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Preface

The Margins of Discourse: Reflexivity and Humanity

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Reflexivity and self-reflexivity, and the variety of their modes surged in their importance to sociology with the work of Harold Garfinkel (1967). Ethnomethodology was certainly one line of influence on actor network theory and, as Latour (1988) and Woolgar (1988) reflected, the potentially endless vertigo of reflexivity is always subject to ultimately arbitrary decisions that ground the forest of rules and ways of life that constitute both science and culture (Linstead, 2002). Whilst positivism sought to establish objectivity as the guarantor of the "truth" of science, qualitative approaches drawing inter alia on phenomenology and social constructionism led some researchers to the pursuit of reflexivity as a corresponding guarantor concept for the "truth" of narrative knowledge (Linstead, 1993). Discourse and conversation became the prime media for analysis, despite the wide variety of approaches that

they glossed. A common and continuing error came to be the conflation of social constructionism with postmodern thought, despite disparities evident in their understanding of the self and consciousness. As Lyotard (1979/1984, 1983/1988) expressed the problem, language may be our best tool, but it is also a flawed tool and we need to be aware and suspicious of its limitations. He exemplifies this with his notion of the "differend," the situation where a term or phrase has been acquired by a group and whose meaning has been determined by that group to the exclusion of alternatives, even before they are articulated. This goes beyond the Elliotian dilemma of 'even if we were able to express deep meanings, no-one would be able to understand them' to a considered instrumentalisation of language for a particular end.

The more we read through codes and structures, the more we surreptitiously import the absolute inhumanity embedded in objectivity (Butler 2005; Linstead 1994, 2017). Lyotard identified a positive "inhuman," closer to the sublime, that always constituted a shifting remainder that lay beyond the bounds of language, just outside the discursive frame. Perhaps prefiguring the "posthuman," Lyotard emphasised the permeable margins of discourse, and the ways in which a "language" or "text" could be non-verbal, and constantly strive poetically rather than constructively or expressively to exceed the inevitable limits of its own construction.

Humanity's own poesis then is both its revolutionary destruction and its evolutionary salvation. In a time when humanity is accused of all manner of planetary villainy, and the age of post-humanity is heralded as the end of the anthropocene, we need to engage our humanity and unhumanity, in all their contradictions and hypocrisies more intensively – to uncover what we need to, and our planet needs us to, become.

There is no finer medium for such self-discovery than the arts and humanities in their discursive and non-discursive interplay. This in itself is one reason why the arts and humanities are, paradoxically, both hailed as important sources of creativity and inclusivity by Harvard Business Review (the enhanced "business case"), and radically defunded by some of the cradles of civilised, democratic, post-Enlightenment society in the West. In the UK, people who studied the magnificent public legacies of Greece and Rome are closing theatres,

libraries, and arts and humanities University departments. Our survival as civilised societies depends on our ability to turn back this tide through our own, progressive but simultaneously deeply traditional, institutional arrangements to reassert the values found on the margins of discourse.

With a background in literature, drama, and music, as well as shopfloor work, Stephen never, as a researcher and consultant, saw management as a science – he never saw it as without science, but for him it was an art because it depended on us bringing out the best of our humanity to keep our shared collective futures evolving. He was reminded of this period in his life when a songwriter friend, Joe, who is in his 50s, told him that his youngest son had inquired if he (Joe) would ever "make it" as a musician. Joe is just recording his 20th self written music album but, despite having played Glastonbury, still has a day job.

Joe said "I laughed. Then I crunched the numbers. 1.1% of all musicians currently active are considered to be mainstream or elite. They represent 87.3% of all Facebook traffic, 88.4% of all Twitter/X traffic, and 79% of all YouTube plays. That means you are exponentially more likely to grow if you are big already. [Which is, of course, how monopolies and privilege work until they choke on their own inertia]. If you are under 25 years old you have a 0.01% chance of 'making it.' Over 25, it is 0.00001%. Over 50, there simply aren't enough zeros."

So Joe told his son that "making IT" wasn't the point. Making ART was. He said, "People need live music because it is far more important to who we are as human beings than any statistics could prove, and I just want to be the best I can be as a human being. I told him we are our own measure, and that success and failure were imposters he should never trust." [Some of you will hear echoes of Alexander Pope, and Rudyard Kipling, and others from your own cultures we may never have heard of, but desperately need to].

His son replied: "That's a NO, then."

"Correct," Joe concurred. "But 98.9% of all musicians are outsiders like me. I'm in good company. I'm where life is."

Music is just one of the arts, but our guess is that the numbers are similar. And so is the rationale. It's not about the money, or others' measures of success,

or competition, of efficiency, or control, or domination, or efficient extraction of enhanced value all along the chain. Art is indeed far more important to who we are as human beings than any statistics could prove; and us, bringing to fruition all the potential of our humanity, is vital for the futures of our societies, our environment, and the other non-humans with whom we share them.

We are the 99%; but only the 1% are getting heard, making the decisions, controlling the channels, and mortgaging our collective futures. But when we are together, we feel the power of the transmission of affect: when we are together through art, we are bigger, stronger, more sensitive, more alert, kinder, more caring, more loving and more together. The myth of the solitary creative is a myth – but it's a powerful and persistent one. Each creative, no matter what their talent, is a focal nexus where several influences intersect – readers, audiences, supporters, cafe waiters, street ambulants, families, friends, colleagues, stories, poems, fragments of conversation or music, events, teachers, lovers, the police, place and workplaces, companion animals, those we've lost.

The margins are not on the outer edge – they are the vital centres of intercrossing between worlds, where shoots of several rhizomes meet and move on. But as such, they are vulnerable, and they need a little support, protection, respect and curation to help them springboard the new and rechannel the venerable. Institutions need to perform the vital work of keeping open channels through liminal spaces, of affirming the deep value of such liminality to who we are, continue to be, and may become together in forming the next creative and curated iterations of human society, economy, and morality; and in doing this in the company of other species and in environmental conditions that, as we understand them more fully, will help us, in humility, to understand ourselves.

This 'flawed tool' – language – should indeed be treated with suspicion as so many across academic domains are now doing, questioning the efficacy of the fields' discourses employed to create, study and disseminate their knowledge and beliefs. Along with this critical eye comes a reconsideration of the authorial processes, the 'solitary creative' is an academic legacy that has its origin in the individualistic model of scientific discourse (Hyland &

Lehman, 2020). However, as Helin (2019) underlines, writing is a shared and relational process. Central to this approach is the notion and practice of reflexivity which requires that the writer strives to create a textual dialogue with the evoked readers, seeking connections (Meier & Wegener, 2017). For Lehman, this relationship needs to be based on equality and commonality through what she describes as "tenderness" (Lehman & Krzeszowski, 2022; Lehman et al., forthcoming) while Tienari emphasises that in our reflexive practices we need to employ respect, not only for our readers but our co-authors and those we write about (Tienari, forthcoming).

One of the driving factors behind these calls to write differently on issues to do with management and organizations is the realization that the fields' discourses are reaching only the inner circle, not embracing a wider audience and also not allowing more traditionally marginalized groups, such as aspiring academics, or scholars from the non-Anglophone world, to participate equally in the fields' discussions. We believe that reflexive practices create a space where "the negotiation and construction of meaning take place," a space for contestation and resistance (Fairhurst & Grant, 2010, p. 174) and most importantly, a space where previously marginalized groups are recognized as potential centers of a variety of intercrossings between different cultures and disciplines.

This volume brings together a variety of discourse perspectives on the issue of 'reflexivity' from the areas of multilingualism, literary and translation studies, institutional entrepreneurship and aesthetic management. It offers insights into the complex interplay between discourse producer and receiver and the context of discourse production. A central point shared by the contributors is that reflexivity processes allow for knowledge, beliefs, feelings and emotions to be communicated in a dialogical way which challenges, confirms or rejects propositional content (Winter et al., 1996; Etherington, 2004).

The volume begins with a paper by Alex Panicacci and Jean-Marc Dewaele, *'Am I sincere about my feelings?': Changes in multilinguals' self-perceptions when discussing emotional topics in different languages*. It investigates how affective socialization in a foreign language can enable

users to feel 'more themselves' when using an additional language (AL) in an emotional context. In the consideration of the background literature, the Authors conclude that AL users' feeling of difference when using affective language was not attributable to single factors, such as AL proficiency or frequency of use, but was multi-faceted involving aspects, such as age, education level, and anxiety when speaking. The study involved 468 native Italian immigrants in 4 Anglophone countries and was carried out by means of web-survey and selected interviews. The questionnaire focused on biographical data and the respondents' self-perceptions when using an AL in emotional situations. The research findings point to the importance of frequency of use of the target language's affective lexicon and the perceived emotive resonance of the target language to their feelings of difference when discussing emotional issues.

The second contribution is Alex Panicacci's text entitled: *A constellation of voices: how the network of languages in migrants' minds, hearts, and interactions shape their sense of self*. The Author sets out to investigate how Italian migrants' perceptions of self change when they use the target language of their Anglophone host country. Her enquiry focused on the reflexive and affective nature of this sociolinguistic phenomenon. Employing thoughts from a number of cross-language writers, the Author points out how reflexive practices are at the heart of many discursive processes and are essential for users of a foreign language to understand the individual changes they undergo in their communications. These self-perceptions are seen to be related to their emotional experiences and specific socio-contextual factors, including the frequency with which they use English. The study reveals to what extent "different linguistic dimensions are interacting in migrants' minds from an emotional, cognitive, and social perspective, and how this regulates their subjectivity when using the language of the host society."

In her article: *Reflexivity and new metanarratives. Contemporary English-language retellings of classical mythology*, Katarzyna Szmigiero looks at how retelling the classics can offer new perspectives on issues, such as ethnicity, class, and gender prejudices. These retellings are the fruit of how recent research has adopted reflexivity in its practices. With these retellings, she

argues, questions have been raised regarding how we should deal with so-called 'canonical' literary texts. They undoubtedly embody western culture's values but to what extent are these values still relevant or acceptable? Szmigiero also questions whether much of the content and assumptions still have a place in the modern world. She cites issues around cruelty, the place of women and physical violence and sexual violence. The Author argues that retelling need not be an erosion of the original, but in choosing these texts their importance and potential significance is strengthened.

Paola Tosi's paper, entitled: *Reflexivity in translation: a multi-layered, dialogic, and self-reflexive process*, investigates the different levels of reflexivity in the translation practice by means of an example of one of her translations from English into Italian. The translation process is analysed focusing on the role reflexivity played in the crafting of the text. The article points out that in translating, there are a wide range of 'reflexivities' at play as the translator struggles with issues, such as ethics, selectivity, fidelity, cultural sensitivity and the translator's position and responsibility. While she argues that reflexivity is fundamental to the translation process she warns that with the prevalence of AI translating software this essential ingredient is in danger of being lost.

Oscar Javier Montiel Méndez, Rosa Azalea Canales García and Anel Flores Novelo, with their contribution: *Dark Side of Institutional Entrepreneurship in Latin America: Vistas from Reflexivity*, examine the complex issue of entrepreneurial development in Latin America through the lens of reflexivity. By means of a comprehensive literature review, they propose three theoretical models aimed at providing proposals to help entrepreneurial efforts in Latin America. The Authors highlight systemic differences facing entrepreneurial endeavors in Latin American and Anglo-Saxon contexts, describing the 'dark' features of institutional entrepreneurship in Latin America. The three models they propose to explain the dynamics of the dark side of institutional entrepreneurship cover aspects of culture, implications for society and issues around agency and ethical behavior. The paper identifies a gap in the academic discourse on entrepreneurship in that it has failed to address the 'dark factors' in institutional entrepreneurship which can lead to the growth of oppressive

systems and argues for the use of reflexivity in the literature to counter this imbalance.

In his article *Reflexivity in the aesthetic situation management*, Michał Szostak considers the notion of reflexivity from two perspectives: self-management and management of the components in the notion of the aesthetic situation. He discusses opportunities for the employment of reflexivity from the perception of the 'creator' and the 'recipient.' With the main focus on the creator, the article argues that through the reflexivity process the creator/manager demonstrates self-awareness and the ability to predict the potential communication difficulties the 'receiver' may encounter, an essential quality to successful outcomes in management.

The paper by Justyna Dziedzic and Łukasz Sułkowski entitled*: Personal Brand in the Reflexive Construction of Organizational Identity* examines the notion of scientists' personal brand (SPB) to show the interplay between organizational culture, institutional identity, and a scientist's self-image. After a review of the relevant literature, the Authors introduce the study which involves interviews with eleven scholars in the field of organization studies. For Dziedzic and Sułkowski, the reflexive approach to this construct is fundamental as reflexivity is a necessary tool which enables scientists to become self-aware and adaptable in crafting their professional identities in the public and academic domains.

Antony Hoyte-West's review of the book *The Reflective Leader: Reflexivity in Practice* by Ian Robson briefly summarises the four chapters before moving on to comment on Robson's argumentation. The book aims to investigate whether leaders reflect on their past decisions and what role reflection plays in the practice of decision making and how its potential can best be exploited here. As Robson points out, the book has important practical insights on how reflectivity can enhance performance from coaching techniques of a professional sportsperson to medical training, academic research, management and in the creative arts. The theoretical considerations are blended into the narratives of the practical examples, thereby creating the text accessible to a wider audience. Robson also argues that the book is structured

so that each of the four chapters can stand alone and this renders the text extremely usable to scholars and managers alike.

Rohny Saylors's book review argues strongly that research into today's social and ecological issues requires a new framework, which is to be found in the concept of Relational Intuition Building (RIB). RIB is a theory of science that urges researchers to carry out their research intuitively, compassionately, to be physically present and to act ethically and collectively. Despite its focus on intuition, RIB marries logical analysis in its approach to arrive at reliable hypotheses and bridges the perceived gap between intuition and science. Saylors exhaustively provides us with the salient literature which supports RIB, including a comprehensive definition and its philosophical and theoretical framework.

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