

Schriftenreihe der DGAP

Donata Schoeller  
Vera Saller (Eds.)

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# Thinking thinking

Practicing radical  
reflection



VERLAG KARL ALBER



Schriftenreihe der **DGAP**

How can one approach the very thought process of thinking, if every reflective move is already a result, a manifestation, of what one is trying to conceive? Verbalizing the act of thinking seems to be doomed to run behind the phenomenon that needs to be grasped.

An inquiry into thinking that accounts for the process of thinking itself can be termed radical reflection. This kind of reflection does not pretend to describe its subject as »given«, independent of the way it's being considered. It faces the challenge of including the *experience* of thinking, as well as the feeling tones that play a major role in thinking and articulating. Thus, the methodologies of radical reflection manifest themselves in cutting edge philosophical, as well as in psychotherapeutic research, in anthropology as well as in the cognitive sciences.

The renowned thinkers from different disciplines in this volume have this in common: their perspectives, questions and means of inquiries do not discount their own embodied practice of thinking and articulating. Their radical methodologies are reflected in new vocabularies and innovative styles of thinking beyond traditional dualities.

#### The Editors:

Donata Schoeller, Ph.D., is teaching philosophy at universities in Switzerland, Germany and the US. She has been trained in first-person-practices such as Focusing, contemplative meditation and the Elicitation Method. Currently, she has finished her book on the development of meaning on the basis of classical pragmatism, hermeneutic and phenomenology. She has published various articles on language, with a special focus on the phenomenon she calls »tentative speech acts.« She has also written books and articles on the medieval understanding of humility as well as on Meister Eckhart, Jakob Boehme and on Hegel. She lives in Zurich and is a mother of three daughters.

Vera Saller, Ph.D., is a practicing psychoanalyst. She published on the challenges of doing psychotherapy with migrant patients. Another major field of her interests and publications concern the intersection of psychotherapy and philosophy. Currently she is involved in research on the life and work of Charles Sanders Peirce. She lives in Zurich.

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Thinking thinking



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# Introduction

*Donata Schoeller, Vera Saller*

[...] has the reader never asked himself what kind of a mental fact is his *intention of saying a thing* before he has said it? It is an entirely definite intention, distinct from all other intentions, an absolutely distinct state of consciousness, therefore: and yet how much of it consists of definite sensorial images, either of words or of things? Hardly anything! Linger, and the words and things come into the mind: the anticipatory intention, the divination is there no more. But as the words that replace it arrive, it welcomes them successively and calls them right if they agree with it, it rejects them and calls them wrong if they do not. It has therefore a nature of its own of the most positive sort, and yet what can we say about it without using words that belong to the later mental facts that replace it? The intention *to-say-so-and-so* is the only name it can receive. One may admit that a good third of our psychic life consists in these rapid pre-monitory perspective views of schemes of thought not yet articulate. (William James 1950)

## Radical Reflection

What does it mean to be engaging in the very thought process of thinking? William James demonstrated the crux of this venture more than a century ago: speaking about what we think is not the same as thinking what we want to say. How much of it consists in words? And yet, the words that »come« are in direct relation to what anticipates them. Still, descriptions fall short. The descriptive use of words is always too late, belonging, as James said, to the »later mental facts« that replace the anticipatory reflections that invite them to *come*. Verbalizing the act of thinking therefore seems to be doomed to remain »theoretical activity after the fact« (Varela 1991, 19), always running behind the phenomenon that needs to be grasped. How can one possibly approach this subject matter, if every reflective move

one does is already a result, a manifestation, of what one is trying to reflect?

An inquiry into thinking that accounts for the act of thinking can be termed radical-reflection (cp. Merleau-Ponty 1948). It is radical by facing the challenge of not discounting its own activity, which means, first and foremost, including the *experience* of thinking and language-use, as well as feeling tones that play a major role in thinking and articulating something. This kind of reflection also needs to be especially creative in the choice of its methodologies, as it cannot pretend to describe its subject matter in terms of something »given«, independent of the way it is being described.

Although a radical-reflective approach to thinking is not often practiced today, it is not new for philosophy and psychotherapy. It has been addressed by hermeneutical, pragmatist and phenomenological thinkers going back to the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Paradoxically, these thinkers demonstrate that radical reflection does not consist in solipsistic explorations of an internal subjectivity. Instead, they recognized that »inside« and »outside« become inseparable and have to be conceived together when reflecting the thought process radically. This has opened up new avenues for understanding the role of interaction, practice and socio-historical conditions for the development of thinking. By inquiring into the fuzzy organic process of *making our ideas and experiences clear* (paraphrasing Charles S. Peirce) a continuity of body-environment as well as person-sociality relations has been uncovered as fundamental to generating meaning and developing intelligence.

Similarly, the pioneers of the so-called *talking cure* such as Freud, Jung and Rogers have contributed greatly in the practice of radical reflective approaches. They have thereby uncovered intersubjectivity as the core feature of the perspectives of the first-person. In the last 50 years, the emphasis of research has shifted increasingly to the dyadic relationship of patient and therapist, replacing a one-person psychology to a two-or-more-person psychology. Intersubjectivity has become clinically visible in considering counter-transference. Furthermore, the dyadic setting is permeated by the third person perspective: The analyst draws upon a body of theories and regularly consults with colleagues. Questions about how to deal with the interactive process of the therapeutic relation, interpretation, explication, experience and projective identification have become a point of major consideration for different schools of therapy.

Whereas traditional epistemology posited an unchangeable structure of cognition and of logic as the source of order in experience, the above mentioned schools began to inquire into an experientially grown order that allows for the growth of knowledge and change of experience. Concepts of process thereby opened up an awareness of the scientist/philosopher deeply situated and entangled in and with the object of inquiry.

The perspectives and methodologies introduced in the coming chapters continue these pioneering approaches. Thereby, they do not only open novel theoretical routes, but also new and subtle practice perspectives. These have to do with recognizing that conditions of thinking go far beyond the logical, syntactical and semantic structures of propositions. Developing and pursuing what is meaningful to us, as a process of thought and articulation, involves body and environment, present and past. This foundation cannot be represented by the propositions we make and the systems we fashion.

Furthermore, thinking and articulating thoughts is a dynamic embodied process that is not entirely in conscious control. Neither is it arbitrary. Rather, the reflective process oscillates between felt, discursive and symbolized phases; it can grow, evolve, become more vivid, or it may even shut down *by how we attend to it and how it is being verbalized*. Similarly, it can open up in its creative dimensions or it can be constricted by the way *it is conceived*. The intricate relation of lived experience functioning together with symbolic forms, accounts for what Charles Taylor termed a Western »split in consciousness«, manifesting a duality of self-reflection-practices, self-control and self-exploration:

Both practices belong to the same culture but they are also profoundly at odds, and our civilization is constantly battling itself over this. You see it everywhere you look. You see it in the conflict today in the West between people with a very strict, narrow, technological orientation to the world and themselves, and those who oppose them in the name of ecological health and openness to oneself because the technological stance of self-control also closes off self-exploration. You get it in attitudes to language. On one side, language is conceived as a pure instrument controlled by the mind, and on the other side are conceptions of language that have led to some of the richest discoveries about human understanding, language as the house of being, language as what opens up the very mystery of the human being. (Taylor 1997, 15)

What makes the following collection of essays significant for theoretical as well as »practical« purposes is that it does not re-instantiate this well described battlefield by taking sides. It suggests new ways forward in scientific and philosophical, as well as psycho-therapeutic and socio-practical terms and methods, by engaging a starting point of inquiry that is part of the interactive process itself. The responsiveness of the emergent process of having ideas and insights, of forming meanings and changing them, is explored in terms of the intricate conditions it requires. In contrast, when mental processes are assumed to be »given« in ways that can be researched from the third person perspective alone, the responsive conditions of the process (including the research process) become the blind spot of the investigation. The following chapters indicate that we have only just begun to acknowledge and think into these responsive conditions. The challenge of a radical-reflective turn in this way becomes a chance to face the fragility and sensitivity of thinking and articulating as a responsive process, that forms, shapes and develops. Finding ways to understand and research the embodied, experiential, responsive and emergent process of thinking thus opens up a deeper understanding of a continuity between body and mind, between feeling and cognition, between social and symbolic environments that need to be *cultivated*.

## Challenges

Radical reflection, thus having a tradition both in philosophy and psychotherapeutic research, can be considered from different viewpoints. Still, there are major methodological hurdles at stake that restrain research today from going forward in this direction. We want to mention just a few of them from different philosophical schools and points of views.

1) Thinking thinking (thought in process) cannot proceed according to established epistemological procedures that begin with definitions of experience, with propositions that can be analyzed or with mental states that can be represented or measured. The self-reflective turn in epistemology has to do with the understanding of assertions, concepts, perceptions and ideas not as the starting point of a reflective process, but as the products of interaction and experiential dynamics

(what Dilthey called »Erleben«)<sup>1</sup>. To think into the characteristics of lived experience and action in relation to the cognitive process requires developing new vocabularies and creating untrodden scientific and philosophical paths. After decades of research in this vein being on hold, only recently the revolutionary character of radical-reflective approaches have been re-acknowledged by cutting-edge philosophers and cognitive-scientists<sup>2</sup>.

2) Contemporary thinkers of analytical language philosophy have come to understand that cognitions involve a »background«. It is constitutive in ways that seem impossible to analyze and to represent in propositions because of its function in the very process of making propositions. The challenge involved also manifests in the restrictions of a vocabulary that is well developed to express intentions, but not to express how they come about. The philosopher John Searle captures this clearly:

[...] just as language is not well designed to talk about itself, so the mind is not well designed to reflect on itself; [...] Our second-order investigations into the first-order phenomena quite naturally use the first-order vocabulary, so we can be said quite naturally to *reflect* about reflection or have *beliefs* about believing or even to *presuppose* presupposing. But when it comes to examining the conditions of the possibility of the functioning of the mind, we simply have very little vocabulary to hand [...]. (Searle 1983, 156)

These predicaments are topped by the problem of the vicious cycle, or the unending regress, which Searle also points to in the same context. For propositions to represent the »background« they have to draw on the very background they represent. When Searle begins to spell out what it takes to form simple intentions, he soon discovers that what is implied are complex capacities that are not representable. A similar conclusion can be found in debates concerning the »frame problem«. It poses the question how an intelligent agent can come to know what information is relevant to draw upon while dealing with an issue. If every context requires a broader context to know what is relevant at the very moment, then of course one faces an infinite regress. (cp. Dreyfus 1992, Wheeler 2008)

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<sup>1</sup> A thorough-going account of this reversed understanding is offered in Jung 2009.

<sup>2</sup> For example: Clark (2008), Damasio (1999) Deacon (2012), Fuchs (2013B), Jung (2009), Lakoff and Johnson (1999), Noë (2009), Thompson (2007), Petitmengin (2011), Stuart (2010), Varela et al. (1993).

An analogous point has been made by Gilbert Ryle through his famous distinction between »knowing how« and »knowing that«. The chess player can perform his clever moves, but he cannot explicate the accumulated experience that makes him move his pieces – other than moving them the way he does. He does not possess a list of rules that spells out his clever way of thinking (cp. Ryle 1966, 30 ff.). Earlier, a similar point has been made by Michael Polanyi's demonstrations of what he terms »tacit knowledge« (Polanyi 1962 & 1958). He shows that the scientist and philosopher does not only draw on explicit knowledge to do his or her work, but on forms of knowledge that need to be conceived according to their tacit, incorporated dimensions. The frameworks that constitute the very approach to topics and questions manifest in as basic a way as bodily competences like riding a bike or knowing how to play the piano – they need no extra attention. Similarly, the reflective framing to approach a problem and to pursue it remains »essentially inarticulable«. (Polanyi 1962, 60).

3) These challenges become even more precarious when one considers that scientific method as such is understood in terms of cultivating »objectivity«, which means having as much distance as possible from the first person perspective. Nagel's *The View from Nowhere* demonstrates how the concept of scientific objectivity necessitates excluding the experience of thinking and speaking. Nagel writes:

For many philosophers the exemplary case of reality is the world described by physics, the science in which we have achieved our greatest detachment from a specifically human perspective on the world. But for precisely that reason physics is bound to leave undescribed the irreducibly subjective character of conscious mental processes, whatever may be their intimate relation to the physical operation of the brain. (Nagel 1986, 7).

Nagel's solution seems to consist in the vision that the view of the world from a detached standpoint can be complemented by the description of the first person perspective, instead of reducing the latter to the former. His central message is to spell out the tensions involved and to account for the quality of »what is it like to be« (Nagel 1974) in an objectified description of the world, – although this means living with irreconcilabilities between a scientific understanding of the world and the experienced kind of value of individual life. Nagel's important intervention, however, does not consider how deeply the

objectifying methods themselves are grounded in the experiential process of what it is like to think.

To reflect the engagement of tacit, background-like experiences for the scientific process is the characteristic trajectory of the authors in this volume. Their methods of investigation therefore face all of the above-mentioned challenges: to consider an »earlier« starting point than definitions, percepts, concepts, observations etc.; to inquire the dynamic of an intentional focus; to expand extant vocabularies. The task involves practicing reflective forms of inquiry and a use of words that is not yet part of shared scientific or ordinary language games. Tools that are thus developed, seem to bring psychotherapeutic and scientific methodologies closer.

## Introducing the authors

The boldness in facing these challenges is what drove us, the editors of this volume, in the choice of the international authors we invited to participate in this book project, which has been generously accepted by the »Schriftenreihe der DGAP«. We come from different disciplinary backgrounds, but we meet in terms of our rather passionate interest for the process of thinking which leads us in reverse ways to the edge of our respective disciplines. Whereas the epistemological emphasis on cognition is constitutive of philosophical discourse (Donata's field), the changing, volatile and implicit processes that lead to insights, beliefs or claims can still be considered more or less a blind spot in many philosophical debates. Inquiries into the subtle functions of feeling involved in thinking and articulating remain marginal. In psychoanalysis (Vera's field), on the other hand, the practice of articulation, the eminent role of feelings and the impact of the unconscious are in the center of attention; the functions of cognition and the process of thinking, however, seem to be taken for granted, thus constituting a blind spot in psychoanalytical theories and debates.

Furthermore, we meet on another intersection: Vera, the practicing psychoanalyst is involved in research on the philosophy of Charles Sanders Peirce, and Donata, doing theoretical work as a philosopher, also practices meditation, Focusing and TAE (Thinking-at-the-Edge). Our interest in the fuzzy, »abductive«, felt-sensing process of thinking and articulating brought us together. We met regularly to read



and discuss, to devise a seminar at the ETH (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology) Zurich, and finally to start this book project. We noticed only during the process, that our interest is also driven by an implicit concern regarding the sensitive interface of theory and practice, i. e. how the consequences of theories of mind, feeling and language have the power to impact daily communication, conflict resolution, education and therapy. So we jointly worked towards a book that would touch this interface in relevant ways and open up further avenues of thinking and further dimensions of practice.

The group of thinkers gathered in this volume comes from Europe and the United States. The authors cover a wide spectrum of interdisciplinary areas of study such as anthropology, cognitive science, evolutionary biology, philosophy, psychoanalysis as well as therapy and neuro-phenomenology. For all the differences in international and inter-disciplinary backgrounds, all of the authors have something in common. Their approaches introduce perspectives, questions and means of inquiries that do not discount their own embodied practice of thinking and articulating. This manifests in their methodologies, vocabularies, research and style of thinking. Instead of focusing on static moments of thought and articulation, such as cognitions, propositions, beliefs and mental-states, each of the contributors ventures to conceive the *ongoing process* of thinking and articulating, thus demonstrating from different sides and approaches what it means to reflect radically. The emergent phenomena that are thereby placed into the center of attention are very fragile. They disperse when we try to think and speak according to static either/or patterns. For example: separating the conceptual from the pre-conceptual, the private from the public, the mind from the body, the body from the (socio-cultural and natural) environment. The authors of this volume demonstrate in different respects, how conceiving thinking and articulating as a process involves an understanding of the first person in an interactive inseparability with its environment, immersed in social relations – as the ground from where we think and speak. This obviously implies that the observer's perspective cannot remain the unquestioned position from where thinking can be addressed. The task at hand requires the flexibility to engage and practice different methods that can be summarized as first-, second- and third-person approaches, carefully interwoven. As Searle rightly noticed, this implies an expansion of traditional vocabulary addressing an interactive di-

mension of thinking about thinking. By re-affirming innovative metaphors and vocabularies (such as »abduction«), or creatively instigating new ones (such as »felt sense«, »enkinaesthesia« »inter-affective«, »embryos of speech act«, etc.), the contributors instance an elaboration of terminology involved in approaching their subject-matter in radical-reflective terms. In this way, the following chapters are beyond a critique of dualistic frameworks and thereby no longer in danger of becoming trapped within the paradigmatic horizon of what is criticized.

Let us now introduce the authors in the order of the chapters:

Claire Petitmengin, philosopher and neuro-phenomenologist, continues Francisco Varela's pioneering work to integrate first person methodologies into cognitive scientific research. She developed the *Elicitation Method* which is an interview-technique engaging the first, second and third person to investigate the emergence of an idea, or creativity, in process. She thereby fills a gap by investigating an occurrence hardly ever studied by science, even though scientific progress heavily depends on it. The difficulties in studying this process concern the subtlety and complexity of the emergence of an idea that also escapes the awareness of the person involved over short or long stretches of time.

Petitmengin demonstrates in her work that the logical and conceptual difficulties mentioned by philosophers need not be the last word that limits investigations to explore a movement from pre-conceptual to conceptual. She shows that it is not a matter of logical impossibility, but of skillful practice and of careful interacting to overcome the habitual directedness of intentional attention. In this way she combines the methodological surplus of two different practice traditions: Western scientific methods and Eastern meditation techniques, being a practitioner of *Vipassana* meditation herself.

This enables her to develop interview-questions that support a de-focused awareness in order to assist the person in describing a creative process in its complex and fine-grained phases. The first-, second- and third-person-approaches thereby interact to overcome what otherwise seemed a logical or intentional limitation: the interviewer supports the interviewee to re-direct the focus of attention to *how* she thinks, enabling her to provide descriptions that are the blind spot to the observer-perspective, thus allowing inquiry into generic patterns of the process.

The kind of questions she developed, themselves require the versatile attentive discipline that they support in the interviewee. She writes in her chapter: »The process we were trying to describe was indeed the very process that we were mobilizing to conduct our research.« The description of the process is thus a delicate but not impossible affair, easily disturbed by premature conceptualization and theorizing. Creativity, but also abstraction, »is played in the body«, as Petitmengin surprisingly shows in her many examples. Inter-action between people as well as within one-self, navigating between discursive, pre-discursive, trans-modal and gestural dimensions of experience, are capacities involved in the maturation of an idea, – as well as in its inquiry.

Eugene Gendlin, philosopher and renowned psychotherapist, is himself a pioneer in developing first-person methods (Focusing, Thinking-at-the-Edge) that expand radical-reflective vocabularies. The investigation of the creative process as well as of the healing dimension of articulation is the driving force of Gendlin's thinking since early in 1960. Although related to the phenomenological approach, it is not easy to classify the out-of-the-box challenge of Gendlin's philosophy. By demonstrating how *every* act of speaking and understanding involves vastly more ›felt sensing‹ than what is explicitly said or understood, he sheds light on the implicit kind of order involved when one thinks or speaks. It is with surprising directness that Gendlin demonstrates the possibilities to think-into the effects and characteristics of an implicit precision that otherwise seem to directly lead into logical dilemmas concerning first and second order languages or infinite regresses. One might say, Gendlin is inquiring into the kind of »emergent order« of the process Petitmengin is describing in its generic patterns. At the same time he spells out what a radical-reflective style of thinking can look like by permanently and skillfully highlighting the means by which he can do what he does.

Gendlin draws a powerful distinction between the concept of experience and lived *experiencing*, between concepts, and the *ongoing source of concepts*. He describes this distinction and puts it to work in his philosophy. In engaging experiential functions, Gendlin seems to operate with a magnifying glass to notice the interactive relation between what he calls »experienced meaning«, on the one hand, and symbols, on the other, both interactively forming, shifting and creating meaning. By engaging the implicit precision of »felt or experi-

enced meaning« in relation to its articulation, he can distinguish between an implicit and a conceptual kind of order. In this way, Gendlin actually tackles William James' important question (see above quote) of how to deal theoretically with an anticipatory intention of saying something without replacing it with the words that come later. Gendlin's theoretical and methodological answers have serious consequences for basic notions such as body, language, space, time and situation. These answers allow him to re-conceive meaning in deep continuity with body-environment interaction. The article in this volume can thus be considered as linking his philosophy of language with his main work, *A Process Model* (Gendlin, 2015).

Like an improvisation of musicians playing similar themes on different instruments and keys, the philosopher and cognitive scientist Susan Stuart introduces the term *enkinaesthesia* into the context developed so far. We chose her, as her work makes conceivable, how verbalized ideas and notions are the tip of an iceberg that can make us forget the embodied conditions out of which they emerge. Stuart's work aims at finding ways to think and describe intricate pre-linguistic forms of interaction as a condition of linguistic and scientific systems. She thus turns around engrained scientific procedures: instead of using science to explain the world, she explores, »how the »enkinæsthetic« field of lived experience can be used to explain science and situate the grounds of our moral discourse« (2015). Her work sensitizes the reader (us) for the richness of somato-sensory engagement of feeling bodies, pre-linguistically and interactively grounding the development of sense-making. Stuart also detects how language-use is rooted in child-development, in the full-bodied responses of infants to their surroundings and stimulations. (This aspect will figure as a continual thread of the chapters to come). By saying she »sensitizes« the reader for a »natural language« we also refer to the kind of language she uses. She is capable of creating scientific-philosophical descriptions in an almost poetic way to stretch the imagination to its limits, brushing against the dynamic of one-dimensional and one-directional (causal) reasoning. Stuart's descriptions of melodies of »coagential communication and comprehension«, which extend beyond individual bodies, including agents and objects, the actual and the anticipated, the cell and organ, they invigorate scientific imagination, carving out the richness of a plenisentient, enkinaesthetic-base of language. In a surprising turn, she conceives of »natural language«

as a first order languaging, thus turning our conventional hierarchy upside down. Despite its superiority, the second order, symbolic level of language, from this perspective, becomes apparent in the striking »paucity of its notions«. Stuart thereby powerfully reaffirms the thinking of Thomas Reid, explicating different embodied layers and levels of meaning. These will be further explored in the coming chapters.

Terrence Deacon, neuro-scientist, evolutionary biologist and anthropologist, is author of groundbreaking books such as *Symbolic Species* and *Incomplete Nature*. His inquiries into the co-evolvement of language, the capacity of thinking and the brain, develop Peircean semiosis further. Deacon is an important author for our purpose, as he demonstrates, how signs are not »simple«, but function on intertwined levels of embodied and symbolic systems. Meaning, according to Deacon, becomes a complex and many-leveled interpretative response, and language, quoting from his article in this volume: »just a recent overlay on much more ancient and basic mental processes«. Furthermore, Deacon's teleo-dynamic approach in *Incomplete Nature*, shows the emergence of new structures as a continuous thread across physical, biological, sentient and conscious living. His original perspectives emphasize the aspect of »work« in each domain, thereby highlighting the pivotal role of practice. From simple organisms to complex mental activity, new structures emerge under constraint, thereby opening up unpredictable »possibilities of new forms of work« (Deacon 2012, 367). A process of understanding, or an effort to clarify difficult subject matters, can thus be considered in terms of a recursive re-organization that »reinforces the capacity to do this again«. His eye-opening emphasis on »work« goes hand in hand with his emphasis on the role of *absential features* (cp. Deacon 2012, Chap. 0), that characterize the makeup of purposes, goals, ideas and meaning, not being measurably present in material or energetic forms (cp. Schoeller's chapter in this volume). What we think and articulate thus becomes conceivable as a work of reorganization, driven by absential features under constraint, gradually allowing the emergence of new symbolic structures to happen, thereby opening up new possibilities of »work«. This grants surprising perspectives on a deep family relatedness of very different kinds of symbolic activities, such as scientific, creative or therapeutic practices.

In his chapter, Deacon provides neuro-scientific glimpses that

seem to back up the work of the authors we have introduced so far. From a different scientific perspective and drawing on different methodologies, he emphasizes the importance of similar kinds of questions, like asking: »what is a concept before it is expressed in words and phrases?« and »what is a proposition or request before it is phrased as a sentence?« Deacon openly acknowledges the methodological difficulties involved with these questions. He warns the reader, that one cannot succeed in understanding an antecedent generative process within a model applicable to artificial systems, in which parts and components are combined according to certain rules (a similar point will be made by Steven Hayes). Sentences, rather, are to be conceived as »products of spontaneous bottom-up self-organizing interactions«, regulated by arousal moods that involve different brain areas linked with whole body-regulation. Looking with Deacon at the emergence of one sentence, in this way brings the whole body into play – as well as the encompassing social context.

The second part of the book will approach our subject matter more closely on the intersection between psychotherapy and philosophy. As mentioned in the beginning, the sociality of the subject and his dependence on culturally shaped sign-processes is nothing new for psychotherapy. Neither is the eminent role that the unconscious plays in rational thinking; however there is a kind of blind spot in the manner that thinking is conceptualized. The following chapters show that in addition to Focusing (Gendlin), today many schools of psychotherapy are aware of the therapeutic effect of radical-reflective moments in the course of the treatment. This has led to modifications in techniques that enable the therapist to foster such moments. The healing process facilitates the patient's interest in his own psychic moves in order to allow obsessive parts of the personality to become more fluid and flexible. This requires new ways of support and practice.

Phenomenological investigations of experiencing the »here and now« often resemble psychotherapeutic arrangements. While neurophenomenology only recently fine-tuned these techniques, psychotherapy's discovery of the healing effect of being aware of the moment is grounded in the inter-subjective encounters of the therapeutic practice. The phenomenological, semiotic, pragmatic and neuro-scientific approaches that move away from mechanistic theories and the shift within psychotherapy towards existential healing mo-

ments, enable a fruitful exchange between the disciplines. This allows psychotherapy to share its deep understanding of the emotional and motivational processes and thus to take part in the interdisciplinary debates more actively. How lively this conversation between a philosophical and a psychoanalytical approach on thinking can become, is demonstrated by our next author.

Vincent Colapietro, himself a philosopher, has contributed greatly in making Peircean philosophy accessible. His book, »Peirce's Approach to the Self. A Semiotic Perspective on Human Subjectivity« (1989), has initiated a new understanding of the classical pragmatist's theories. Against the backdrop of a common understanding of the Peircean semiotic community (cp. Umberto Eco), Colapietro demonstrates how Peirce's pragmatist semiotics is significant for the study of human thinking, and even for the understanding of psychology. He also indicates how Peirce has distanced himself from the metaphysical approach to the self as propagated by his close friend William James. Whereas the latter suggests personal minds as being isolated from one another, Peirce's maxim is that of a continuous interchange of self and others, understanding human beings as submerged and part of an incessantly moving sea of references and signs. It is on these lines that the phrase »we ought to say that we are in thought, and not that thoughts are in us« (Peirce 1984, 227n) is to be understood.

Colapietro also opened up a new field of investigation by comparing the Peircean understanding of the self with Freud's. Peirce often addressed unconscious states in the sense of the Freudian descriptive unconscious. The automated, habituated behavior, in fact, belonged to his favorite subjects. It was questionable, however, if Peirce also advocated Freud's notion of an unconscious characterized by repression or other defence mechanisms. Colapietro successfully showed that the classical pragmatist explicitly also refers to states that correspond to what Freud conceived as dynamically unconscious.

Colapietro's chapter masterly reconstructs the fine-boned Peircean arguments and thereby shows how »radical« Peirce's thinking is, while being nonetheless »commonsensical«. Reminding us of the possibility of knowing the other's state of mind more accurately than the person herself, Colapietro does not remain on an abstract philosophical level of discussing »other minds«. Although he understands the self as being immersed in signs and relations, he is careful not to

overstate the position, especially in regard to the therapeutic situation. The analyst may know more about the client's moods, but it is the client himself who has to find words and symbols in order for that knowledge to become efficacious, that is, to enable the patient to stand her own ground when faced with others.

Whereas in its early days, psychoanalysis was understood as a theory of an isolated individual's drive history, the emphasis on the sociality of the human development increasingly permeates the theoretical discussions of the last 60 years. Acknowledging the importance of the relationship between patient and therapist, psychoanalysis has left behind the illusion of an omniscient therapist. A similar development can be traced in behavioral therapy. The two practices now have an increasing common denominator in their focus on learning as understood in terms of acquiring new meaning.

An exponent of this new relational and mindfulness based form of behavioral therapy is Steven Hayes, our next author. The psychologist and acclaimed founder of the »third wave« of behavioral therapy, ACT (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy), is known for his innovative approach to meaning and language. The Relational Frame Theory (Hayes et. al. 2001) conceptualizes the complex cooperation of different forms of learning that develop into networks of meaning that vary from individual to individual. His approaches make the radical-reflective turn we are pursuing in this book very apparent. To our delight, this is also noticeable in the manner he wrote his chapter.

It is the individual's experiential background that, due to Hayes extensive research, re-enters the picture of a scientific *take* on language. At the same time, his work demonstrates how individual experience has to be conceived as always socially-linguistically immersed, how the private and public domains in this way belong together without being identical. By inquiring into the complex framework of meanings that differs from person to person, Hayes demonstrates how publicly shared meanings of words go hand in hand with eliciting individual connotations, feelings, experiences. By investigating this network and its complex growth and logic, Hayes opened behavioral therapy up to new horizons of practice, showing that retraining clients' behavior need not be the only route forward. Training an enhanced awareness of the present moment, of what it is like to be here and now, allows the reframing of what otherwise seems necessarily and unchangeably connected.



In this chapter, Hayes echoes the methodological challenge running through the foregoing chapters, by announcing his core analytic unit as an »ongoing act in context«. Similar to Deacon, he reminds us that this kind of unit cannot be analyzed in terms of the parts and components involved. Rather, it needs to be considered according to its situatedness and purposiveness. In addition, Hayes points out the limitations of understanding the first-person as an internal subjective process. Instead, each individual needs to be considered as a social being, extending across »the cognitive relations of time, place and person.«

Finally, his radical-reflective methodology openly plays out when he invites the reader to notice the flexible dimension of meaning while reading the chapter.

Our last author, Patrizia Giampieri-Deutsch, connects the dots by bringing together intersubjectivity, the psychological process and its immersion in cultural environments, with philosophical non-reductive approaches. Being both a philosopher as well as a psychoanalyst, she is a practiced thinker across disciplinary fields. Her approach to lived experience takes account of the reality check she, as a therapist, faces in her everyday work: »Psychoanalysts receive the unique opportunity to take part in the living subjective experience of their patients.« Giampieri-Deutsch, in her chapter, gives an overview of the characteristics of non-reductionism in contemporary theories of mind. In this way, her chapter provides ample research highlighting the emergent properties of consciousness as well as bottom up causation that accounts for the ways in which verbal cures work (even on a physical basis). She links her research explicitly to questions concerning the body and mind gap and suggests original directions that lead across the split, for example by referencing phenomena of transference. That mutual interconnectedness of persons sharing meanings goes beyond language and becomes apparent in the very moment of relational empathy: »What patients cannot tell us, they will show us. This experience offered by patients in the analytic session may even be the instantiation in vivo of their very early preverbal past experience«. From the practice-perspective, thoughts are never just a mental state, but a »psychophysical, embodied experience«.

Awareness of the moment was also emphasized back in 1967 by Wilfred R. Bion, who recommended that the analyst plunge into the session without »memory and desire« in order to accept the patient