hypnosis should be considered as located on a spectrum. Even at the extreme points of the spectrum neither self nor the other completely dominates. In a heterohypnosis which is maximally controlled by the hypnotist, the subject's fantasies and her active imagination are necessary. In the case of self hypnosis, the hypnotic experience cannot be initiated completely independently from the other. Even in the case of pure self-initiated hypnosis the personal experience is constructed based on the preconceptions and beliefs of the person which are culturally shaped and the result of a definition of hypnosis received from the society. In a hypnosis session controlled by a hypnotherapist, the balance of the control of the process is continuously fluctuating and is not a static at all.

In using hypnosis as a therapeutic modality or as a tool for controlling a habit, the phenomenon of automaticity plays a critical role. The hypnotist and the subject together construct the desired reality which is usually experienced as an automatic and effortless experience under hypnosis. But it is a misconception to expect that delivering suggestions under hypnosis can solve the client's problem. Practically in the first session, the hypnotist explains about the hypnosis and corrects the misconceptions that are prevalent about hypnosis and also tries to understand the beliefs and expectations of client regarding hypnosis. In next session, the hypnosis is experienced without any suggestions related to the client's problem. After that, in a further session, hypnosis is induced and suggestions related the client's problems are given. At the end of this therapeutic session self-hypnosis is taught to the person and she or he is encouraged to practice and use self hypnosis whenever it is necessary. This process is facilitated by giving post-hypnotic suggestions during deep hypnosis by which the person will experience hypnosis more easily in future attempts at self-hypnosis. It is via this practice between sessions that over a period of time the client will be able to take control of the habit or treat the relevant health condition (Nash, 2008).

As seen in the similar context of sports training, there is close interaction between discursive and practical consciousness. As Noble and Watkins state, automaticity is central to sporting success and athletes have frequently described their experience of peak performance as automatic which is felt to be involuntarily (p. 532-533). As discussed, a sense of involuntariness is also central to hypnotic phenomena and in fact the experience of automaticity is the key factor in making hypnosis a helpful tool for treatment and change of behaviour. As Noble and Watkins show, in sports training it is the tight interaction of language, imagination and embodied knowledge of skills that makes the perfect automatic performance of sportspeople possible. Similarly, in the context of hypnosis, habit change and hypnotherapy, automaticity is experienced as a result of suggestions and imagination but to install the change and establish the desired outcome, practice is essential. This practice is basically in the form of internal conversation in which the person internalizes the suggestion received from the hypnotist and tries to reconstruct the experience which has been constructed in collaboration with the hypnotist in the hypnosis session.

My aim in analysing and comparing hypnosis and sport training was to show the complex interactions of consciousness in its different modalities and embodied knowledge

of skills which can be applied at an unconscious level. Although it is beneficial for the purpose of theory making to define categories to explain social practice, it is also important to consider that these categories are in close interaction and sometimes the boundaries become blurred.

As Dell (2010, p. 3) states, it was studying hypnosis that resulted in birth of the area of dissociation in psychology and the development of dissociative theories of mind. Historically, Pierre Janet (1859-1947) pioneered the development of dissociation theory which was further developed later by Ernest Hilgard (1904-2001) in the form of neo-dissociation theory (Cardeña, 2014). Hypnosis could be experienced by any healthy person and is considered to be one the normative dissociative experiences (Butler & Palesh, 2004). Today, researchers in the field of dissociation describe various positive dissociative experiences in which the common characteristics of dissociative phenomena such as absorption, alterations in the experience of self, and depersonalization are seen. Also there is a conceptual and phenomenological overlap between these and the state of flow in psychology of creativity (Butler, 2006). Flow states as described by Csikszentmihalyi (1990) are enjoyable occasions in which there is a perfect match between skills and the task and the attention is fully absorbed in the activity, self-reflective mechanisms are halted and there is a distortion of time perception. The connection between dissociation and creativity has been explored in different areas such as fine arts (Pérez-Fabello & Campos, 2010) and musical creativity (Schubert, 2012). The paradoxical presence of automaticity and sense of involuntariness in the most creative moments of elite innovators in which consciousness is fully devoted to the ongoing task shows that there is a highly complex interaction between habitus and consciousness and none of them should be excluded from a comprehensive theory of social practice.

## **Conclusion**

Although with the emergence of modernity the day to day life of people is becoming more and more unpredictable and there is an increasing need for reflexivity, a basic level of routine and habituality is still needed to provide enough security and prevent disruptive anxiety. Consequently, any comprehensive theory of practice should provide the place for both routine life and reflexivity.

As any reflexive process needs consciousness, to understand reflexivity there is a need for knowledge about consciousness. Because consciousness has different modalities reflexivity also has different forms and can happen at different levels. The advanced form

of reflexivity which is a language based process is internal conversation and it can be considered as the main mediator of social agency.

In this chapter I tried to shed some light on the relationships between consciousness and automaticity which is the main mechanism used for fast and effective performance in daily routine life. With this aim, I proposed the dissociative theory of mind as a useful framework by which the place of reflexivity and automaticity can be explained in social agency. Furthermore, I emphasized the developmental origins of reflexivity. Considering the fact that reflexivity is an emergent property it is important to consider the developmental context in which different modes of reflexivity are formed and to study them from this perspective.

Finally, the interactions between consciousness and embodied knowledge were explored using the two examples of sport training and hypnosis. This analysis shows that reflexivity and automaticity are interdependent and automatic behaviour can be seen even in most creative activities of human beings. The next chapter presents a fuller account of hypnosis as an example of the phenomenology of agency.

## **Chapter 6: A sociological analysis of hypnosis: development of social self and phenomenology of agency**

It is generally known that psychoanalysis originated from Freud's interest in hypnosis and treatment of hysteric patients with trance induction. Although he later dismissed hypnosis, his seminal work with Breuer (Breuer & Freud, 1895) was an analysis of their experiments with hypnosis induction in this group of patients (Ellenberger, 1970).

Apart from psychoanalysis, hypnosis and its effects on human cognition and behaviour fascinated many other intellectuals in Freud's time as well. As Valsiner and Van der Veer (1988) explain, late nineteenth century Europe was influenced by the phenomenology of suggestions in hypnosis and there was a network of theorists and empirical researchers inspired by hypnotic phenomena and the possibility of thinking about social influence from the viewpoint of social imitation and suggestion.

A key figure in this network was Pierre Janet (1859-1947), a philosopher and medical doctor who, like Freud, was interested in hysteria. Both had received training in Salpêtrière hospital under the supervision of Jean-Martin Charcot and had treated hysteric patients under hypnosis. Janet's experiments led to the development of his 'dissociation theory' and the idea that some mental faculties become dissociated from the whole, and work independently. He coined the term "psychological automatism" for this process (Haule, 1986). Janet's ideas were influential in the circle of advocates of the sociogenesis of human personality. Two main figures, Vygotsky and Mead, were directly and indirectly



influenced by him. For Vygotsky, Janet's ideas were a major source during the development of his theory. Mead was not directly influenced by Janet but was connected to his works via American philosopher Josiah Royce (1855-1916) and American philosopher and psychologist James Mark Baldwin, (1861–1934). Janet used Baldwin's ideas in his later works and there was a bidirectional interaction between them. For Baldwin, social imitation was a key concept to denote suggestions coming from the society. This conception was explicitly linked to the Janet's early works on hypnosis and the effects of suggestion on human cognition and behaviour. Royce developed a social constructionist view of reality based on concepts like imitation, internalization of social processes and internal dialogue borrowed from Baldwin. Royce's works were one of the sources for Mead in the course of development of his theory (Valsiner & Van der Veer, 1988, 2000). Recently, Huebner (2012) has analyzed the sociohistorical process under which the Mead's famous book *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934) was produced. He observes that to produce this book, Mead's writings were not made available through publication but were constructed using the notes taken by his students and even these materials were not used without change in the book but were transformed and reinterpreted by the social actors involved in this process. He states that in the course of production of the text, the editor Charles Morris simply deleted the passages where the stenographer could not accurately capture the reference that Mead was making. As an example, he points to Mead's use of a study by Morton Prince (American physician and psychologist) 'The Dissociation of a Personality' (1906) which was omitted because the stenographer could not decipher the pseudonym of the patient in Prince's study and there is no reference elsewhere in Mead's published works.

The crowd psychologist, Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904) also developed a view in which suggestibility and imitation instead of rationality were characteristics of people in their social life. Considering the interrelationships between psyche and society, he was inclined to study the dynamics of social organization at the level of interpersonal and intercorporeal interactions. In his model, suggestive and imitative processes were the core mechanism of social cohesion and bond (Blackman, 2007, 2010).

Georg Simmel, in his discussions about domination, superiority and subordination (Simmel, 1896, 2009), speaks about the relationship between the hypnotist and the hypnotized person and notes that although the relationship in hypnosis seems to be subordination without any corresponding reaction. The relationship is a reciprocal one in

which the hypnotist is influenced as well. He explains that an (unknown) prominent hypnotist emphasized that without this effect of the hypnotized on the hypnotist the hypnosis would not be effective (Simmel, 1896, p. 171).

In spite of this evidence for the influence of hypnotic phenomena on social theorists, especially those who developed theories of the social self, the actual phenomenon of hypnosis has not been well explored from a sociological view point. Perhaps the reasons for this neglect can be traced to the dichotomies in (modern) Western thought. Traditionally, hypnosis was considered to be a psychological phenomenon, something occurring in the person's mind or psyche. Only later was it revealed that it is more than a mind-body phenomenon, but also a process that emerges out of an interpersonal interaction in the social context (Straus, 1978). As Blackman (2010) states, the revival of research about hypnosis and related phenomena could shed light on unexplored aspects of the body and emotions in social science and the humanities.

In recent decades, however, a number of sociologists have criticised social theories for being disembodied and for ignoring emotions in the action of people in society. Reacting against the Cartesian dualism of modern Western thought and the dominance of cognitivism and individualism, they argue that there is a need for a more comprehensive framework in which rationality and emotion, mind and body, individual and society are not separated but are defined as a coherent whole. In other words, in this perspective, social agency should be defined as embodied and relational (Shilling, 1999; Williams & Bendelow, 1996; Williams, 1998). In fact, as it will be discussed in this chapter, hypnosis is a special kind of interpersonal relationship in which key concepts of social interaction including agency, embodiment, emotions, imagination and suggestibility can be studied and analyzed.

### **The nature of hypnosis**

What does happen in a hypnosis session? Hypnosis is a brief interpersonal relationship in which a hypnotist speaks to the subject, conveying suggestions he or she has formulated, and as a result a significant change in the phenomenological experience of the subject takes place. This change can assume different forms like the experience of hallucinations, changes in memory, change in bodily sensations, new emotional experiences and non-volition (Vandenberg, 2005).

There is no consensus about the real nature of hypnosis and despite extensive research on hypnotic phenomena, their nature remains contested. Perhaps as Kallio and

Revonsuo (2003) observe, this is because of the complexity of the process of hypnosis and the fact that it is not limited to one level of life organization and ranges from cellular molecular to social interactions. The other point, as Kihlstrom (2005) states, is that alteration of consciousness is the core topic of hypnosis and our knowledge about consciousness is very limited and there is much to understand about the underpinning of normal and possibly altered states of consciousness which are claimed to be seen in hypnosis.

One of the most debated issues in hypnosis research is the experience of altered state of consciousness (ASC). There are two views about the alteration of consciousness during hypnosis. Some believe that trance is an especial state of consciousness which is required for development of hypnotic phenomena. They are advocates of the ASC theory of hypnosis or simply “state” theory. The other group which is composed of proponents of the so called sociocognitive theory of hypnosis considers that although hypnosis results in altered consciousness, this alteration is not a necessary causal factor for experiencing hypnotic phenomena (Kallio & Revonsuo, 2003; Lynn et al., 2008).

Beyond these debates, there are certain issues that nearly all hypnosis researchers agree upon. One is that hypnosis is an interpersonal phenomenon and social interaction plays a crucial role in the development of hypnosis. As Kallio and Revonsuo (2003) pointed out, even in the American Psychological Association (APA) definition of hypnosis, alteration of consciousness is not a criterion and it is defined as ‘a procedure during which a health professional or researcher suggests that a client, patient, or subject experience changes in sensations, perceptions, thoughts, or behaviour’ (Kallio & Revonsuo, 2003, p. 114). Similarly, Miller (1994) defines hypnosis as ‘an interaction process in which one participant voluntarily cedes control of self to the direction of the other in order to reach a social objective’ (p. 351).

In fact, many studies have shown that different hypnotic phenomena can be experienced outside the trance state only via suggestions. Sociocognitive theorists do not deny that hypnotic induction and suggestion change the phenomenological experience of the subject or dispute the fact that consciousness is altered during hypnosis, but they do not believe that this alteration is a necessary component of hypnosis or that it has any causal effect in the production of hypnotic phenomena. Suggestions are the key tool of hypnosis induction. Suggestions in hypnosis are different from other types of suggestion like placebos or misleading questions because they evoke imaginative experiences and are

called ‘imaginative suggestions’ by sociocognitive theorists. Accordingly, hypnosis is a social interaction similar to other kinds of ordinary interactions in daily life. Theorists of this group like Theodore Roy Sarbin (1911–2005) described hypnosis as a kind of ‘role taking’ to discriminate it from ‘role playing’, not to be interpreted as faking. The subject in hypnosis embodies a social role similar to other social roles like teacher, doctor, parent and soldier (Coe & Sarbin, 1991; Lynn et al., 2008). This issue will be explored later in this chapter.

Another characteristic of hypnotic interaction is that it is an asymmetrical interpersonal relationship. Two people agree upon a common goal but during hypnosis, the subject abandons his or her critical self-reflective evaluations and instead becomes non-reflexively obedient. This relationship ultimately leads to a non-reflective automaticity in the subject (Miller, 1994).

It is well known in hypnosis research that different people have different hypnotisability (Kihlstrom, 2008). It means that not all people experience the hypnotic phenomena similarly after hypnotic induction. But as mentioned, many hypnotic phenomena can be experienced out of trance as a result of imaginative suggestions. This fact brings to mind the idea that there should be some underpinnings for human proneness to change in the perception of reality as a result of suggestions. This idea has been supported by the research of social and developmental psychology and will be briefly reviewed in the next section.

### **Hypnosis and development of social self**

The first interpersonal relationship that every person experiences is the asymmetrical relationship with their caregivers. This is obviously because infants have no well-developed self-regulatory mechanism and are dependent on their caregivers for the fulfilment of their physical, social and emotional needs. Because babies are immature, they become easily overwhelmed and they need others for regulation and organization of their experience. Caregivers normally try to reinforce positive emotions like joy and pleasure by positive response in communication and weaken negative emotions like anger and sadness by ignoring or avoiding them. Also, when the baby is anxious, in pain or uncomfortable, they try to soothe him or her via different verbal and non-verbal messages and communication. Infants’ dependence on caregivers’ experience and regulation is so profound that even if the biological needs are met, the inattentiveness of parents may result

in failure to thrive, physical mal-development and, in extreme cases, even the death of the baby (Vandenberg, 1998a, 1998b, 2005).

From another perspective, as Wiley (2003) expresses it, children have no self when they come into the world but parents and caregivers treat them as if they do have a self. Caregivers treat the infant as a real person in their interactions but in reality the child is not. In fact, the entirety of verbal and non-verbal messages conveyed to the child is a package of suggestions that direct her or him towards acquiring a true self and the ability to self-regulate and organize experience. In this view, Wiley describes self as a self-fulfilling prophecy as it is the future directed behaviour of the caregivers that ultimately develops the foundations of the social self of the child. Without this suggestion, development will not be successful either psychologically or physically.

It is known in hypnosis that rapport is a prerequisite for successful induction, (Lynn & Rhue, 1991). In an infant, this rapport is present at the beginning of life because the baby is in need and it is supposed that these needs should be met by others. In hypnosis, the patient or subject again is in need or wishes to reach a goal (for example, to have a new experience for a person who agrees to be a subject in a stage hypnosis programme) and because of that suspends his or her self-regulatory mechanisms and becomes absorbed in the hypnotist's suggestions (Miller, 1994). As a result, what is experienced in hypnosis is not something without any historical conscious and unconscious memory in an adult when it is experienced for the first time. Similar patterns of interaction have been experienced since the first interactions with care givers in infancy.

Although hypnosis induction is essentially language based, the whole process is embodied both for the hypnotist and the subject. The hypnotist frequently refers to bodily sensations and feelings during trance induction and monitors the process of trance by paying attention to non-verbal messages coming from the subject. During the first years of development in which the child has not acquired language abilities, non-verbal and embodied interaction is the medium of communication. Facial grimaces, gestures and hand and body motions are constantly in use and voice is used in a limited way only in crying and noises with different tonalities. Even when children acquire language, they still enact their imagination. When young children are requested to use their imagination in the course of hypnotic suggestion, they enact the imaginations by their motor system instead of making images in their minds like adults (Vandenberg, 1998a, 1998b). This issue can also be seen in play. The first forms of play begin with the reciprocal mirror interactions of

the mother and the child. Winnicott (1971) believes that in the course of the complex process of mother and child play, it is impossible to locate where the play is happening. In fact, it takes place in a transitional hyperspace between the two which does not belong to either of them. In the first months of their life, infants become engaged in a communicative exchange with others through imitation and embodying the gestures and actions of the other and are attuned by the other in interactions. This embodiment of the other is the origin of the development of imagination that adults experience in later life. Gradually, children learn to become engaged in mimetic play in which they substitute an object or their body with another reality. For example, they become a locomotive with wheels and steam or imagine a ruler as a sword and fight with it in their imaginary war. By the age of two, they acquire full ability in role-taking and are able to enact different roles based on social scenarios coming from real life, movies, stories and from their own imagination. By the age of five or six they are able to become engaged in theatrical and well elaborated role play and later participate in games with rules and predefined frame convictions (Whitehead, 2001).

The importance of role taking and enactment has been elaborated by the sociologist Erving Goffman and the anthropologist Victor Turner. The following overview explains the relevance of their ideas and considers the features which theatre and hypnosis have in common.

### **Goffman's dramaturgy and Turner's anthropology of performance**

Erving Goffman (1922-1982) is the symbolic interactionist social theorist who introduced the interaction order, the domain of face-to-face relations and bodily co-presence to social theory (Shilling, 1999). Influenced by the Meadian tradition, he defines the self as a construct developed in the process of social interactions and in his work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Goffman, 1992), he describes the dramaturgical nature of human interactions in routine daily life. As Vosu (2012) explains, in Goffman's view, the self could not be performed in social context without assistance and feedback from others. In other words, the individual becomes engaged in a social role. This comparison between performance and social interaction has led to some misinterpretation of Goffman's ideas as some theorists have considered social role as faking or deception. As Vosu points out, in social context, the individual is engaged in the role but is unaware of 'being in the role'. In other words, it is an unconscious role enactment like the subject in

hypnosis who is not pretending the role of being hypnotized but enacts this role in a believed-in manner.

In fact a similar view has been suggested by the theorists of the sociocognitive model of hypnosis. Theodore Sarbin (2005), one of the pioneers of the sociocognitive approach pointed to the dramaturgical nature of human social interaction. Citing Goffman and bringing a quotation from William Shakespeare (Sarbin, 2005, p. 204), that ‘All the world’s a stage’, he explains that people are living in a drama-shaped world and the identity of a person is formed from the stories in which people’s participation resembles actors who act on the stage.

In the hypnosis context, Coe and Sarbin (1991) state that the sociocognitive approach has been developed because of their dissatisfaction with mentalistic approaches to hypnosis in which the subject has a passive role in the process of hypnosis. In contrast, in the sociocognitive approach the subject is an active participant or an agent who is making an effort to enact the role of a hypnotized person and reach the goal upon which they have agreed. What the hypnotist does is an implicit invitation of the subject to participate in a ‘miniature drama’ and success in achieving the goals depends on the subject’s imaginative and rhetorical abilities.

In social theory, Goffman’s theory and his dramaturgical view toward social relationship has been suggested as a fruitful approach for bringing embodiment and emotions to theories of social agency (Shilling, 1999). Although the metaphor of theatre in his theory sheds light on the nature of human interactions in the social context, exploring hypnosis as a special form of enactment can add to our understanding.

In a similar way, anthropologist and cultural theorist Victor Turner (1920-1983) developed his theory of social drama. He holds that human interactions in everyday life have a drama like nature and considers two types of role play in society. One is the structural role play of routine life and the other is the anti-structural role play of rituals and entertainment. In fact, in Western cultures in which people do not participate in religious rituals as before, they are replaced by arts and leisure activities. In his view of human life, there is a continuous alternation between structural role play of daily routines and anti-structural role play of rituals or ritual like activities like theatre, games and arts (Whitehead, 2010, 2012). Turner believes that a heightened perception of the individual of her or his culture is attained during rituals (Turner, 1969). This can have two consequences. One possibility is that it might lead to a better attachment of the person to

social norms and values. The other possibility is the motivation of the person to transform these norms and values. Then rituals are important tools for social change and transformation (Vösu, 2012).

Apart from cultural and social theory, the effects of enactment of a role have been examined in theatre studies. Although in theatre, actors or actresses usually ‘play’ the role and do not always ‘take’ it, there are occasions in which they become deeply involved with a role. Here this issue is briefly considered.

### **Acting, embodiment and alteration of consciousness**

As discussed, the sociocognitive approach to hypnosis considers it to be ‘role taking’. Related to this issue, Scheiffele (2001, 2003, 2014) argues that alteration of consciousness may happen during performance. He points out that the Brechtian method attempts to avoid this alteration of consciousness. In this approach, the actor should not become immersed in the character but should introduce the character to the audience while keeping his or her ordinary consciousness (Scheiffele, 2001, pp. 180–181). Apart from such exceptions, alteration of consciousness is a familiar phenomenon in acting. In his book *The Psychology of Consciousness*, Farthing (1992) describes the different aspects of conscious experience recognized by psychologists. He then explains that how these aspects become changed in altered states of consciousness. Scheiffele uses these dimensions of change in subjective conscious experience introduced by Farthing and explains how acting can result in a change in these dimensions similar to other consciousness altering activities like hypnosis and meditation. These dimensions are attention, perception, imagery and fantasy, inner speech, memory, higher-level thought processes, meaning or significance of experiences, time experience, emotional feeling and expression, level of arousal, self-control, suggestibility, body image, and sense of personal identity <sup>1</sup>.

The importance of embodiment and first person experience in performance has encouraged the theorists of theatre and performance to try to merge the abstract semiotic aspects of theatre with embodied and material components of it. For this goal they have used the newly derived concepts in cognitive psychology like the bodily origins of metaphors and importance of image schemas in our daily life proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) to develop an embodied view of acting (Hart, 2006). These efforts could be compared with new developments in the sociology of body and emotion mentioned above. In parallel with theories of theatre, issues including the body, emotions, consciousness and its alteration have not been sufficiently considered in social theory.



Straus (1978) depicts the theatrical nature of hypnosis in which the subject becomes disconnected from the taken for granted daily reality:

Essentially, at this point [after induction of hypnosis and in the body of session] the subject and hypnotist have built the theatre, set the stage, and delineated the roles. As the curtain rises, we see them turning to the central performance of the session, the play itself. What they do is essentially no different from earlier.... once the subject achieves "letting go," [of daily reality] further activity is directed at reconstructing the subject's reality schemes or ongoing experience of reality either to exploit the subject's potentialities now or later (pp. 416 & 417).

Essentially, a believed in role enactment can change the person's experience of reality and it can happen in different contexts like hypnosis or performance.

Another aspect of embodied experience which is worth exploring in hypnotic experience is the phenomenology of volition.

### **Phenomenology of volition and social agency**

Young children's inability to discriminate between voluntary and involuntary actions means that they cannot differentiate between 'I made it happen' and 'it happened to me' (Vandenberg, 1998a). Similarly, as was also discussed in the previous chapter, one of the interesting experiences in hypnosis is the experience of non-volition in which the subjects feel that things are happening to them instead of being done by them. This is obviously an illusion. For example, a hypnotist may give suggestions that the person's hand is becoming lighter and lighter and lifting involuntarily. What the person experiences is that the hand becomes light and perhaps numb and levitates on its own. But it is easily understandable by an external observer that the subject is using his own muscular system and raising the hand and it is only a phenomenological illusion. I believe this illusion is very important from a social theoretical point of view. Here I will try to critically examine it.

It is claimed by hypnosis researchers that any hypnosis is a self hypnosis. It means that although it seems that the subject is under the hypnotist's control, in fact this is not true. In the whole process of hypnosis the subject is actively participating and tries to fulfil what is expected. New feelings, images and experiences are continuously generated by the subject and he or she is enacting the role of a hypnotized subject (Coe & Sarbin, 1991; Kihlstrom, 2008; Miller, 1994). Although the suggestions are formulated by the hypnotist, the interpretation of the message is done by the subject and because of that the hypnotist

should constantly monitor the process and get verbal and non-verbal messages from the subject and pay attention to the gestural and non-verbal signs in the face and body of the person to evaluate the situation and plan the next step in giving suggestions (Teleska & Roffman, 2004). It is the experience of the hypnotist here that determines the quality of hypnosis induction and without this bidirectional interaction the process of hypnosis would be interrupted.

In spite of the fact that in the whole process of hypnosis the subject is actively and creatively participating, from a phenomenological point of view, as Miller (1994) observes, there are two different phases present. Although there is no defined temporal border between these two phases, the subject gradually goes from the first experience to the second. In the beginning, the subject tries to carefully pay attention to the hypnotist's suggestions and do whatever requested. But gradually the subject experiences that things are happening to her or him and there is no control over the performance of what is being suggested. This is the experience of non-volition and it has been considered as the core of hypnotic experience (Kallio & Revonsuo, 2003). Thus hypnosis begins with compliance and obedience to what is requested by the hypnotist, but gradually with the deepening of trance, an experience of automaticity becomes replaced by the sense of authority of experiences. Resistance is possible in all stages of hypnosis, but it is much easier in the beginning than when the subject goes into deep trance and feels non-volitional towards his or her experience. Then it is much more difficult to resist (Miller, 1994).

As mentioned, young children normally have volitional confusion and formation of inner speech is a key process in the development of discrimination of 'self' and 'other' agency. Young children do not have the ability to use the language as a private tool for giving direction to action and behaviour and they lack the ability of subvocalization. Inner speech is contradictory and only overt speech is appreciated by them (Vandenberg, 2002). Accordingly, in hypnosis the inner speech should be terminated. Any questioning, judgment about or ignorance of suggestions will terminate the hypnotic state. The subject, in a successful trance induction, becomes deeply engaged in the details of suggestions and does not critically examine their content. In fact, suggestions are in many cases composed of contradictory and paradoxical requests (Vandenberg, 2005) like 'remember to forget' (p.38) or '(I suggest that) the pain you feel you do not feel' (p.40) that easily could raise questions and criticism. Practically, this is the special structure of language in hypnosis that –if not critically examined by the subjects can lead toward the goal of hypnosis which

they agreed upon at the outset. In another example of these contradictory requests, Straus (1978) explains that how 'challenge' is employed in the process of hypnosis:

Typically a "challenge" is employed – having the subject imagine his or her eyes are stuck tight and cannot be voluntarily opened, and then telling the person to "try and open your eyes, you can't-try and open them!" This very typical "challenge" actually places the subject in a double-bind. If the person is cooperating and striving to comply with the first demand, it is impossible to accomplish the second, so the person typically "tries" in such a way as to fail, thus maintaining the role performance of a "hypnotized subject." Often the person can be seen trying to open the eyes by raising the eyebrows. When the eyes do not open (textbooks stress wording the demand in such a way as to prompt failure – for example, to "try" is not the same as to "do it" – this enhances the hypnotist's credibility and "controller" status, while helping the subject define the situation as one of "involuntary" compliance and, therefore, trance (p. 411).

As discussed, the transition from volitional to non-volitional experience is a rule in trance induction. Also as seen, the pattern of communication is different from what could be seen in tyrannical relationships in which although there is an asymmetrical relationship, there is no agreement at any stage (Miller, 1994). The other difference might be hidden in the point that in hypnosis the lack of power is an illusion and the subject is really able to resist the suggestions but in a tyrannical relationship the person might really be unable to resist the action of the authority. Considering this discussion it could show the importance of embodied experience in the analysis of power relations in the real world. A brief interpersonal relationship in trance induction can easily distort the people's conception of their real abilities and it is at the level of first person experience that cannot be grasped by an observer. In fact, when the phenomenology of agency is distorted in people, they are practically paralysed in a sense, because it is an illusion and they really believe that they are unable to resist.

The question here is whether a comparison can be made between what is experienced phenomenologically in trance with other experiences of social interaction in different contexts? In fact, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, research in social psychology has demonstrated that automaticity is a ubiquitous experience in our daily life. There are many activities in our life that are fulfilled automatically in response to social or environmental cues with minimal need for attentional resources. When one of these actions

begins it is practically impossible to terminate it before the end (Bargh & Chartrand, 1999; Kirsch & Lynn, 1997).

One famous experiment in social psychology which can be compared with hypnosis is Milgram's (1974) obedience to authority study in which the participants were requested to give electric shocks to another person in another room who was asked a series of questions. In response to each wrong answer there was an electric shock as punishment and the voltage of the shocks was progressively increased. In practice the learning experiment was a cover story and the shock machine was a fake one and nobody was receiving a shock in the other room. Milgram's goal was to assess the participants' willingness to harm others and obey the orders to do the experiment. Shockingly, Milgram showed that a significant number of participants gave up to a lethal dose of 'electric shock' to the learner in the context of the study.

As Reicher and Haslam (2011) state, the popular, oversimplified interpretation of Milgram's experiment says that ordinary people obey even the most extreme of instructions of a destructive authority. They believe this oversimplification is dangerous. Instead, they describe the experiment as 'the theatre of obedience' (p.163) and emphasize the dramaturgical nature of this experiment. They believe that Milgram's study was not only great science, but also great drama. The scripts were delicately written and the space and instruments were carefully set up. For example, a lot of time and effort were put into the design of the shock generator. Even the details like replacing the highest level of shock from 'lethal' to 'XXX' had an influence on the final results of the study. Reicher and Haslam believe we should be aware that people obeyed the instruction in that particular circumstance and any change in the details of that setting could lead to in a different result. In fact, the aim of Milgram in his book *Obedience to authority: An experimental view* (1974) was to discover the effects of changing the scenario of the study on the obedience of participants. Some similarities can be inferred between hypnosis and Milgram's experimental settings as follows.

One similarity is in the patterns of instructions. As discussed, in hypnosis the subject volitionally performs the hypnotist's instructions and later the instructions are experienced as just happening. A similar transition is reported in Milgram's experiment. When the participants were requested to give a high voltage like 450 volts to a learner who was answering wrongly early in the experiment, many of participants refused but when it began from insignificant voltage and gradually increased to lethal amounts a significant

number of them complied. Thus the pattern of transition from volition to non-volition can be seen in asymmetrical interpersonal relationships outside the trance state (Miller, 1994).

The other issue is that, in both settings, self awareness is suppressed. As discussed, hypnosis proceeds only if inner speech, judgment and criticism are terminated. This similarity was considered by Milgram himself (1974) and other authors emphasized it as well (Blass, 1991; Hunt, 1979). They believe that in the context of Milgram's experiment, the subject is so absorbed with the task details and instructions that there is no room for self awareness, inner speech or questioning the content of the requests. Reicher and Haslam (2011) highlighted a finding in Milgram's experiments that could support this claim. They noted that according to the results, 150 volts is a critical decision point in Milgram's experiments and it is the point in which the highest rate of disobedience was reported. At this point, the learner for the first time asks to be released from the experiment and the subject can hear this demand. In other words, in this point the subject becomes distracted from performing the task of experiment and pays attention to the voice of the learner who is suffering in the other room.

The other issue is the patterns of language. As mentioned, patterns of language are important in hypnosis. The way that the hypnotist makes sentences and formulates suggestions is critical. Use of metaphors, contradictory or paradoxical orders and the way that suggestions are expressed are all important. In Milgram's experiments, the way that the experimenter used language has been investigated by researchers (Gibson, 2013; Reicher & Haslam, 2011). For example, in the experiment, when the participant was reluctant to continue, the experimenter used four types of prompts in an escalating order. They were (1) 'Please continue', or, 'please go on'; (2) 'The experiment requires that you continue'; (3) 'It is absolutely essential that you continue'; and (4) 'You have no other choice, you must go on' (Milgram, 1974, p. 38). The last sentence is an order with no justification. In Milgram's studies there is only one report of the reaction to this command. The participant was a professor of Old Testament who replied in response to this prompt that: 'if this were Russia, maybe, but not in America' (Milgram, 1974, p. 65) and the experiment was terminated. In a recent replication of Milgram's study by Jerry Burger (2009) no participant continued the experiment in response to the last prompt. The other aspects of verbal and non-verbal communications in Milgram's experiments and comparative studies with hypnosis communication patterns remain an open area for research.

The last notion considered here as common between hypnosis and obedience to authority experiments is the fact that, in both contexts, the reality and perceptions of the subjects become distorted and reality is defined in a manner that is suitable for a predefined goal. Milgram (1965) describes this fact as below:

...with numbing regularity good people were seen to knuckle under the demands of authority and perform actions that were callous and severe. Men who are in everyday life responsible and decent were seduced by the trappings of authority, by the control of their perceptions, and by the uncritical acceptance of experimenter's definition of the situation, into performing harsh acts (p.74).

Milgram also speaks about the 'agentic shift' and states that the most far-reaching consequence of agentic shift is that a man feels responsible to the authority but feels no responsibility for the content of the actions that the authority prescribes (Blass, 1999).

In a wider perspective, Whitehead (2001, 2012) argues that reality distortion happens in all cultures to guarantee the cooperation of the members of that society. Referring to a Bourdieusian framework of thinking, he states that in the process of socialization of the members of a society, the assumptions of that culture are considered by the members as taken for granted reality and this secures bonding and cooperation between them.

As shown, there are different aspects of hypnosis that can shed light on the nature of social agency. The other important notion is the place of body in the sense of agency in an asymmetrical interpersonal relationship.

### **Agency and embodied self-reflexivity**

Body plays an important role in mediating our agency. Even when bodily movements are not directly involved in a task, we use bodily metaphors to describe the situation and find solutions. We frequently use bodily metaphors like 'My heart aches for you', 'We have a close relationship', 'He thirsts for recognition' and so on to describe circumstances and situations we experience (Gibbs, Lima, Francozo, & Costa Lima, 2004; Gibbs, 2003). In the case of agency, similarly, the sense of authorship of our actions and behaviours is rooted in our bodily experiences. From a social psychological point of view, internal conversation, which is formed as a result of internalization of dialogue with others, is the main mechanism by which personal agency is mediated. But considering the experience of hypnosis and Milgram's study it could be judged that internal conversation is not always an independent and trustable mechanism and in certain contexts and under

the pressure of certain discourses, internal conversation might be suppressed and the feeling of lack of agency be replaced.

This role of embodied self reflexivity and its role in mediating social agency could be evaluated in hypnosis. As Straus (1978) explains, hypnosis induction generally begins with somatic stress. A series of suggestions which are repeated over and over in a period of time about a change in bodily perceptions e.g. ‘your hand is becoming lighter and lighter’ or ‘your eyes are getting heavy and heavier’. This process, after a while, induces the illusion in the subject that the suggestions are the cause of bodily changes and it is after distortion of the sense of agency in the body that the person becomes hypnotized and other steps go on. In other words, termination of embodied self reflexivity has an important role in the process of hypnosis. In a similar way, Lynn and Green (2011) state that the ability to translate suggestions from thoughts and images into sensations may contribute to hypnosis induction and recommend further empirical research to test this hypothesis. Also, as explained in the above discussion, a similar pattern might be present in contexts like Milgram’s obedience to authority experiments. It means that language and non-language based patterns of communication in these contexts could be explored to see if there is any direct and indirect suggestions that distort the embodied phenomenology of agency in the subjects. Another way is to explore the phenomenological feeling of people in these contexts to see if the sense of embodied agency has been distorted in them or not.

The changes in bodily perceptions and their social importance have been explored by sociologists and anthropologists under the term ‘techniques of body’ and their effects on phenomenology of volition is also a topic that is important from a sociological point of view (Lyon, 1997; Mauss, 1973). In her contribution, Pagis (2009) has paid attention to another form of reflexivity important in the development of sense of self, namely embodied reflexivity. Embodied reflexivity is direct perception of bodily feeling and sensations without mediation of other signs like words and images. In her field work on mediators of Vipassana meditation centres she has shown that how this embodied self reflexivity is cultivated via meditation and used for emotion regulation and self control. According to her research and the findings of neuroscience and psychology of embodiment she points to the primacy of embodied self reflexivity and the fact that inner speech is grounded in this embodied self. In fact, altering consciousness by role taking could be a pleasant experience and is very popular in different cultures. This notion is also important from the sociological point of view.

## **Culture, role taking, rituals and alteration of consciousness**

The efforts of human beings to alter their ordinary state of consciousness have been described in different cultures. Apart from the fact that this alteration is pleasant, it has healing effects and can be beneficial for the well being of the individual (Grof, 2003; Scheiffele, 2001). Anthropological research has shown that the techniques that shamans use in their healing rituals in many cases induce altered states of consciousness which have healing effects. Even in modern medicine rituals are important. Findings in the field of placebo response reveal that the healing response cannot be confined to the biological, physiological and anatomical changes resulting from medical interventions. When a pill is prescribed a group of psychoneuroimmunological pathways become activated which have healing effects and the molecular interaction of drug molecules with their receptor is only a part of this healing response (De Craen, Kaptchuk, Tijssen, & Kleijnen, 1999). This fact is not only true in medical management but also in surgical interventions. In some cases it has been shown that the effect of a surgical intervention was only related to mind-body interactions that were activated by the medical ritual of the surgical intervention (Kradin, 2012; Wall, 1996). This issue will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Similarly, as discussed in the previous chapter, alteration of consciousness is what makes the arts, sports and entertainments exciting. The optimal experience in sports or - as the psychologist Csikszentmihalyi called it- the flow experience has been connected to ASC experience (Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Also alteration of consciousness has been described in arts like music (Pérez-Fabello & Campos, 2010; Schubert, 2012).

Together, these facts show the importance of enactment of different roles in the social context. To put these together Whitehead (2001, 2012) developed his 'social mirror' theory, which holds that 'mirrors in the mind depend on mirrors in society' (2012, p. 56). He states that different social and cultural theorists like Mead, Turner, Goffman and Baldwin emphasize the importance of social interaction and the 'other' in the development of self. As mentioned, he believes that cooperation is the key factor in the maintenance of a culture and to keep the members together, each culture has means to persuade the society to accept its assumptions of truth and ultimate reality. For this process of enculturation, alteration of consciousness in different contexts like rituals, entertainments and arts is essential. During these experiences everyday reality and self become suspended and the person is temporarily ready for adaptations and transformations. Obviously these possibilities are supported by the inner psychological properties of human beings like the



tendency for role-taking and suggestibility (Weisbuch & Ambady, 2008; Whitehead, 2011, 2012). Thus the self not only is not a coherent whole but is composed of many contradictory or paradoxical components that should be held together. Straus (1978) explains:

If we postulate that integration of self and/or identity is a lifelong open-ended process rather than a systematic organization of parts or systems, then we cannot presume that a "normal" human being comes to be "well integrated" in the course of development. Rather, we are continually integrating our selves out of sometimes contradictory bits and pieces, sticking them together by imputing meaning here and ignoring edges there, focusing attention now on this set of defining elements while barely experiencing others. In the course of living we may shift definitions of the situation, reconstellating and continuously rearranging ourselves-even while we consider ourselves "the same." Such a model provides for the openness and fluidity we claim to see in human life. It also provides a mechanism for consequential reality reconstruction, that is, for the ability of a person to adopt new definitions of the situation and enact these as defining elements of everyday life (pp. 417 & 418) .

In hypnosis, like other consciousness altering enactments, the social self becomes temporarily dissolved and new potentials for change and transformation become available. Different aspects of this critical process are important for social and cultural theory and I have tried to shed light on some of them in this chapter.

### **Summary and concluding remarks**

Hypnosis is a brief interpersonal relationship that can change the individual's perception of reality. Although the words and sentences that the hypnotist uses are the main tools for hypnosis induction, the hypnosis is a semiotic process in which different verbal and non-verbal signs are involved. Suggestions are not expressed only in the form of words and sentences. In fact the whole semiotic space around the subject is used to induce the change of perceptions and sensations. Sociocognitive theorists of hypnosis believe that altered consciousness is not a necessary component for the experience of hypnotic phenomena and consider hypnosis as 'role-taking' (and not role playing). They point to the fact that any role-taking could contain or develop hypnotic phenomena and also that consciousness might be altered during any role-taking. This view could become even broader when we think about the semiotic network of culture and the direct and indirect suggestions that we receive in our daily life.

As shown, development of the social self is an ‘other’ dependent process from the beginning of life. In fact the self is not a coherent whole per se and it is the result of integration of different social roles that a person takes during life in her or his cultural context. In each role, different meanings are assigned to different realities in the person’s life and in a lifelong effort, the person tries to incorporate these different realities to provide a coherent meaningful whole. Exploring hypnosis shows that how a new social role could bring forward the unknown and hidden abilities of people and construct a new world.

Another important point that the study of hypnosis teaches us is that we cannot achieve a true understanding of the nature of these influences without bringing the embodied experience of people into account. This means that in any area of sociology in which social agency is important (like the problem of structure and agency and discourse analysis), if we do not consider the embodied experience of the agent, we will fail to reach a comprehensive understanding.

In this chapter I have considered hypnosis and its relation to the development of the social self and the phenomenology of volition. But there are other aspects of hypnotic experience that are socially important: The emerging field of affect studies which emphasize the need to reconsider marginalized aspects of psychology like suggestibility, telepathy and voice hearing and their importance in the process of affective transfer (Blackman, 2010) is promising. Also the evolving interest in crowd psychology and the place of suggestibility and imitation in social organization has led to the formation of another important field of research (Blackman, 2007, 2008, 2012; Borch, 2005, 2012). The effects of hypnosis on memory and consciousness, and the role of imagination are other important notions that could be considered.

In conclusion, reconsidering hypnosis and similar dissociative phenomena can illuminate the new aspects of social interaction in the context of developing embodied and relational sociology.

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1- Here I summarize Scheiffle’s (2001, 2003) explanation of how acting can change the 14 dimensions of ASCs based on Farthing (1992):

1- Attention: Both in acting and ASC the person is fully present in the moment. In acting, the attention should be highly focused to what is happening right now in the present moment.

2- Perception: delusions and hallucination can be experienced as reality during acting. Also the actor's sensations might be altered during acting. For example, an actor might feel cold or warm under the effects of the role he or she is playing in a theatre which is not really cold or warm.

3- Imagery and fantasy: the ability to enact fantasies is enhanced on the stage and is at the core of some methods like psychodrama. Enacting dreams is usual in psychodrama and people doing that frequently describe it as going back to that dream.

4- Inner speech: when fully involved, inner speech is silenced and the actor becomes totally absorbed in the task in hand. In role-reversal (the psychodrama technique in which the actor exchanges role with another person) sometimes inner speech becomes changed into that of the other person.

5- Memory: acting has different effects on memory like remembering long forgotten memories or remembering an event from another point of view (e.g. in role reversal). Like hypnosis, memory recall seems to be improved but again here the possibility of formation of false memory under the effects of suggestions is present.

6- Higher level thought processes: creativity and problem solving abilities are enhanced during performance. People sometimes reach to creative solutions for their problems when acting a role.

7- Meaning or significance of experience: the mystical experience of being one with others and environment has been described in ASCs. This also has been experienced in acting. Furthermore, the actors feel that the life on stage is magnified and bigger than the reality of daily life.

8- Time experience: in acting, due to total absorption, time can stand still. Time experience is non linear. Timelessness and eternal presence can also be experienced.

9- Emotional feeling and expression: the emotional expression could be uninhibited both in ASCs and acting. This freedom of expression of emotion has beneficial effects via the release of unexpressed emotions.

10- Level of arousal: the physiological signs of arousal like increased heart rate and breathing are seen in acting. In fact one of the reasons that acting is interesting is because it is exciting. Similarly this arousal could be seen in ASCs.

11- Self-control: spontaneous acting may be experienced in performance in which actions happen without control. The experience of immediacy in this context is similar to what is described in different ASCs and mystical traditions.

12- Suggestibility: like in hypnosis, the actor may accept the directions and suggestions of the director and other actors as real. Enactment of childhood in drama could become part of memory and is used as a therapeutic technique.

13- Body image: skilled actors can change their body image to that of the character whose role they are playing. They can feel their body as being lighter or heavier than what it really is according to the characteristics of the character. Also the experience of pain is diminished during deep involvement in acting.

14- Sense of personal identity: enacting different characters is liberating for actors as they realize that they can be different. The sense of personal identity could be altered during acting. Sometimes actors feel they are someone else or even possessed by a god. In psychodrama, during role-reversal, the person may become deeply absorbed in the role so that they cannot come back to their normal identity. The Director in this situation should use de-roling techniques to help her or him to come out.

## **Chapter 7: Hypnosis, placebo and performance: recovering the relational aspects of medicine**

In previous chapters I tried to show that how relational context acts to form and reform the boundaries between consciousness and unconscious. Also I tried to demonstrate that dissociative theory of mind helps to explain the ways by which conscious reflexive processes, most importantly internal conversation and unconscious processes such as various forms of automatism, can function together. Using the examples of hypnosis and athletic training the complex interactions among various conscious and unconscious forces were explored. To show the practical implications of applying this theoretical framework in a real life context, my aim in this chapter is to analyse the place of relationality in health care. According to my background in medicine, I take the experience of doctor-patient relationship and based on the research findings in the fields of placebo and hypnosis research argue that relational context has a critical role in the formation of healing response. In this process all the conscious and unconscious forces discussed in previous chapters are involved. Here I will try to clarify the place of relationality and its relationship to various conscious and unconscious healing mechanisms in the context of health care.

Consultation between a physician and a care seeker is a frequent and essential event in health care systems and its outcome depends not only on the medical knowledge and technical skills of the doctor, but also on his or her ability to communicate effectively. Changes in the paradigm of medicine affect the quality of this encounter and the dominance of biomedicine as the working paradigm of modern medicine has resulted in a change to the pattern of doctor-patient interaction (Morgan, 2008). In biomedicine, the emphasis is on the human as a biological and physiological machine and as a result, sciences such as biology, physiology and anatomy are considered to be the ‘basic sciences’ (Greaves, 2002; Pauli, White, & McWhinney, 2000). The model of interaction which has emerged in the biomedical approach is the paternalistic (guidance-cooperation)

relationship in which the doctor is the expert and source of knowledge who gives advice that the patient should passively accept it. Although this model functions well in some situations such as emergencies and in the management of acute infectious diseases, it is insufficient in many other contexts such as the care and management of chronic diseases (Morgan, 2008). In spite of many efforts to eradicate chronic health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes, there is still a long way to go to achieve this goal (Wagner et al., 2001). In chronic health conditions, after a while, the patients become familiar with the basic medical and technical knowledge about their problems and clinical consultations mainly focus on issues related to long term management of the disease. As a result, it has been argued that a patient-centred approach in which the patient's views, feelings, thoughts and needs are respected is especially necessary in the care of chronic conditions. Such an approach improves the quality of decision making for patient care, results in adherence to treatment, and more effective ways of addressing the patient's concerns (Mead & Bower, 2000). Furthermore, as it will be discussed in this chapter, this relationship has a healing effect per se.

Considering these facts, the aim of this chapter is to explore the power and potentials of the relational space as an important but not sufficiently explored area of research in medicine. For this purpose, two fields of research, hypnosis and placebo, are briefly considered and the place of performance in the development of healing response in these contexts will be examined. Finally, I will try to show the consequences of these understandings such as the need for the use of qualitative research methods.

### **Hypnosis: imagination and role taking**

Although the astonishing power of suggestions has been described in the texts dating back to the ancient times, the first reports of hypnosis being used as a therapeutic modality go back to the time of the 18th century Austrian physician Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815). In his system of treatment, it was believed that there is a special fluid present everywhere in the body and any disturbance in distribution of this fluid results in the formation of diseases. The idea of presence of such a fluid was not verified but certain characteristics of Mesmer's healing method have been regarded as important factors in his success. In a treatment session, a crisis was an essential episode in which patients experienced a trance like state, after which the healing occurred. To induce the crisis, the dramaturgical nature of Mesmer's practice was crucial. He had a charismatic character,

dressed in a showy manner and the room in which treatment was performed was elaborately decorated (Ellenberger, 1970; Whorwell, 2005).

Since that time, extensive research has been done in the field of hypnosis in medicine and the effectiveness of hypnotherapy for the treatment of different health conditions has been shown. Hypnotherapy helps patients with a wide range of problems such as chronic pain, asthma, irritable bowel syndrome, warts, migraine and anxiety (Heap & Aravind, 2002; Kroger, 2008; Olness, 2008). In spite of this proven effectiveness, hypnotherapy has not been incorporated to the mainstream treatments of the modern medicine. Upshaw (2006) argues that the negative perception of medical educators, practitioners, patients and even the general public is the barrier to appropriate use of hypnosis in medicine. As Olness (2008) explains, it is certain misperceptions that make the general public fearful of hypnosis, such as the incorrect idea that hypnosis is sleep or the notion that the hypnotist takes control of the subject during hypnosis.

In terms of the underpinning mechanisms of hypnotherapy, there is a controversy among researchers. Some believe that hypnosis happens when the person goes in to a special state of consciousness different from our ordinary consciousness in everyday life. Others believe that although alteration of consciousness happens under hypnosis, an extraordinary change in the state of consciousness is not necessary for experiencing hypnotic phenomena. The debate between these two groups of researchers has resulted in the formation of so-called state and non-state theories of hypnosis. The non-state theories of hypnosis, also called sociocognitive theories of hypnosis, emphasize the psychosocial context in which the hypnosis happens (Kallio & Revonsuo, 2003; Lynn et al., 2008).

The sociocognitive theorists of hypnosis believe that hypnotic phenomena are the result of suggestions and they can be experienced without hypnotic trance. Researchers in this field have shown empirically that all hypnotic phenomena such as hallucinations, changes in perceptions and feeling of automaticity and involuntariness can be experienced out of the trance state as well. They conclude that the trance state is not the essential component for experiencing hypnotic phenomena and there are other factors important for these to happen (Coe & Sarbin, 1991; Lynn et al., 2008). Kirsch (2001) explains:

If the effects of suggestion are not produced by magnetism or by trance states, then how are they produced? The data point to two factors. One is a talent or ability to experience an imaginary state of affairs as if it were real. The second is the person's beliefs and expectations. The effects of suggestion, in or out of

hypnosis, may be due to a tendency to experience the world as one expects to experience (p.800).

Hence, in the view of the sociocognitive theorists of hypnosis, imagination, belief and expectations of hypnotic phenomena are the most important components necessary for their development. As a result, they define hypnosis as a process of ‘believed-in imaginings’ (Sarbin, 1998).

Considering these facts, it is obvious that defining the situation has an important role in the success of the hypnotist and the quality of the experience of the hypnosis. For example, the knowledge of the subject about the nature of hypnosis and the assumptions that she or he has about what is experienced during hypnosis can determine the quality of the experience. Apart from that, environmental factors such as the space, smells, sounds and etc. are also factors involved (Coe & Sarbin, 1991; Lynn et al., 2008). Furthermore, although it is generally assumed that the subject under hypnosis has a passive role, it is not in reality the case. During hypnosis, especially at the beginning, the subject has to cooperate and actively participate and use or her imagination to experience the hypnotic phenomena. In fact, it is after a while and only in so called ‘deep hypnosis’ that the feeling of automaticity or involuntariness is experienced (Miller, 1994; Straus, 1978). Consequently, the general belief in people’s mind that the relationship in hypnosis is unidirectional and the hypnotist applies his power and controls the subject by suggestions is wrong. Hypnosis is impossible without the cooperation of the subject and in fact their active participation and use of imagination and creativity is essential in order to experience the hypnotic phenomena. Also the hypnosis will not have a good outcome if, in formulating the suggestions, beliefs, interests, feelings and emotions of the subject are not considered (Laurens, 2007). In other words, as Coe and Sarbin (1991) state, by performing the rituals of hypnosis induction, the hypnotist implicitly or explicitly conveys this message to the subject that ‘Please participate in a miniature drama’ (p. 317) and it is the choice of the subject to take this role or not.

To clarify the meaning of believed-in imaginings, distinction should be made between role playing and role-taking. Hypnosis is a role taking process similar to other social roles that people take in their life. For example, when teachers are performing their job in the class, they believe that they are teachers and because of that embody this role with the totality of their mind-body system. It means that they are not faking the role of a teacher. In a similar way the person under hypnosis takes the role of a hypnotic subject.



Actually, defining hypnosis as role taking has been a source of misunderstanding for many researchers; but sociocognitive theorists do not say that hypnosis is role playing or faking. Instead they define it as a role taking similar to other social roles that the people embody in their daily lives (Coe & Sarbin, 1991; Kirsch, 1998; Lynn et al., 2008).

Even in the case of role playing, it has been shown that deep engagement with a role can alter the state of consciousness. In an empirical study by Scheiffele (2001), a scale measuring different dimensions of altered state of consciousness was given immediately after an improvisational acting exercise to a group of acting students and the results show that a significant alteration occurred in their state of consciousness. The change in the state of consciousness after acting can be so profound that a director may sometimes use de-rolling techniques to bring the actor back to the ordinary consciousness (Scheiffele, 2001, p. 187, 2003, p. 16). Also, in his contribution Zarrilli (2011) has explored the effects of performance on altering consciousness in modes of role playing and theatre in west and east. In a historical approach, he notes to the fact that the modern aesthetic theatre is rooted in early forms of ritual/shamanistic practice. These practices have various functions such as pleasing gods, predicting the future and getting power for diagnosis and treatment of diseases. In the context of non-western traditions of performance he states that in these practices direct experiential knowledge has always been central. He brings different examples of these psychophysical methods of altering consciousness in eastern traditions such as Yoga, Zen meditation, martial arts and genres of performance such as kutiyattam and kathakali in India, and noh in Japan. In the west, he discusses that under the influence of Russian director Konstantin Stanislavsky (1863-1938) an innovative system of actor training began in which various modalities and techniques applied to actualize the altered states of consciousness necessary for performance.

In the context of medicine, the consequence of the above discussion is that the healing effects of hypnosis might be achieved outside the hypnotic trance as well and this fact connects hypnosis to the placebo effect (Kirsch, 1985, 1999). Here, placebo effects will be introduced briefly and then the connection between the two will be explored in more detail.

### **Placebo, meaning and interpersonality**

Placebo is an inert medicine or intervention, such as a sugar pill, which is prescribed for the patient condition. Usually the doctor knows that the placebo does not have any therapeutic effect in that condition but tells the patient that it will help and in

many cases it is effective (Miller & Kaptchuk, 2008, p. 222). Studies have shown that many doctors prescribe placebos in their practice (Meissner et al., 2012, Fässler et al., 2010, Howick et al., 2013). There is an ongoing debate about the ethical concerns related to prescribing placebos because, especially in modern medical ethics, there is an emphasis on the autonomy and the rights of the patients to know about the treatments and the interventions used in the management of their problems. In spite of that, many clinicians believe that prescribing placebos is not unethical and their benefits outweigh the disadvantages (Bensing and Verheul, 2010).

American anthropologist Daniel Moerman (2011, 2006, 2002b, 2002, 2002a) emphasizes the fact that we already know the placebo itself - in the form of a pill or any other intervention is inert and the mechanisms of healing involved are not related to the action of placebo. So, if the placebo has no role here, how does the healing happen? Moerman (2011) believes that the meaning of the placebo for the patient is the key factor and describes the placebo response as a 'meaning response'. Consequently, any change in the intervention that could alter its meaning could affect the outcome of the treatment. For example, injecting the drug may be more effective than prescribing it orally. Also any information given about the intervention could change its effects as well. Even minor characteristics of the intervention such as the colour, shape or smell of the pills and medicines used are important. In summary, the context in which the placebo is prescribed assigns meaning to it and this meaning is the basis for activation of healing response involved in the emergence of placebo effects.

As it might be imagined, the results of the suggestions coming from the environment are not always positive and they could create negative consequences as well. In fact this notion has been identified and the term *nocebo* has been coined to describe it. Here this concept will be briefly reviewed.

### **The nocebo effect**

Nocebo effect is developed when the negative expectations or affective state result in the development of sickness, symptoms or exacerbation of existing health condition (Cohen, 2014; Hahn, 1997). The classical form of nocebo effect is 'Voodoo death' which has been described by American physiologist Walter B Cannon (1942). In this work, he showed anthropological evidence from the natives of various regions such as South America, Africa, Australia and New Zealand that sudden and inexplicable death happened in response to being cursed. When these people were informed that they had been cursed,

their health condition deteriorated suddenly and they died in a short period of time. Cannon attributed this phenomenon to the psychological shock and the emotional stress resulting from the bad news and the consequences that they had for the internal physiological balance of the victim's body.

Hahn (1997) considers four categories for nocebo effect. The first one is the effects originating from the internal world of the individual. Negative mood and certain psychological conditions are frequently associated with negative expectations. For example, depressed people usually lack hope and more frequently expect pathology. The second is related to nosological categories and self-scrutiny. For instance, the people who are always concerned about their heart condition are more frequently diagnosed with non-cardiac chest pain and evidence shows that the belief in being susceptible to heart problems is a risk factor in developing real heart attack. The third type is the sociogenic illness. In this case, observing and learning illness or symptoms in others results in the development of similar conditions in the person. The outbreaks of 'epidemic hysteria' and increase in suicide rate after the release of the suicide news of celebrities or in response to media stories about suicide are examples of this type. Lastly the nocebo effect could be sickness or symptom induced. In this form the negative suggestion could negatively affect the medical or surgical intervention. For example, asthmatic patients more frequently react to nebulised normal saline when they are told that they are inhaling irritants or allergens. Clearly these different forms of nocebo effect could have diverse consequences in various area of health care. One consequence is related to the notion of informed consent and the ethical concerns about the nocebo effect resulting from giving information regarding the possible negative outcomes. Calling this the nocebo effect of informed consent (NEIC), Cohen (2014) argues that the ethical dilemma raised by this is important and it is necessary to be addressed properly. On the one hand according to the need for respecting patient autonomy and the right of the patients to know about the possible side effects of interventions, it is necessary to inform the patients about the possible negative consequences and complications of interventions they are receiving. On the other hand there is compelling evidence available that shows informing the patient about the side effects and complications could result in their actual formation and it is in contradiction with the rule of "do not harm" in medical ethics. The author advises that in addressing the question of optimal balance between disclosure of information to the patient and nonmaleficence, the dilemma of the NEIC should be considered.

Thus, the effects of suggestions in the matrix of relationships can be harmful as suggestions and the meaning of the events and interactions with the socioecological environment are not always positive. These facts reveal the complexity of the effects of psychosocial interactions on people's health states. In the next section, the connections found in the fields of placebo and hypnosis are considered together with the interactions of health professionals and clients in the clinical setting.

### **Placebo, hypnosis and the relational context**

Kirsch (1994) regards hypnosis as a non-deceptive placebo, as in hypnotherapy the expectations of client are manipulated without the need for an inert pill or intervention in place of active treatment. The response expectancies are defined as anticipation of positive responses which are taking place as a consequence of particular stimuli or behaviours. Spiegel (1997) believes that the ability of imagination is a distinguishing feature of human beings from other animals which affects their health status and plays a key role in placebo/nocebo response. In his view, if the individual is placed in a situation in which some factors result in dissociation and absorption and suggestibility is maximized, then placebo response is developed.

Considering placebo effects as a meaning response can also connect this concept to hypnosis. As mentioned, hypnotic phenomena can be seen outside the hypnotic trance, and suggestibility, belief and expectancy are the key elements in their formation. In the case of placebo, the meaning of the placebo provides the suggestion needed for activation of the healing response. For example, when the doctor tells the patient that 'this pill will calm down your bowels', he or she is giving a suggestion to the patient at the time of prescribing the medicine. This suggestion is not always language based and can be non-verbal as well. For example, if the patient is going to see a well-known professor who has a long waiting list, this very fact is suggestive that anything prescribed will be effective.

Up to this point I have tried to make it clear that the context in which a treatment or intervention is prescribed has a critical role in its ultimate outcome. Placebo researcher Kradin (2011a) believes that although elements such as the shape, colour and form of medicine and environmental factors such as space and time are important in the development of healing response, the placebo response is basically developed by mechanisms activated by the dynamic of interpersonal relationships. In other words, the interactions between the therapist and the patient are central to the development of placebo response. The origins of these mechanisms are rooted in the early life interactions of the

newborn with her or his caregiver. These are the soothing and relaxing mechanisms which are developed early in life so powerfully that their activation later in life has modulatory effects on the immune system, reducing anxiety and promoting healing effects (Kradin, 2011b). Similar mechanisms are activated during a hypnotherapy session and are involved in the formation of its healing effects (Vandenberg, 1998b).

Benson (1997) believes that three components are necessary for development of development of placebo or nocebo effect. First, the belief and expectancy coming from the patient, second the belief and expectancy from the therapist side, and third, the belief and expectancy which is constructed by the relationship between these two. Understanding the fact that the dynamic of interpersonal relationships is important in the formation of healing response makes it clear that the quality of relationship between therapist and patient determines the success in the activation of healing mechanisms in the patients. As mentioned, in the modern biomedicine paradigm, the dominant pattern is the paternalistic relationship in which the doctor takes the control of the consultation and the patient has a passive role. Especially in the sociology of doctor-patient relationships, many have criticised this domination and regard the doctor-patient relationship as a meeting between experts in which the doctor shares medical knowledge and clinical skills and the patient brings their illness experience and ideas and beliefs about that particular health condition (Morgan, 2008). Others, such as Maseide (1991), disagree and believe that power is necessary for adequate medical practice. He claims that because the doctor has the knowledge and skills needed, it is they who should take control of the consultation because it is the competency of the doctor that legitimates his or her authority. Similarly Schei (2006) believes that attacking the power of doctors is not correct and claims that the structural and symbolic power of doctors is necessary for actions that make the healing process possible. She argues in favour of clinical leadership and states that an imbalanced relationship is necessary during clinical consultation in order to lead the patient effectively. Kirmayer (1994) takes a balanced position and tries to describe what ideally should happen in a session of clinical encounter. He argues that suffering and distress in the body is a shapeless and unformulated experience and illness experience is dependent on interpretation and explanation. Assigning any meaning to the chaotic and unfamiliar sensations of pain and distress can give order to it, thus reducing the fear and anxiety of the patient. In fact, in his formulation, Kirmayer takes a step further from the above discussion and claims that even the process of making diagnosis is therapeutic because it

gives shape to the ambiguous and vague experience of sensations and pain and distress in the body. After listening to the patient story and looking for the signs, the doctor makes an authoritative diagnosis. The doctor should then explain the next step, which is the treatment strategy, which allows more space for improvisation. In other words, diagnosis is an authoritative basis for constructing a treatment strategy and this should be done creatively. But there is no definitive border between these two stages and keeping balance between the two is important in clinical practice. Kirmayer (1994) explains:

Authority is concerned with legitimation and hence with truth, while the therapeutic enterprise is fundamentally concerned with *how to continue* and hence with the improvisation of meaning. While authority is necessary to provide a structure (themes or modes) on which variations can be improvised, authoritative meanings inevitably restrict the possibilities for invention by clinician and patient. Seen from this perspective, the goal of the clinical negotiation between patient and physician is to create an interpretation of distress with enough closure or certainty to diminish the threat of the inchoate while preserving enough openness and ambiguity to allow for fresh improvisation. The ideal balance between ambiguity and certainty varies over time and with the characteristics of the participants in the clinical encounter as well as with the exigencies of family, work and the health care system. (pp. 183-184, italics original).

As mentioned, the main problem of health care systems in the modern world is the management of chronic health conditions. In some chronic diseases such as diabetes or heart failure, a diagnosis is easily made in the early stages of disease and the patient becomes aware of what is going on in his body. In some others, the process of making diagnosis is not that easy. For these conditions, which are described by terms such as ‘functional somatic symptoms’, or ‘medically unexplained symptoms (MUS)’ (Fink et al., 2005), no definitive aetiology has been found. In fact, there is a network of different causes involved in the formation of these disorders. In any case, in a chronic health condition, after the initial diagnosis, the main topic of clinical encounters is the management and treatment of that known condition and this is actually the part in which the therapist has enough space for creativity and improvisation. This is a delicate process in which the carer should be vigilant of the patient’s story, signs and symptoms and the thoughts and emotions around that. In a sense, it could be described as improvisational acting in which the clever and experienced therapist carefully monitors the actions and

behaviour of the patient and responds appropriately. But here again, similar to hypnosis, the doctor invites the patient to participate in a miniature drama and there is a chance that, for some reason, a patient may decline this invitation, fail to cooperate and refuse to share her or his feelings, beliefs and experiences. Even the best practitioners are not always successful and on occasions fail to make a good rapport with some patients. Consequently, the physician-patient relationship is a reciprocal interaction which needs the active engagement of both sides. This clarifies the importance of acting in the clinical context but more needs to be said about the place of performance in medicine and here it will be explored briefly.

### **Performance and medicine**

Although the contributions of the works of American sociologist Erving Goffman (1922-1982) such as *Asylums* (1961) and *Stigma* (1963) on the revolution in institutional care are well known, there are many inspiring ideas for medicine and health care systems in his other important work *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1992). In this book, Goffman tries to show the dramaturgical nature of social life and brings many examples from different social contexts to show the similarities between the elements of theatre such as front and backstage with the social interactions of everyday life. Among these, there are some interesting instances from the medical context which shed light on some aspects of our discussion. Goffman explores the theatrical nature of the health care system in different places. Discussing different requirements of taking a social role he states that each role should be performed in its appropriate front. In the case that a role is new for the person and for the society, sometimes the best front should be chosen from pre-existing opportunities or, if needed, a new front could be invented. He takes the example of the task of administering anaesthesia in the early stages of its development. He explains:

In some hospitals anaesthesia is still administered by nurses behind the front that nurses are allowed to have in hospitals regardless of the tasks they perform- a front involving ceremonial subordination and a relatively low rate of pay. In order to establish anaesthesiology as a specialty for graduate medical doctors, interested practitioners have had to advocate strongly the idea that administering anaesthesia is a sufficiently complex and vital task to justifying giving to those who perform it the ceremonial and financial reward given to doctors. The difference between the front maintained by a nurse and the front maintained by a doctor is great; many things that are acceptable for nurses are infra

dignitatem for doctors. Some medical people have felt that a nurse 'under-ranked' for the task of administering anesthesia and that doctors 'over-ranked'; were there an established status midway between nurse and doctor, an easier solution to the problem could perhaps be found (pp. 38, 39).

Today, with the rapid progress of medical technologies, each day brings a new device or instrument to health care and this issue of emerging new roles in health care systems is even more relevant.

Arguing the belief of the social actor in the part he is playing, Goffman explains that a cynical actor is a person who 'has no belief in his own act and no ultimate concern with the beliefs of his audiences' (p.28) and the actor who believes in his acts is 'sincere'. Then he introduces an exception: an actor who is always sincere but sometimes:

...forced to delude their customers because their customers show such a heartfelt demand for it. Doctors who are led into giving placebos, filling-station attendants who resignedly check and recheck tire pressures for anxious women motorists, shoe clerks who sell a shoe that fits but tell the customer it is the size she wants to hear-these are cynical performers whose audiences will not allow them to be sincere. Similarly, we find that sympathetic patients in mental wards will sometimes feign bizarre symptoms so that student nurses will not be subjected to a disappointingly sane performance (p. 29).

Consequently, Goffman categorizes the act of giving placebo to the patient with other similar behaviours seen in the society which are seemingly insincere or even sometimes unethical but are done with the intention of helping or serving the customer. Interestingly, he also points to a situation in which a patient is doing such an insincere act for the sake of helping a health professional trainee. In a broader view, he tries to show the importance of the visible and tangible activities done by health professionals for patient satisfaction. He uses the example of nursing practice in surgical and medical wards. In surgical wards the care of the post-operative patient includes recognizable tasks such as changing bandages and swinging orthopaedic frames. But in a medical ward, the tasks are more frequently composed of activities which are not grossly visible and understandable without explanation, such as checking the number of the breaths or the colour and tone of the skin. In the latter, it is more probable that the patient thinks the nurse is 'wasting time' (Goffman, 1992, p. 41).



In the clinical encounter of the doctor and patient, this element of dramatization is very important and Goffman provides some examples to show that. He points to the fact that the practitioner usually pretends to remember everything about the patient, and even in the cases where the patient does not remember a point, such as the tablet prescribed in the last visit, he or she expects the doctor to remember it without difficulty and it is not acceptable for the patient that the doctor cannot remember too. The other instance is the process of referring a patient to a specialist by a general practitioner. Although it seems that the specialist has been chosen because they represent the best option, other factors such as the ties between the two doctors may play a role in the decision (p. 58).

Using these examples, Goffman shows the essential role of dramatization and performance in interpersonal interactions in the health care system and in the context of the clinical encounter between doctor and patient. As discussed, the events that happen in interpersonal space are essential for the activation of healing mechanisms and formation of the placebo response. The power of relationship in the activation of healing mechanisms is so important that the psychoanalyst and psychiatrist Michael Balint (1896-1970) speaks about the drug doctor and believes that the doctor her- or himself is a potent drug. In his research he aimed to show the function of the doctor as a drug and find out the benefits and side effects of this drug in the process of diagnosis and treatment. Exploring the general practice of medicine, he revealed the problems that doctors trained in the biomedical paradigm have in recognizing the psychosocial context behind their patients' health conditions and the effort that they make to find an organic cause for any complaint of the patient, thereby failing to discover the meaning of the symptoms that emerged out of the patient's particular psychosocial situation (Balint, 1957; Kirkby, 2011).

In his contribution, Myers (2010) introduces placebo as performance and tries to see the act of prescribing placebo from this perspective:

The doctor who says, "Try this, it might help," while prescribing a placebo, is utilizing a performance to heal the patient, for there is no healing agent other than the words issued by the doctor and the authority of those words. It is the doctor's performance, not the placebo that heals the patient (p.1296).

Emphasizing the concept of embodiment, he points to the fact that the biophysiological life of the body is not something detached from the social and cultural world and the effects of the interactions in the social world become inscribed in the physical body. Also, the subjective experience of distress and pain which is the result of

the biological processes of the body has no meaning per se. The meaning is assigned to these experiences through authoritative diagnosis and the way the doctor describes the problem according to the logic of the biomedical paradigm. The fact that placebo, in spite of its inertness, has healing effects depicts the power of rituals in medicine.

The importance of rituals in medicine has been revealed in different studies. In one study, Kaptchuk and his colleague (2006) compared the effectiveness of real acupuncture with placebo treatment. In this study 270 chronic pain patients were divided into three groups and treated by acupuncture, placebo acupuncture and placebo pill. The result of the study shows that the real acupuncture was the most effective treatment but the placebo groups had also pain reduction to some extent. In placebo groups interestingly it was revealed that the pain reduction in the placebo acupuncture group was greater than in the placebo pill group. To explain these results, the increased effectiveness of placebo acupuncture was attributed to the effects of the ritual of acupuncture. In another study Ostefeld-Rosenthal (2012) qualitatively explored the experience of patients with medically unexplained symptoms who were treated by energy therapists. In this research she shows that healers focus and reflect on the bodily sensations and embodied experience of patients. In their treatments, they use the imagination of the patients to induce changes in bodily experiences and ask them to describe their feelings and sensations carefully and comment and interpret this information according to the system of beliefs of the method of healing that they use. Calling the pre-reflective, pre-linguistic bodily feeling and sensations, the 'bodily experienced symbols', she argues that placebo response in its essence is manipulating these symbols, re-editing the body and self-image using the healing rituals. She views the primary skill of healer as using the power of linguistic symbols and bodily experienced symbols to help the patients to have the healing experience.

Apart from the alternative and complementary medicine, the power of ritual also has been considered in the context of modern medicine. Wall (1996) states that the rituals of surgical procedure are important in development of healing responses in the patient. He argues that the structured process of surgical operations with all its details is a kind of non-verbal communication which conveys the message to the patients that going through this ritual helps them to move from disease to health. Similarly, Green (2006) has compared the events that happen before and after the operation with the rituals of shamanistic healing and claims that these events give suggestions to the patients that the intervention will be

effective and increase their expectancy for the experience of healing. Evidence shows that in some cases the efficacy of surgeries was related to this placebo effect and not to surgical procedures. For instance, one study showed that the widely used surgery for treatment of knee osteoarthritis is actually no more effective than sham surgery (Moseley et al., 2002) and it was the placebo response resulting from the rituals of knee surgery that ultimately led to pain reduction. Moerman and Jonas (2002) claim that surgeries produce even stronger meaning response because surgical procedures have convincing rational explanations which are not present in drug treatments. In a broader view, Brody (2010) argues that rituals are present in various areas of today modern medicine. He particularly speaks about two commonly seen examples of the process of physical examination and 'ward round' in teaching hospitals (p.154). In the former, the senior doctor examines the patient in a search for relevant signs and in the latter the findings are communicated to other participating doctors and students. All these events are meaningful for the patients and are functional in the activation of the healing response.

Considering the above discussion it could be claimed that although the healing mechanisms are present in the body, the patient is unable to activate them without the help of social context and interpersonal interactions. It is through the medical rituals' conscious and unconscious, verbal and non-verbal suggestions that these healing mechanisms become activated and help the patient to recover. The first step is the invitation of the patients to express their feelings, thoughts, emotions and beliefs about the suffering they are experiencing. After that, in the process of consultation, meaning is assigned to embodied experiences. Metaphors have a key role in this context. Lakoff and Johanson (1980; 1999) have shown that the origins of the metaphors that we use in our daily life are in our embodied experiences. One example is the unconscious use of spatial-relations concepts (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 30) we use in our everyday communications which are related to our spatial experience of our bodies. When we say 'the prices are raised', describing prices as entities which are going up is only a metaphor originating from our embodied experience. For instance, metaphors also can in turn change the bodily perceptions sensations and cognition (Kirmayer, 2011). To give verbal and non-verbal suggestion and manipulate the expectation and beliefs of the patient, it is important for the therapist to be a good actor and play her or his role in harmony with the role that the patient is taking.

Case and Brauner (2010) discuss the benefits of using acting classes and performance in medical education. They claim that using acting in medical education can improve the ability of what they define as empathic imagination which is 'a cognitive skill set that helps one to imagine the experiences and responses of another person' (p.159). This ability is necessary for understanding patients' feelings and emotions and giving an appropriate response in the process of caring and treatment. They also provide different examples of applications of theatre in medical education. Acting is important for activities such as presenting a patient's history to the supervising doctor, taking a history from a person who is playing the role of the patient in an examination and participating in an educational round. Further, students consider their seniors as role models and learn the proper way of interacting with patients. Accordingly, many efforts have been made to incorporate theatre and performance to medical education. In one study, Dow and his colleagues (2007) used theatre teaching to enhance the skills of clinical empathy in medicine residents. They define clinical empathy as 'the skill of recognizing a patient's emotional status and responding, in the moment, to the unique needs of the patient to promote better clinical outcomes' (p.1114). In a controlled trial, they showed that the skills of residents who participated in a course for teaching this skill had a statistically significant improvement compared to the control group which were assessed before and immediately after the curricular intervention. In the study conducted by Shapiro and Hunt (2003), one-person shows about AIDS and ovarian cancer were presented to a group of medical students, faculty, community doctors, staff and patients to enhance empathy and improve the understanding of illness experience in students and health professionals. The results of their assessments were positive and showed that the participants felt they acquired better insights towards the nature of illness experience. In another study (Hammer et al., 2011) theatre training was provided for medical students to improve their case presentation skills. For this purpose a group of teacher artists taught storytelling skills to medical students. All participants believed that using learning acting skills is beneficial for medical students but there was an interesting comment from one of them criticizing the course teachers saying: 'Too much focus on how this relates to medicine. We will realise that later. For now, teach us the [performance] skills' (p. 20). The authors believe that this unnecessary explanation by course teachers is a sign of the tension between science and humanities and the fact that modern medicine is reluctant to accept humanities as an important part of medical practice and education. The other topic that I would like to

address in this chapter is the importance of self-care and the place of reflexivity in maintenance of good health according to the above discussion.

### **Reflexivity, lifestyle and self-care**

As mentioned, after successful control of acute health problems such as medical emergencies and infectious diseases due to the achievements of biomedicine, the main concern of health care systems is the management of chronic health conditions such as diabetes and hypertension. As these conditions are present in the life of the patients for a long period of time, lifestyle modification and active participation of patients are crucial components of proper management of these problems. In other words, the patient's agentic power is necessary for successful management of these conditions. In their study, Bayliss and her colleagues (2003) investigated the barrier of self-care in patients with chronic health condition. They argue that self-care is a very difficult task for these people because usually they have several chronic conditions together. Also they point to the several barriers of self-care in the results of their research including 'physical limitations, lack of knowledge, financial constraints, logistics of obtaining care, a need for social and emotional support, aggravation of one condition by symptoms of or treatment of another, multiple problems with medications, and overwhelming effects of dominant individual conditions (p. 15)'. Considering Archer's (2003, 2010a) dialogic theory of reflexivity in which personal agency is mediated through the internal conversation, it could be claimed that in the process of self care and management of health conditions and in efforts for lifestyle modification and adjustment, all these different barriers and obstacles take a place in the related internal dialogues of the patients. Obviously to help the patients with their self-care it is necessary for the voice of the doctor to be incorporated to the internal dialogue of the patients and it is possible only when the doctor is aware of the content and concerns of the voices engaging the internal conversation to accommodate and adjust the new voice with the existing ones. Control of unhealthy habits is the other crucial step in care and prevention of chronic conditions. As discussed in chapter 4, there is a complex interaction between different modalities of consciousness and automatic behaviour which can lead to change of detrimental habits. Also it was mentioned that the possibility of self-hypnosis provides the opportunity for suggestions to be internalized and helps people to overcome the automatism of undesirable behaviours. Focusing on the dynamics of the relationship between intersubjective interactions and reflexive processes of the internal

world is crucial for improving the health status of the society. In the next section, the implications of the above discussion for research are briefly considered.

### **Implications for research**

Apart from medical practice and education, there are some implications for research as well. According to the fact that the placebo effect has been defined as meaning response, to understand the mechanisms involved it is necessary to realize the meaning of elements of treatments and interventions for the patients and to focus on the qualitative aspects of these elements in the clinical setting. Also, considering the performative nature of medicine and the importance of the sociocultural context in the formation of the healing response, there is a need to develop innovative research to explore the mechanisms involved. Placebo is usually considered as a non-specific healing response but there have been attempts to specify the underlying mechanisms and some explanations have emerged based on relevant psychological theories such as classical conditioning and expectation theory (Kirsch, 1997). Research findings in the field of psychoneuroimmunology also shed some light on the complex interactions between psychological phenomena, the endocrine and immune systems and the consequent negative and positive health effects (Kirmayer, 2006). Furthermore, drawing on new findings in social psychology and using various concepts and theories such as priming, client perceptions and theory of planned behaviour, attempts have been made to clarify the ways by which placebo response can be enhanced and harnessed (Sliwinski & Elkins, 2013). In spite of these efforts, there are many obscure and unexplored aspects of processes involved and as Kirmayer (2011) states still there is no comprehensive theory of healing. In this context, several critics (Dean, 2004; Goldenberg, 2006; Rafieian, 2010) argue that the research approach of the dominant model of modern medicine in which the Randomized Clinical Trial (RCT) is the gold standard, cannot adequately explore the complexity of various factors involved in the health system as this approach does not bring into consideration certain critical aspects of this complexity, such as the phenomenal world of people, their health beliefs, emotions and the important qualitative psychosocial factors which have defining effects on the health status of people in the society. In the recent movement in biomedicine called Evidence-Based Medicine in particular there is an overemphasis on the information coming from quantitative empirical studies in the process of clinical decision-making and this further amplifies the above mentioned problems regarding the qualitative aspects of health care. Although using qualitative research methods is not new to health care and a significant

repertoire of knowledge is emerging from qualitative studies, there are still certain elements missing in this context. For instance, Ellingson (2006) observes that health research is rarely embodied and qualitative researchers usually do not explain their bodily experiences in research and she urges the need for embodied writing in qualitative research. To summarize, by analysing both the hypnotic phenomena and placebo effects, this chapter has shown that there is a complex interconnection between biophysiological, interpersonal and sociocultural aspects in a clinical setting. To show these complex interconnections, there is a need for research methods that will include both phenomenological and first person experiences of the patient as well as clinical and para-clinical findings from, for example, physical examination findings, tests and imaging results. In other words, researchers should search for both soft and hard data in their investigations (Adler, 2000).

## **Conclusion**

The interpersonal relationship between health care professionals and the care seekers is nearly always present in the clinical context. The overemphasis in the biomedical paradigm on the biological sciences, and their neglect of the psychosocial events that are inscribed into the body, has resulted in the allocation of a majority of research and education tools to biosciences and the emergence of new problems such as ineffective care of chronic diseases and failure to manage functional somatic symptoms. These issues have been well discussed in the sociology of medicine and health psychology. In this chapter, using the results of research in the fields of hypnosis and placebo, I have shown that performance and acting elements play a key role in the dynamic of healing response. I have taken further steps towards the development of a theory of healing. The obvious fact is that, to understand these mechanisms, knowledge from several disciplines is required. As discussed, performance and theatrical studies are very important in this context. Although it was shown that teaching acting skills to medical trainees can enhance empathy in their interactions with the patients, it also improves their ability to evoke the healing response as well. New theories of performance can help to clarify some unknown aspects of the healing process in the clinical encounter. Also they can inform research and help to improve research methodologies in order to show more clearly the complexities of health and disease in the real world.

Furthermore, giving enough space to the clients of health care systems to express their thoughts, feeling and emotion and knowledge of the health professionals about the

phenomenal world of care seekers provides the opportunity to help them to use their own reflexive consciousness for self-care, lifestyle modification and adjustment and take responsibility for maintenance of a healthy, productive and creative life. This important process is currently under-theorised and there is a need to develop new theory based on available theories of agency and reflexivity.

Finally, it was explained that placebo is a meaning response and to understand the dynamics of healing response formation there is a need for research methods which are capable of capturing the qualitative aspects of interpersonal interactions, the embodied experience of the people involved, and the phenomenal world of clients and health professionals. The current biomedical research approach is not adequate for this goal and there is a need for an alternative perspective and innovation in research methodology.



## Chapter 8: Conclusion

In order to define a theory of the individual which does not treat the person as under- or over-socialized, there is a need for an understanding of consciousness as well as the closely related concepts of agency and structure. The aim of this project was to provide a better understanding of the dynamic of consciousness and the unconscious in social behaviour using emerging ideas and examples from relevant fields such as psychoanalysis, sociology and social psychology. To understand the relationship between structure and agency, I have adopted the position of analytical dualism in which subjectivity is considered to be real, causally effective and irreducible. In this view, the property that distinguishes agency from structure is reflective self-consciousness. In spite of that, evidence supports the idea that unconscious forces are also involved in shaping the individual's social behaviour. In this research I have attempted to make a distinction between different forms of consciousness and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the unconscious in social theory. Here these categories and their relationships are briefly reviewed.

### **Modalities of consciousness**

***Embodied consciousness:*** this form of consciousness is the first to be formed in human development. It is necessary for the formation of the primary sense of self which is pre-linguistic and is constructed on the basis of bodily perceptions. These sensory data and perceptions come from various sources and are disorganized in early life. It is the relationship between the child and others, especially primary care-givers, which is necessary for the organization and integration of these data and the construction of a coherent and integrated sense of self. These relationships are important for the shaping and regulating of emotions and the way that they are experienced in the body. Throughout life, embodied self-reflexivity is necessary for monitoring of actions and is also important for the recognition and regulation of emotions. These facts are known to various schools of meditation such as mindfulness meditation in which body awareness and embodied reflexivity are primary topics of interest and embodied self-reflexivity is used as a tool for self-control and emotion regulation. In addition, there is a tight relationship between

embodied reflexivity and the phenomenological sense of agency or the individual's ability to discriminate between voluntary and involuntary actions.

***Discursive consciousness:*** this form of consciousness is expressed in verbal statements of facts and events and is necessary for the formation of the other mode of reflexivity, namely internal conversation. Although language has a basic role in internal conversation, it is an embodied process. From a developmental point of view, internal dialogue develops through the process of role playing in the early years of life in which the child plays the roles of others and while playing the role of a character, expresses aloud the ideas of that character. Gradually the child learns to speak quietly and internalizes the roles of others. Since internal conversation is constructed on the basis of embodied consciousness it is important to note that the quality of internal voices is always dependent on and coloured by the embodied experiences and emotional states which are perceived by embodied consciousness. After maturation, internal conversation can be used as a tool that functions independently from society. It is not merely the product of the internalization of ideas and viewpoints of others. In spite of that, it also remains open to the incorporation of others' voices, a phenomenon which is known in psychology by the term suggestibility (Fernyhough, 1996, p. 53). The extent to which the internal dialogue can function independently and its characteristics depend on the way that caregivers have interacted with the individual in the early life period. A healthy attachment and appropriate collaboration with the child in solving problems results in the development of a dialogical mind. This enables the child to acknowledge different aspects of complex realities and makes her capable of considering different dimensions of a problem in the process of problem solving. In other words, as discussed in Chapter 5, it can be claimed that the more independent forms of reflexivity –namely autonomous and meta reflexivity– are seen in people with a more fully developed dialogical mind. Agency is complex and it would be incorrect to reduce it to internal dialogue, or to suggest that the more reflexive a person is the better the agent or person they are. However, reflexivity is an important aspect of it and has an important role in mediation of agency. Despite Archer's major contribution, this notion is an underexplored concept in sociology and there is scope for more research on the subject.

### **Categories of unconscious**

***Psychoanalytic unconscious:*** in traditional psychoanalysis, the formation of the unconscious is a process that, along with discursive consciousness, primarily takes

place in the early years of life and the mechanism involved is repression. I have tried to develop a new conceptualization of the unconscious using the dissociative theory of mind, new understandings emerging in the field of memory studies and ideas from dialogical self theory. In this view, through embodied encounters with the surrounding world, a large amount of information is registered but a great deal of this remains shapeless and is categorized as ‘unformulated experiences’. It is the relational contexts in which individuals are engaged that define what experiences become formulated. In other words, the relational context helps the individual to translate the sensory data, bodily perceptions and embodied emotions into linguistic codes and express them discursively. Accordingly, only those experiences become formulated that are compatible with the existing structure of the self. Experiences that could potentially damage the coherence of identity and cause emotional pain and threaten the integrity of self remain unformulated and unconscious. As discussed in Chapter 2, this interpretive and context dependent view of self and identity formation is compatible with new understandings of memory formation in which this process is considered to be constructive and interpretive. In contrast to the concept of a linear and factual structure for memory, the view here is that the way that the memory of an event is registered depends on the broader context in which it occurs. Memories of the past are not solidified but will be reconstructed according to the context in which they are remembered. Also, forgetting, not just remembering, is crucial for identity formation, and for the maintenance of a coherent self.

In the context of psychoanalysis the role of the therapist is to help the client to address and formulate the unformulated experiences which are the source of unhappiness and discomfort. Drawing on this conception and using the Habermasian theory of the public sphere, it was argued (Chapter 3) that people according to their unique personal characteristics engage with different public spheres and formulate experiences that they cannot express discursively without the help of relational context. In this view, the public sphere is not unitary and there are several spheres in which different people with various characteristics and needs become engaged.

***Psychological unconscious:*** this type of unconscious is related to the process of habit making and formation of automatic behaviour. It is possible for some routine and repetitive actions to be performed with minimal need for conscious attention. This mechanism allows everyday skills to be acquired and performed more quickly and efficiently. Also this organization makes it possible to use consciousness economically and

is in fact a parsimonious approach to expenditure of conscious resources. As discussed in Chapter 4 this model is compatible with Bourdieu's habitus theory and the process by which the socialized body is formed. One of the advantages of the dissociative theory of mind is that it allows for two or more processes to take place together and one or more of them to carry on with minimal need for conscious attention. This model also provides the flexibility necessary for consciousness to shift from one process to the other. It means that automatic behaviour never functions completely independently. In normal daily life activities it is always possible for the agent to shift their attention to a particular process and monitor it.

Considering these different categories, it is also important to explore the ways in which they interact and the role they play in theorizing agency and the formation of social behaviour. In the next section, discussing the interactions and relationship between these categories, I will try to reassess the key concepts of this project in the light of the above categorization.

### **Discussion and concluding remarks**

Prior to focusing the various concepts discussed in this research, including the details of conscious and unconscious interactions, it is important to recapitulate some of the basic concepts and the consequences of applying them to the development of theory and explanation. In Chapter 2, it was argued that some theorists in sociology and psychoanalysis have tried to re-evaluate the concept of relationality and provide a new conceptualization of it. In relational psychoanalysis, it is believed that the need for relationship with the other is original and not secondary to other instinctual needs such as hunger and the sexual drive. In this view, the organization of the conscious and unconscious takes place on the basis of the relational context with which the individual is engaged. In relational sociology, concepts such as power, agency and identity are only meaningful when they are conceptualized relationally. Accordingly, any essentialist and static understanding of social phenomena is flawed and they should always be understood dynamically as being transactional and processual. Relational psychoanalysts also implicitly endorse this view as they believe in the formation and reformation of mind in the relational context. Since agency is a core concept for this research, it is the first to be re-evaluated here.

**Agency:** usually the individual is considered to be the agent of an action or behaviour if she or he does it intentionally and is able to control it consciously. I believe

that one of the sources of confusion in theories of structure and agency is that theorists do not consider the dynamic and relational nature of consciousness. In his habitus theory, Bourdieu emphasizes the process of socialization and embodiment and the fact that structure can penetrate into the agent's body. One of the reasons why critics find his theory deterministic is because they fail to consider the shifting nature of consciousness. It means that although, as Bourdieu (1990) states and is discussed in Chapter 4, the body is structured through its interactions with the field, without the need for conscious aiming and intentionality, social practice always remains accessible to conscious monitoring and reflexivity. For example, a typist uses her fingers with a normal keyboard very fast and with minimal need for attention. But as soon as one of the keys stops functioning she must type consciously in order to solve the problem. In this view, the body always remains in transition between structure and agency and any static conceptualization of the structure and agency relationship results in confusion.

The other important notion in this context is the phenomenological sense of agency. In popular belief, people are able to discriminate between phenomena that just happen to them and the ones that they make happen and are authored by them. But the study of hypnosis shows that some particular forms of interpersonal communication can cause the individual to be deluded about the cause of their experience. I think this issue is neglected in sociology and has not been well explored. As it was discussed in Chapter 6, to experience hypnotic phenomena, alteration of consciousness is not necessary and, as was shown in Chapter 5, the sense of involuntariness and automatism can be experienced in other contexts such as the peak performance of highly creative people like athletes and musicians. In the field of hypnosis, there are some known patterns of language that are used in the induction of hypnosis. One of the important points about these patterns of communication is that bodily experiences and sensations are usually the target of formulaic suggestion. Today, it is well known that there is a reciprocal interaction between linguistic concepts and embodied experiences. It is known that metaphors and concepts that we use to explain our ideas, even the most abstract topics, originate from our embodied experiences. It is also known that conceptual phrases and metaphors can affect embodied experience. The other point in this context is that the people's phenomenological sense of agency in relation to their life experiences and the extent to which they feel in control of their lives are influential in the way that they decide and behave in the social context. If the matrix of relationships and patterns of communication in the daily life of the

agent are suggestive of involuntariness and distort the sense of agency, they would be unable to function properly and participate actively in the process of social transformation.

The other notion worth considering in this context is the relationship between reflexivity and agency. Archer attributes the role of mediation between structure and agency to internal conversation. As mentioned, in internal dialogue, different aspects of a reality are assessed and a decision made according to the outcome of this internal dialogue. But one important point in this context is the fact that different voices in the internal conversation are not disconnected from the body and are coloured by the emotional states that the individual embodies. This idea could be supported by the fact that in some mental health conditions such as depression, the internal conversation not only fails to help the person, but also is converted to rumination, namely the uncontrolled repetition of negative thoughts and ideas, causing further deterioration of the situation. Accordingly, to theorise internal conversation as a process disconnected from body and embodied emotions is inadequate.

Regarding internal conversation it was also argued that it is a process that requires attention and consciousness and one of the advantages of the possibility of automatism of routine action is that it provides the necessary free conscious resources for engagement with internal conversation. In other words, involvement with external activities is a barrier for effective internal conversation. In the case of hypnosis, one of the factors necessary for success of hypnosis induction is subjects' deep engagement with the details of suggestions and their efforts to actualize the contents of suggestion as well as possible. It means that any critical evaluation of suggestions results in the failure of hypnosis induction. In a similar way, in the Milgram experiments discussed in Chapter 6, the participants were deeply engaged with the details of experiments and doing their tasks according to the instructions. This engagement with details of the study and the instructor's pressure to go on with the study resulted in the failure of many participants to critically evaluate the process using the internal conversation and understand the unethical consequences of the progress of experiment. Here it is important to note that there were few people who declined to continue with the experiment in spite of the fact that they took that decision under the same circumstances. This difference between participants' responses could originate from variations in the ability to maintain independent reflexivity. As mentioned, healthy attachment and interactions with care givers in early life results in the development of dialogical mind which enables the individual to be independently

reflexive. The possibility of developing a dialogical mind in people who have not developed it properly in the early years of life is an important question that should be addressed. Today, there are various forms of psychoanalytic and psychological therapies that help people with the problems that they are unable to solve using their own reflexivity. But these methods only have function for the group of people who struggle with their life problems to the extent that they sense the need to get help from a specialist. There may be also other modalities such as adding new courses in systems of education or producing new programs for radio and television or designing new internet websites which can help the people to become more reflexive, choose more creative ways of living and better contribute in the process of social change and transformation. The other core concept explored in this research was the self and identity formation.

***Self and identity:*** it was shown in Chapter 5 that to develop a balanced conception of identity construction, it is necessary to consider both unconscious processes underlying habitus formation and conscious processes related to reflexive deliberation in an integrated model. Drawing on the insights provided by the dissociative theory of mind and psychology of automatism, I attempted to clarify the dynamic of conscious and unconscious interactions and the place of embodied and discursive forms of consciousness in this process. During waking encounters with the world the consciousness is continuously shifting from one object to another. These objects could be external entities such as a friend or a flower or they could be internal such as a dream or an internal dialogue. During any of these conscious engagements the whole embodied person is experiencing the world around and a great deal of information is unconsciously registered. These data contribute to the formation of unconscious emotions and bodily feelings and as a whole develop the so called unformulated experiences. In this view, narrative identity is the result of the formulation of a part of those unformulated experiences. This happens relationally either via internal conversation or in dialogue with an external other. This process of formulation of shapeless experiences begins actively from the development of language, especially internal conversation, and carries on until death. In the course of shaping their experiences, individuals interpretively and constructively formulate the experience so that it is compatible with the whole structure of the self and any incompatible experience remains unformulated and unconscious.

Considering the repetitive nature of day to day life, any theory in which the role of routines and habitual life is not addressed will be inadequate. In Chapters 4 and 5 it was

argued that in Bourdieu's theory there is an attempt to explain the role of habitus and field in identity formation. But this view has been criticized as being deterministic. In contrast, Archer posits a central role for reflexivity especially in the form of internal conversation in formation of self and identity. However, in her theory of self formation, the role of routines and habitual actions are not adequately theorized. Archer developed her theory of reflexivity on the basis of the ideas of Charles Sanders Peirce, particularly his dialogical self theory. It is ironic (as discussed in Chapter 2) that in Peirce's philosophy, habits and habit formation have a central place. To him, the most important property of mind is habit making and he believes that the main topic that a psychologist should study is habit making and not consciousness. For him the main function of internal conversation is regulation and control of habits. In other words, Peirce was aware of the power of habit making in shaping people's lives and he considered self-reflective consciousness to be a tool for controlling and reshaping habitual behaviours.

To support this view, Chapter 5 used the two examples of sport training and hypnosis to clarify the ways in which discursive and practical consciousness interact with automatic processes. In the case of sport training it was argued that although in the moments of peak performance automatism is the key mechanism, prior to that, many hours of practice are necessary in which both discursive and practical consciousness are involved. In the process of training, with the help of the network of intersubjectivity, the trainee reflexively monitors and elaborates the techniques of their sport using different modalities of consciousness i.e. body awareness, internal conversation and listening to comments and feedback from the coach and other members of the training team. In the other example of hypnosis, a similar dynamic of interaction between discursive and bodily consciousness and automatism is seen. In hypnosis, suggestions are formulated in the forms of words and sentences which direct the subject's attention to various internal objects such as bodily sensations and feelings and imaginary scenes. But the aim of suggestion is the development of involuntariness and automatism which is at the core of hypnotic experiences. Hypnosis is a known powerful tool for treatment of various health conditions especially those in which autonomous physiological processes are malfunctioning. It is also used for habit control. Hypnosis exemplifies an embodied process in which the bodily processes are affected by imagination and suggestions. According to Bourdieu (1998, p. 81), in the process of interaction of habitus and field the body is socialized and 'structured'. The possibility of self-hypnosis supports the idea that



the internal conversation is always open to incorporation of new voices and this can ultimately result in the restructuring of the body. It is interesting that hypnosis, imagination and autogenic training are known methods for increasing the performance of athletes and evidence shows that imaginary practice can effectively improve the function of sportspeople in real life situations (Barker, Jones, & Greenlees, 2013; Uneståhl, 1996). Considering these complex interactions of conscious and unconscious processes in the context of identity formation, it is necessary to take all these details in to account to provide an adequate theory of self and identity.

***Dramaturgy and role taking:*** theatre is a known metaphor in social sciences and the performative nature of societies has been the core concept for a range of social, cultural and anthropological theories. As discussed in Chapter 6, one important consequence of taking a role is the alteration of consciousness. Also, in Chapter 3 it was argued that dissociation is a complex phenomenon which can be studied at different levels. Emphasizing rituals and the sociocultural context of dissociation, anthropologists have provided a non-pathological conceptualization of dissociative phenomena. They have shown that alteration of consciousness in these contexts can actualize some unexpressed and undiscovered potentials of the self. In traditional societies, various rituals and ceremonies were available to address this need but in modern societies, in which the traditional forms of rituals and ceremonies are vanishing, new alternatives such as group activities like concerts and sporting events as well as personal activities such as watching television and reading novels have emerged. There is a capacity among people of all societies for taking on new roles and participating in activities that help to construct new forms of experience. While the shaping and reshaping of self through different forms of role taking in society is well discussed in traditions of sociology such as symbolic interactionism, I have shown that imaginary role taking is also consciousness altering. This kind of role embodiment is seen in various forms in virtual reality such as computer games or when a person is becomes absorbed by the story of a movie. It is important to consider this function of role taking in developing new theories in sociology. With the emergence of new communication technologies especially Internet and World Wide Web, new forms of engagement with media has become possible and the new concept of interactivity has emerged (Ariel & Avidar, 2015; Bucy, 2004; Downes & McMillan, 2000; Kiouisis, 2002). Defining interactivity as 'the degree to which a communication technology can create a mediated environment in which participants can communicate (one-to-one, one-to-many,

and many to many) both synchronously and asynchronously and participate in reciprocal message exchanges (third-order dependency)', Kiouisis (2002, p. 379) emphasizes that the psychological factors and ability of the person to perceive the experience are also important in this context. Accordingly, the dissociative mind theory and the concepts developed in this research could be helpful for the further development of more comprehensive definitions for interactivity and other related concepts.

***Relationality, embodiment and institutions:*** in the previous chapter I tried to apply the conceptualizations developed in the earlier chapters to medicine and health care and tried to explain how applying these views could result in a change in practice, education and research in health care systems. I have argued that in the current model of medicine, namely biomedicine, there is an excessive emphasis on drugs and new technologies, while interpersonal relationships are at most adjunctive, supporting and secondary to drug and technology based treatments. In contrast, I attempted to show the central role of relationality in the activation of healing mechanisms and the fact that body is consciously and unconsciously affected by the meanings that are assigned to the elements of the environment in which the health services are delivered. Drawing on the findings in hypnosis research it was argued that the patterns of communication between clients and health professionals are crucially important in the activation or suppression of healing mechanisms. It follows that, instead of the current linear and mechanistic model, there is a need for a comprehensive theory of healing in which the complexities of biopsychosocial interactions are considered. Further to this, drawing on Archer's view about internal conversation as the mediator of agency, it was argued that in order to help people to apply their agency to choose a healthy lifestyle and take responsibility for their own health, it is necessary for health professionals to become familiar with the voices present in their internal dialogue. On this basis they would be able to incorporate their health messages as new and effective internal voices in dialogue with other voices and provide the necessary means for health behaviour change.

I think it is possible to apply this theoretical framework to other social institutions such as the justice system, market institutions and educational systems and to theorize the changes that may occur when these principles are applied. For example, in the case of educational systems some scholars have argued that modern systems of education are disembodied, that educational activities are normally designed based on the cognitive abilities and that bodies are disregarded (Kelan, 2011; Rathunde, 2008). In the context of

early childhood education, as Tobin (2004) states, the body is losing its place and instead of the activities in which the body is actively used such as playing in a sandbox or running in a playground, more time is devoted to computer based activities. In terms of relationality also, she argues that interactions both with teachers and with other children are diminishing. For instance, it is now less likely that a young child will be given a hug or sit on the lap of a teacher. Similarly, physical interactions between children are decreasing. To address these issues it is necessary to revise the theoretical framework of educational systems. Applying embodied and relational views could be helpful in developing more adequate theories.

To summarize, in this project, which focused on the close relationship between consciousness and agency, I tried to develop a theoretical framework in which the place of conscious and unconscious forces in the formation of human social behaviour can be clarified. To achieve this, I borrowed ideas from various disciplines such as psychoanalysis and social psychology. The main finding of this research is that to avoid the under- and over-socialized conceptualizations of the social agent, it is necessary to consider both conscious and unconscious forces and also to draw on a dissociative theory of mind. Emerging ideas in relational psychoanalysis and relational sociology contribute to the development of a more comprehensive theory in which two important concepts can be reconciled, namely habitus and reflexivity. Given the interdisciplinary nature of this project, to merge ideas and connect concepts from different disciplines was not a straightforward or easy task. Apart from the possibility of errors in the translation of concepts and ideas from one field to the other, there is also a risk of misunderstanding when there is a lack of engagement with the research findings of a particular area. In spite of that, to develop stronger theories about a complex problem like structure and agency interdisciplinary research is essential and the solution for above mentioned problems with theory making in this way is only critical reading and reassessment of produced conceptualizations. This means that the key concepts like agency, self and relationality produced in this research should remain open to further critique and assessment. Further, these conceptions should be applied to various domains to produce theories about different social institutions. In the previous chapter, I demonstrated how these ideas can be applied to medicine and health care. There is obviously further need to elaborate this framework in the context of health care. Finally, applying these conceptualizations in other fields such as education could be the topic of further research and theory building.

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