Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann: The social construction of reality

Introduction: the problem of the sociology of knowledge

Reality and knowledge

Long history of philosophical inquiry. Also in sociology >
Sociology of knowledge: dealing with how knowledge of
reality comes to be socially established as reality.

Object of study

The analysis of the social construction of reality. Differs from
the traditional sociology of knowledge.

Previously

Explicate in what way and why, Berger and Luckmann
deviate.

Max Scheler

Wissenssoziologie. Germany 1920s. Philosophy. Aim to clear
away the problem of relativity. See point 1, 2 and 3 below.

General agreement

Concerned with the relationship between human thought and
the social context within which it arises.
The problem of the vertigo of relativity.

1. Marx

Man’s consciousness is determined by his social being.
Ideology and false consciousness.
Substructure/superstructure.

2. Nietzschean ideas

Anti-idealism. Social significance of deception and self-
deception, and of illusion as a necessary condition of life. The
art of mistrust: seeing through the facades of social structures.

3. Historicism

Esp. Dilthey. The relativity of all perspectives on human
events, the inevitable historicity of human thought.

Karl Mannheim

Key concern: Ideology > no human thought immune to the
ideologizing influences of its social context.

Relationism

(as opposed to relativism): No capitulation of thought before
the socio-historical relativities, but recognition that
knowledge must always be knowledge from a certain
position.

Espacing ideology

Not eradicated completely, but mitigated by the systematic
analysis of as many positions as possible. Belief in the
intelligentsia – free of class interests.

Robert Merton

Seeks to integrate sociology of knowledge with structural-
functional theory.

Traditional empirical focus

The sphere of ideas, of theoretical thought.

Berger and Luckmann’s project

Not concerned with such epistemological and methodological
problems. Rather the sociology of knowledge has to concern
itself with everything that passes as knowledge in society.
Hence not theoretical ideas, Weltanschauungen. What people
know as reality in their everyday lives. In short the social
construction of reality.

Influences

Marx, Alfred Geilen, Helmut Plessner. Durkheim (the
nature of social reality); Marxist dialectical theory of society;
Weber (the constitution of reality through subjective
meanings), George Herbert Mead (social-psychological
presuppositions).

I. The foundations of knowledge in everyday life

1. THE REALITY OF EVERYDAY LIFE

The object of sociology

The empirical world as we interpret and perceive the reality.

Intersubjective

Necessary to clarify the foundations of knowledge in
commonsense of the world everyday life. As we come to share an intersubjective understanding of the everyday reality.

> Phenomenological analysis As a descriptive method. Refrains as such from causal and genetic hypotheses. Uncover various layers of experiences and structures of meaning.

Spheres of reality E.g. dreamworld vs. everyday reality: “different objects presents themselves to consciousness (…)”

The reality of everyday life Reality par excellence. Presents itself as an objective, a priori reality: “imposes itself upon consciousness in the most massive, urgent and intense manner.” Self-evident and compelling facticity.

Closeness/remoteness Experienced around the “here” of my body and the “now” of my present. From this closeness to spatially and temporally remoteness. Zones of reality.

Intersubjective world Shared with others. Sharply differentiated from other realities (such as my dreamworld). Ongoing communication processes of meanings. > Commonsense knowledge.

Sectors of everyday life Everyday routines and sectors of interruptions/problems. Interruptions of routines > the reality of everyday life seeks to integrate the problematic sector into what is already unproblematic.

Excursions to other realities Theater, dreamworld. The return to the everyday life appears as coming home from excursions. Back to the real world. “Endemic producers of finite provinces of meaning” Attention is turned away from the reality of everyday life.

Spatial structuration Has a social dimension < my manipulation zone intersects with that of others.

Temporal structuration An intrinsic property of the consciousness. Temporally ordered consciousness. Temporal dimension of the intersubjectivity of everyday life. My own life and my own projects have to be correlated with this temporal structure of everyday life.

2. SOCIAL INTERACTION IN EVERYDAY LIFE
Face-to-face situations definitely priviliged as situations where people really can learn to know each other. “The prototype of social interaction”. This sub-chapter is clearly of great interest in a discussion of personal media and social interaction. F2F encounters > full access to the other’s “symptoms”: the other is fully real.

The other as more real than myself “What I am” is not so available. The need for deliberate contemplation upon myself. Makes me think of Foucault’s notebook and obviously personal media as tools for the self.

Typifactory schemes Used also in F2F encounters. But more flexible and apt for change than in less proximate encounters.

Social structure Continuum of typifications, progressively more anonymous as they are removed from the “here and now” of the F2F situation. Social structure as the sum of these typifications.

3. LANGUAGE AND KNOWLEDGE IN EVERYDAY LIFE
Objectivation Human expressions objectified. The reality of everyday life is dependent of objectivations.

Signification Human production of signs. With explicit intention to serve as an index of subjective meanings. Available beyond the expression of subjective intentions “here and now.”

Detachability from immediate expressions of subjectivity.

Language as obviously the most important sign system. Language only
as far as vocal expressions have become capable of detachment from the immediate “here and now” of subjective states. An understanding of language is required in order to understand the reality of everyday life.

Language as detached
< 1. as technically mediated
< 2. its capacity to communicate meanings that are not direct expressoins of subjectivity “here and now.” Accumulations of meaning and experience.

Materialised speaking/writing
“I hear myself as I speak. My subjective meanings become “more real” to me. Again clearly parallels to Foucault’s technologies of the self. “Ready-mades” > objectification of my experiences. Transcends the “here and now”.

Transcendental
- Bridges different zones within the reality of everyday life, integrates into a meaningful whole.
- Transcends the reality of everyday life altogether: like writing down one’s dreams.

Relevant knowledge
Our everyday life consists of knowledge that is relevant to our own lives, our own situations. As long as we do fine with this, there, wider knowledge is irrelevant, unnecessary. However, leaves the world behind our immediate relevance as opaque. We need not have detailed knowledge about this world.

Relevance structures
My relevance structures intersects with the relevance structures of others > We have interesting things to say to each other.

II. Society as objective reality
1. INSTITUTIONALIZATION
a) Organism and activity
World-openness: man’s relationslip to his environment. Not pre-determined by biological equipment.

Becoming human
A continous process, not completed in the mother’s body. Continuing socially determined interference. Human beings construct their own nature, produce him/herself. Plasticity of human nature/organism. Thus the self has to be understood in relation to the encompassing social environment.

Social enterprise
“How Homo sapiens is always, and in the same measure, homo socius.”

Stability and social order?
How can there be stability if the human being is characterised by world-openeness?
1) A given social order precedes any individual organismic development.
In what order does social order itself arise?
2) Social order is an ongoing human production. Social order exists only as a product of human activity.

b) Origins of institutionalization
Human activity is subject to habitualization: frequently repeated actions > patterns. Narrows choices, frees energy to concentrate on other decisions. Habitualization precedes institutionalization.

Institutionalizations arise
Whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors. Shared typifications. Institutions imply historicity and control.

Control human conduct
Predefined patterns of conduct. Channels human action. Social control through institutionalization.
A and B example
Illustrates how habits evolve. When passed from generations: institutions in nuceo.

Appears as natural
and objective. All institutions appears as given, unalterable and self-evident. Instutional worlds are experienced as objective reality.

Humanly produced
objectivity
The objectivity of the institutional world is humanly produced, constructed objectivity. Objectivation: the process by which the externalized products of human activity attain the character of objectivity.

Dialectical relations
Between man, the producer, and the social world, his/her product.

Externalization
Objectivation
Internalization
Society is a human product. Society is an objective reality. Human is a social product.

Requires legitimization.
Ways by which it can be explained and justified < Historical reality: the same story must be told. Consistent and comprehensive formulas.

Knowledge about society
Realization in a double sense:
1) apprehending the objectivated social reality
2) ongoingly producing this reality

The constructed reality
“It is learned as objective truth in the course of socialization and thus internalized as subjective reality. This reality in turn has power to shape the individual.”

c) Sedimentation and tradition
A small part of human experiences are retained, and saved as recognizable and memorable entities. Individual sedimentation. Intersubjective sedimentation: when these experiences are shared > common stock of knowledge.

Detached experiences
Sedimented experiences are detached from their original context < Language/objectively sign system. Experiences are transmittable. Objectivates the shared experiences, makes them available to all within the linguistic community (40 years later, blogs seem to be relevant in this discussion).

Sedimentation and institutions
Sedimented institutional meanings. Formula character to ensure their memorability: Conceived and communicated as knowledge. Various mnemotechnic aids.

d) Roles
Typification of forms of action, objectified linguistically: developed role-vocabularoy. Performers of objective, generally known actions. Roles when typification occurs in the context of an objectified stock of knowledge common to a collectivity of actors.

Origins of roles
Lie in the process of habitualization and objectivation (as the origins of institutions). All institutionalized conduct involves roles.

Roles represent institutional order
Takes place on two levels:
1) Performance of the role represents itself: e.g. the judging individual is not acting “on his own” but as a judge.
2) The role represents an entire institutional nexus of conduct.

Roles makes institutions a real presence in our experiences. Institutions are further represented by their linguistic objectifications.

Roles and knowledge
Roles as mediators of specific sectors of the common stock of
### e) Scope and modes of institutionalization

#### Differentiation
- Degree of division of labour with concomitant differentiation of institution. Specialized knowledge.
- Economic surplus, makes possible a specialization and segmentation in the common stock of knowledge. Theoretical knowledge.

#### Relationships between institutions?
- In differentiated societies. Problem of integrating meanings within the entire society > Propaganda to convince other.

#### Subuniverses of meaning
- In institutionally segmented societies. Result from accentuations of role specialization: role-specific knowledge becomes esoteric against the common stock of knowledge. Subuniverses must be carried by a particular collectivity.

#### > Complexity
- Subuniverses of meaning > variety of perspectives on the total society. Different Weltanschauungen. Increasingly inaccessible to outsiders.

#### Reification of social reality
- The manner in which the institutional order is objectified. The apprehension of human phenomena as if they were non-human. This sort of bear resemblance to Feenberg’s argument concerning technical codes. How we do not see the human values therein. Reification as an extreme step in the process of objectivation: fixated as a non-human inert facticity. “Typically, the real relationship between man and his world is reversed in consciousness.”

#### Reification of social roles
- Roles reified in the same manner as institutions. “I am just doing my job”. Narrows the subjective distance that the individual may establish between him/herself and his/her role-playing.

### 2. LEGITIMATION (derived from Weber)

#### a) Origins of symbolic universes
- How we come to live in the same world? Symbolic universes are legitimated and appear as the most “real world.”

#### Legitimation
- Integration on two levels (and correspondingly the question of subjective plausibility):
  1. The totality of the institutional order should make sense to participants in different institutional processes.
  2. The totality of the individual’s life must be made subjectively meaningful. Plausible subjective biographies.

#### The problem of legitimation
- Arises when the objectivations of the (now historic) institutional order are to be transmitted to a new generation. When the unity of history and biography is broken.
- Legitimation in order to explain and justify.

#### Legitimation’s way of explaining
- Explains the institutional order by ascribing cognitive validity to its objectivated meanings.
- Cognitive as well as normative element. Knowledge precedes values in this legitimating process.

#### Analytical levels of legitimation (overlaps empirically)
- **1. Incipient legitimation**: present as soon as a system of linguistic objectifications of human experience is transmitted.
2. **Theoretical propositions in a rudimentary form:**
ex. explanatory schemes relating sets of objective meanings. Pragmatic schemes, directly related to actions.

3. **Explicit theories:** by which an institutional sector is legitimated in terms of differenitated body of knowledge. Frames of reference for the respective sectors of institutionalized conduct. Begin to move beyond mere pragmatic application > “pure theory”.

4. **Symbolic universes:** Bodies of theoretical tradition that integrate provinces of meaning and encompass the institutional order in a symbolic totality. Symbolic processes (of signification): refer to realities other than those of everyday experience. All sectors of the institutional order are integrated in an all-embracing frame of reference. Encompasses all socially objectivated and subjectively real meanings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crystallization of symbolic universes</th>
<th>follows processes of objectivation, sedimentation and accumulatin of knowledge. Social products with a history.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universes and biographies</td>
<td>How symbolic universes operate to legitimate individual biograhy and institutional order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomic/ordering function</td>
<td>provides order for the subjective apprehension of human experience. All experiences are incorporated into a whole. The world as more intelligible (and meaningful?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomic function for individual experience</td>
<td>Puts everything in its right place, and allows one to return to reality (when being in marginal situations). for discrepant meanings actualized within everyday life. Symbolic universe orders and integrates all meanings, roles, priorities by placing them in a general context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordering biography</td>
<td>Different phases, periodization. Made intelligeble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective identity</td>
<td>The legitimating function of symbolic universes &gt; pertain to correctness of individual identities. “True self” as an ultimately real entity. “(…) legitimation again integrates all conceivable transformations of identity with the identity whose reality is grounded in everyday life in society.” A hierarchy of self-apprehensions of identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social significance of symbolic universes</td>
<td>Paralled to that of individual significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make comprehensive</td>
<td>Provide the delimation of social reality; what is relevant in terms of social interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make comprehensive</td>
<td>Orders history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>Continually threatened by the presence of realities that are meaningless in its terms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human existence as externalization</td>
<td>“As man externalizes himself, he constructs the world into which he externalizes himself. In the process of externalization, he projects his own meanings into reality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>b) Conceptual machineries of universe-maintenance</td>
<td>The symbolic universe is theoretical. Still, one lives typically naively within a symbolic universe. Taken-for-granted, not reflected upon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimation to the second degree – sophisticated</td>
<td>Theorizing about the symbolic universe. Such legitimizations described as machineries of universe-maintainance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Necessary when</td>
<td>Universe-maintainance becomes necessary when the symbolic universe has become a problem (otherwise self-legitimating) &lt; inevitable tensions of the processes of institutionalization.</td>
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</table>
All social phenomena are social constructions. That is, symbolic universes are incipiently problematic.

Universes transmitted From one generation to another. But, socializations are never complete – always idiosyncracies.

Conceptual machineries The need for repression of deviances/against heretical challenge. Conceptual machineries both legitimizes and modifies symbolic universes.

- Heretical challenge from within society
- When confronted with another society with a very different history: demonstrates that one’s own universe is not inevitable.

Conspicuous types Mythological, theological, philosophical, scientific

1. Mythology Represents the most archaic form of universe-maintainance. Closest to the naïve level of symbolic universe and not too far removed from the level of what is generally known.

2. Theology more canonical mythologies. Distinguished from mythology in terms of greater degree of theoretical systematization. Further removed from the naïve level. The body of theological knowledge is hence for difficult to acquire. Specialist elite (as also for philosophy and science).


Therapy To ensure that actual or potential deviants stay within the institutionalized definitions of reality. Appropriate specialists. Internalization of a conceptual machinery.

Nihilation Denies the reality of phenomena and interpretations that do not fit with the concurrent symbolic universe. Assigning an inferior ontological status to deviant definitions.

c) Social organization for Universe-Maintainance Socially constructed universes change < product of human activity. Definitions are always embodied: individuals/groups serve as definers of reality. The question is “says who?”

Specialization of knowledge < the division of labour. More complex forms of knowledge emerge + economic surplus: experts society

Consequences 1. the emergence of pure theory 2. strengthening of traditionalism in the institutionalized actions thus legitimated. > Inertia: resistance to change. Limiting the flexibility of human actions.

Occassions for social conflict

- between experts and practitioners: may lead to emergence of rival definitos of reality, and the appearance of new experts.
- Between rival groups of experts. Problematic when theories do not have pragmatic applications. Cannot really be tested.

Power Includes the power to determine the power to produce reality: determine decisive socialization. “Highly abstracted symbolizations are validated by social rather than empirical support. It is possible to say that in this manner a pseudo-pragmatism is reintroduced.”

Competition between rival definitions of reality are constant. Often connected to different spheres/social groups. Theory is demonstrated to be pragmatically superior by its applicability to the social interests in the group that is its “carrier”. Pseudo-pragmatism.

Universal experts With an effective monopoly over all ultimate definitions of
society. Single symbolic tradition. Primitive societies. Unified power structure. Liquidating strategies to deal with deviances: physically destroyed; integrated within the tradition itself; or segregated within the society and made harmless. Ex. Medieval Christendom.

Monopolistic situations
Presuppose a high degree of social-structural stability. Moreover functions structurally stabilizing.

Ideology
When a particular definition of reality becomes attached to a concrete power interest. Must be modified to suit the specific interests and values it must now legitimate. A process of selection and addition. Ex. Constantine’s involvement in the Christological controversies.

Most societies are pluralistic
Shared core universe and different partial universes coexisting.
Presupposes an urban society, highly developed division of labour, differentiation of social structure, high economic surplus. Thus complex societies.

Pluralism and change
Pluralism accelerates change. Helps to undermine the change-resistant efficacy of traditional definitions of reality. Encourages both scepticism and innovation.

Subsystem

Dialectical processes
Between theories/ideas and their sustaining social processes.

III. Society as subjective reality
1. INTERNALIZATION OF REALITY
The dialectics of society ongoing dialectic process: moments of externalization, objectivation, internalization. – but not in a temporal sequence. “(…) to be in society is to participate in its dialectic.”

Inducted into participation
Beginning point: internalization. “Taking over” the world in which others already live.

Socialization
The comprehensive and consistent induction of an individual into the objective world of a society or a sector of it. Primary and secondary socialization.

a) Primary socialization
Significant other
First childhood socialization. Becoming a member of society. Every individual is born into an objective social structure. Encountering the significant others, in charge of the socialization > constitutes the specific objective social world. Significant others mediates a world, but also modifies it.

Learning and emotion
Identification with significant others in emotional ways. “internalization occurs only as identifiication occurs.” Take on roles and attitudes of significant others.

Dialectic process
between identification by others and self-indentification. Between objectively assigned and subjectively appropriated identity. Subjective appropriation of identity/subjective appropriation of social world – two aspects of the same process of internalizing, mediated by the same significant others.

Generalized other
Abstraction of roles and attitudes – identification with a generality of others, i.e. with a society. Self-identification attain stability and continuity, and identity in general.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Objective/subjective</strong></th>
<th>Symmetrical relationship between objective and subjective reality, but not a complete relationship. Never a total internalization of the objective social world, and subjective biography never fully social.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>Various motivational and interpretative schemes are internalized as institutionally defined.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>First world</strong></td>
<td>Constructed with primary socialization. Stable world &lt; the inevitability of the individual’s relationship to his/her first significant others. Objective social world appears as massively and indubitably real.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>End of primary socialization</strong></td>
<td>When the concept of the generalized other has been established in consciousness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b) Secondary socialization</strong></td>
<td>The internalization of institutional or institution-based “subworlds”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Division of labour</strong></td>
<td>&gt; Extent of secondary socialization. Increases with increasing complexity.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Role-specific</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
|                         | - Knowledge  
|                         | - Require role-specific vocabularies: internalization of semantic fields structuring routine interpretations. |
| **Legitimating apparatus** | Required.  
|                         | > Subjective identification with the role and appropriate norms. |
| **Primary and secondary socialization** | Secondary socialization always presupposes primary s. Must deal with already formed self and internalized world. Problem of consistency > presupposes conceptual procedures to integrate different bodies of knowledge. |
| **Biological limitations** | The foundational structure of specific knowledge. The order of learning things. |
| **Instututional context** | Usually apprehended within secondary socialization. School-system with teachers performing institutional functionaries of transmitting knowledge. Possible to detach part of the self and its reality as relevant only for the specific role-situations. |
| **c) Maintenace and transformation of subjective reality** | > To safeguard a measure of symmetry between objective and subjective reality. Threats to the taken-for-granted reality. E.g. marginal situations that do not fit with this world (dreams again). Challenging definitions of reality. |
| **Two types of maintenance** |  
|                         | - Routine maintenance  
|                         | - Crisis maintenance |
| **1. Routine maintainance** | The reality of everyday life continuously reaffirmed in the individual’s interaction with others. |
| **Significant others and less important others** | Both entail important parts of the individual’s everyday life. Maintained thorough interaction with both types. The New York Times example – reassures us we live in the real world. |
| **Identity**             | Ongoing confirmation from especially our significant others. But also the more general others. (Personal media, perhaps especially hot-or-not sites comes to mind, these popularity of these media can clearly in part be explained with a Berger and Luckmann perspective). |
| **Dialectical relation** | Between significant others and the less important others. Involve the totality of the individual’s social situation. |
| **Conversation**         | The most important vehicle of reality-maintainance. The conversational apparatus both maintains and modifies reality. For instance with doubts concerning reality: “one then “talks oneself into” these doubts; they are objectified as reality |
Language (Personal media) Thus realizes a world: linguistic objectification (clearly occupies in part these functions. Berger and Luckmann also mentions the use of correspondence as possible vehicles to continue especially important conversations.) Plausibility structures Required for the maintenance of subjective reality: specific social base and social processes. Hot-or-not as technique of reality-maintainance? Modern conversation technologies. Berger and Luckmann claim technically mediated conversations are greatly inferior to f2f conversations.

2. Crisis situation Procedures essentially as with routine maintainance. But reality-confirmations have to be explicit and intensive. Frequently also ritual techniques.

Subject reality transformed Ongoing process of modification of subjective reality. Different degrees of modifications.

Alternations: extreme cases of transformations Appear total. Process of re-socialization. The reality-base is the present: everything will have to be explained from the beliefs in the present.

Not ex nihilo Must cope with the preceding nomic structure of subjective reality. Has to include both social and conceptual conditions.

Plausibility structure Must be internalised, displacing all other worlds.

Conversational apparatus are also reorganized.

Legitimating apparatus Most important conceptual requirement. For the whole sequence of transformation. Not only the new reality, but the stages by which it is appropriated and maintained.

Reinterpretations The past and persons of the past need to be reinterpreted. Cannot disappear but must be comprehended in a new way.

Intermediate types F.ex. social mobility and occupational training. Face the problem of maintaining consistency between the earlier and later elements of subjective reality.

Tinkering the past But in a less radical manner. Usually a continuing association with persons and groups of the past.

2. INTERNALIZATION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Macro-sociological context Always the background for micro-sociological analysis of internalization processes.

Socio-structural aspects Of successful and unsuccessful socialization.

Successful socialization High symmetry between objective and subjective reality (and identity). Graduations on a continuum. Extreme poles are unavailable. Maximal success likely in societies with very simple division of labour and minimal distribution of knowledge.

Counter-realities Based on unsuccessful socialization. Counter-definitions of reality and identity < as soon as unsuccessfully socialized individuals congregate in socially durable groups. Counter-reality objectivated in the marginal group of unsuccessfully socialized. The leper-example. Unsuccessful socialization into one world, but successful socialization into another world.

1. Heterogeneity in the socializing personnel > unsuccessful socialization. More complex distribution of knowledge: different significant others mediating different objective realities. Very dubious example of how people may be socialized gays.

> Therapeutic mechanisms.

2. Mediation of discrepant During primary socialization > unsuccessful socialization.
worlds by significant others Complex distribution of knowledge. A little hard to differentiate from the example above. But difference seems to be that this is actually discrepant worlds (not just somewhat different objective realities – versions of the same world). The child – parents/nurse example. > the possibility of a hidden identity: assymetry between public and private identity.

Possibility of individualism Individual choice between discrepant realities and identities: directly linked to the possibility of unsuccessful socialization. “the potential to migrate between a number of available worlds and who has deliberately and arely constructed a self out of the “material” provided by a number of identities.” (171).

3. Discrepancies between primary and secondary socialization In secondary socialization, alternative realities and identities appear as subjective options. Subjectively chosen identity as a fantasy identity, objectified within the individual’s consciousness as “his/her real self”

Different ways of identifying In sec. soc. internalization need not be accompanied by affectively charged identificaton with significant others. Internalizing realities without identification.

Reality and identity pluralism But must be understood related to socio-structural context < necessary relationship between social division of labour (consequences for social structure) and the social distribution of knowledge (consequences for the social objectivation of reality).

3. THEORIES ABOUT Identity

Identity/society Dialectic relationship. Identity formed by social processes, that again are in part formed by social structures. Identity maintained, modified, changed by social relations.

Dialectic process I.e. Identity – social relations go both ways.

Identity types Based on specific historical social structures. Recognizable in individual cases. Social products tout court, stable elements of objective social reality.

Psychologies Theories about identity as social phenomenon. Necessary to recognize the reality-definitions that are taken for granted in the social situation of the individual.

Psychology/subjective reality Another dialectic relationship between psychological theory and those elements of subjective reality that it purports to define and explain. Psychologically defined cases may be internalized as realities through socialization by the individual. Constituents of both objective and subjective reality in relevant contexts. Internalization/identification: psychology pertains to identity. “the imprint of societal identity types upon the individual subjective reality of ordinary people with commonsense”

Changes in psychological theorie When identity appears as a problem. For instance caused by radical changes in the social structures. > Changes in the psychological reality.

4. ORGANISM AND IDENTITY

Human’s animality Transformed in socialization, but never abolished. Dialectic between nature and society.

Dialectic Externally: between individual animal and social world Internally: between the individual’s biological substratum and his socially produced identity.

“In the dialectic between nature and the socially constructed
world, the human organism itself is transformed. In this same
dialectic man produces reality and thereby produces himself” (183).