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EXPLORING SEARLE'S SOCIAL ONTOLOGY

Abstract: In this short article, I will explore John Searle's social onto-logy project from the perspective of social epistemology. The outcome of my analysis is that language is decisive for the collective acquisition and production of knowledge. I agree with Searle regarding the exposure of language as a central constitutive component of social forms of knowledge, a component that plays a significant role in the development of social epistemology.

In Searle's account, all institutional facts are linguistically created and maintained. I agree that language should play a central role in any social ontology, in social epistemology, as well as for our understanding of society. But when we bring in language and make it the central focus and foundation in explaining how society is created and functions, it becomes inevitable to bring in the diversity of views in theories of meaning and to analyze how these contribute to the creation and maintenance of society. Other questions also need to be addressed, including those related to the so-called "problem of group belief justification", as it is not clear how it fits into Searle's project and how individual convictions become convictions of the community.

Keywords: language; society; belief; knowledge; social epistemology.

Самал Х. Р. Мани – Изследване на социалната онтология на Сърл

Резюме: В тази кратка статия ще изследвам проекта за социална онтология на Джон Сърл от гледна точка на социалната епистемоло-гия. Резултатът от анализа е, че езикът има решаваща роля за придо-биването и производството на колективно знание. Съгласна съм със Сърл, че езикът трябва да се представи като централен конститутивен компонент на социалните форми на знание, което оказва значително влияние върху развитието на социалната епистемология. Според Сърл, всички институционални факти са лингвистично създадени и поддържани. Аз също смятам, че езикът трябва да играе централна роля в социалната епистемология, както и в разбирането ни за общес-твото. Когато обаче правим езика главен фокус и фундаментален мо-мент в обяснението на това как се създава обществото и как функцио-нира, става неизбежно и привличането на различните възгледи в тео-риите за значението и анализ на това как те допринасят за създаването и поддържането на обществото. От отговор се нуждаят и други въпро-си, сред тях този, който е известен като „проблем за обосноваването на груповите убеждения", тъй като не е ясно как това се вмества в проекта на Сърл и как индивидуалното убеждение се превръща в убеждение на общността.

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Introduction

In this short article, I will explore John Searle's social ontology project from the social epistemology perspective. It is an analysis of Searle's social views from the point of view of their relevance to social epistemology.

The outcome of my analysis is that language is decisive for the collective knowledge acquisition and production. I agree with Searle for the exposure of language as a central constitutive component of social forms of knowledge that plays a significant role in the development of social epistemology.

Section one: The proposal for philosophy of society branch

John Searle proposes a new branch in philosophy to cover what is not covered by other branches. For there is a multiple layer question that we need to answer, Searle points out at the start in answering this complicated question first: *we have to avoid postulating different ontological realms, a mental and physical, or worse yet, a mental, a physical, and a social. We are just talking about one reality, and we have to explain how the human reality fits into that one reality.* We have to avoid postulating different ontological realms, we are talking about one reality. Once that is out of our way, we have to explain how the human reality fits into that one reality (Searle 2010: ix-x.).

Searle attempts to explain the fundamental nature and mode of human social institutional reality, as he puts it in the explanatory title '*Making the Social World – The structure of human civilization'* (Searle 2010) in which he examines the mode of existence of nation states, money, corporations, ski, clubs, summer vacations, cocktail parties, football games, etc. Searle also examines language in the creation of social reality, and the maintenance of the latter. He builds his argument as a continuum on the line of his earlier book (Searle 1995) '*The Social Construction of Social Reality*' (Searle 1995). In describing his intention in relation to language, he writes: *I will try to overcome the curse of all social (and political) theorizing from Aristotle through Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel to Habermas, Bourdieu, and Foucault. All of the philosophers of politics and society that I know of take language for granted. They all assume that we are language-speaking animals and then they are off and running with an account of society, social facts, ideal types, political obligation, the social contract, communicative action, validity claims, discursive formations, the habitus, bio-power, and all the rest of it* (Searle 2010:63).

The new philosophy branch Searle proposes and justifies is to carry out this task, he calls it *philosophy of society*. The task of this branch is to answer the question that I had earlier stated, the interests of the new branch is in social ontology and collective intentionality. And the reason for the new branch is that the other branches have not answered the big question, instead they tended to either answer issues in philosophy of science or to present a continued debate in political philosophy that is sometimes called political and social philosophy, in which they focus on deductive nomological explanations and the theory of justice. Searle suggestion is that there is a line of research that is more fundamental than

all others mentioned above, namely, the study of the nature of human society it-self, hence is this new branch to do just that.

The new branch is to answer some big questions, for instance, 'What is the mode of existence of social entities such as governments, families, cocktail par-ties, summer vacations, trade unions, baseball games, and passports?' This will generally deepen and help our understanding of social phenomena. On Searle's view that this new branch of philosophy is historically situated, that is it is the right time to ask these questions, it could not have been taken up a hundred or fifty years ago. To explain this, he argues that, from the seventeenth to the twen-tieth century most of philosophers in the Western tradition were preoccupied with epistemic questions, and even their questions about language and society were construed as largely epistemic, such as: How do we know what other people mean when they talk? How do we know that the statements we make about social reality are really true? How do we verify them? These are interesting questions, but in this investigation, they will be ignored. Searle tells us that writings in the present era have largely overcome our three hundred years of obsession with epistemology and scepticism. The fact in intellectual history is that great philoso-phers of the past century such as Frege, Russell, Quine, Carnap, Strawson, Austin and Wittgenstein, all had little or nothing to say about social ontology, but they did develop techniques of analysis and approaches to language that we can use to establish the social ontology. Standing on their shoulders, Searle argues, we can attempt to look at the train they did not see, and see why this is a subject of phi-losophy and not social sciences, as it turns out that our society has a logical (con-ceptual, propositional) structure that admits of and requires logical analysis (Searle 2010: 5–6).

Section two: Searle's ontological project

John Searle argued that concerning knowledge there is an initial form of para-dox, which is : How is it possible that we can have factual objective knowledge of reality that is created by subjective knowledge?

This is one way to highlight the puzzling character of social ontology, namely, to point out the apparent paradox in our understanding of social reality. For ex-ample, Donald Trump is the president of the United States, this piece of paper is a 100 dollar bill, and so on, these are social facts and are objective facts, we make statements about these social facts which are completely objective, yet the facts corresponding to them are all created by human individual's subjective atti-tudes (Ibid.). Searle points out that this is part of a much larger set of questions, which formulates the big question in contemporary philosophy: How can we give an account of ourselves, with our peculiar human traits as mindful, rational, speech act performing, free-will having, social, political human beings, in a world that we know independently consists of mindless, meaningless, physical particles? How can we account for our social and mental existence in a realm of brute physical facts? How can we reconcile a certain conception of the world as described by physics, chemistry, and the other basic sciences with what we know, or think we know, about ourselves as human beings? Also, how is it pos-

sible in a universe consisting entirely of physical particles in fields of force that there can be such things as consciousness, intentionality, free will, language, society, ethics, aesthetics and political obligations?

In asking 'What is society*?'* Searle proposes that there are two conditions of adequacy in any accounts and he states them as the purpose of his book/ argument. He writes: *First, we must not allow ourselves to postulate two worlds or three worlds or anything of the sort. Our task is to give an account of how we live in exactly one world, and how all of the different phenomena, from quarks and gravitational attraction to cocktail parties and governments, are part of that one world. Our rejection of dualism, trialism and other ontological extravagances is not to be taken as an endorsement of "monism", for the use of the term "monism" already accepts the metaphysical ontologizing that we are out to reject and replace* (Ibid.: 3–4).

The first condition which is to not postulate many realities, this will give us one world that we live in, but different phenomena from quarks and gravitational attraction to cocktail parties and governments are part of that one world. If that is so, then our task is to give an account of that one world and how we live in it. Further, rejection of dualism, trialism and what he calls 'other ontological extravagances' is different from endorsement of monism, for monism already accepts the metaphysical ontologizing that Searle rejects.

His second condition is that the account must respect the basic facts of the structure of the universe, the basic facts given by physics, chemistry, evolutionnary biology and the other natural sciences. Searle argues that we need to show how all the parts of reality are dependent on, and in various ways derive from, the basic facts. Searle gives examples of these facts in natural sciences; he notes that the two most fundamental sets of basic facts are the atomic theory of matter and the evolutionary theory of biology. Our mental life depends on the basic facts. Searle's view is that, both conscious and unconscious mental phenomena are caused by neurobiological processes in the brain and are realized in the brain, and the neuronal processes themselves are manifestations of and dependent on even more fundamental processes at molecular, atomic, and subatomic levels. Our capacity for consciousness and other mental phenomena is the result of long periods of biological evolution. Collective mental phenomena, that we get in organized societies, are themselves dependent on and derived from the mental phenomena of individuals. This same dependence continues higher as we see the social institutions such as governments and corporations as dependent on and derived from the mental phenomena and behaviour of individual human beings. This is the basic requirement of our investigations; the account we give must be consistent with the basic facts and show how the non-basic facts are dependent and derived from the basic facts (Ibid.: 1–3).

Another theme that I would like to highlight regarding Searle's direction is that he proposes a new branch of philosophy to accommodate philosophical inquiries about what society is: *The entire enterprise is in part based on, and in part an attempt to justify, the assumption that we need a new branch of philoso-*

phy that might be called "The Philosophy of Society" (…) I am proposing that "The Philosophy of Society" ought to be regarded as a legitimate branch of philosophy along with such displines as the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of language. I believe this is already happening, as is evidenced by the recent interest in questions of "social ontology" and "collective intentionality". One might object that there already is a recognized branch of philosophy called "social philosophy", on which there are numerous university courses. But social philosophy courses, as they have traditionally been conceived, tended to be either the philosophy of social sciences or a continuation of political philosophy, sometimes called "political and social philosophy.". Thus, in such a course one is likely to study either such topics as C.G Hemple on deductive nomological explanations or John Rawls on the theory of justice. I am suggesting that there is a line of research that is more fundamental than either the philosophy of social science or social and political philosophy, namely, the study of the nature of human society itself (Ibid.: 5).

Section three: Searle's view of society

Sealer's view on society can be captured on his views regarding the differences between human and animal society. Searle's view is that what makes human social reality different than animal reality is that humans have the capacity to impose functions on objects and people where the objects and the people cannot perform the functions solely in virtue of their physical structure. The performance of the function requires that there be a collectively recognized status that the person or object has, and it is only in virtue of that status that the person or object can perform the function in question. Examples of that can be: a piece of private property or the president of the USA, a twenty-dollar bill, and a professor in a university, are all people or objects that are able to perform certain functions in virtue of the fact that they have collectively recognized status that enables them to perform those functions in a way they could not do without the collective recognition of the status.

Collective intentionality is the key for the system of status functions at work, in Searle's view. For the status functions to work, he says, there must be collective acceptance or recognition of the object or person as having that status. This acceptance or recognition is different from approval; recognition does not imply approval. Acceptance is from enthusiastic endorsement to grudging acknowledgement that one is simply helpless to do anything about, or reject, the institutions in which one finds oneself. (…) *what I believe is the fundamental building block of all human social ontology and human society in general: human beings, along with a lot of other social animals, have the capacity for collective intentionality* (Ibid.: 43).

The points are these: status functions can only work to the extent that they are collectively recognized. For instance, hatred, apathy, despair is consistent with the recognition of that which one hates, is apathetic toward, and despairs of changing; the status function depends on collective intentionality. There is a remarkable fact about human beings and some animals that they do have capacity

to cooperate, collectively; they can cooperate not only in the actions they perform, but they can even have shared attitudes, shared desires and shared beliefs, Searle argues; to what extent that capacity exists in other species is not clear, but it is clear that it exists in human species.

So far there are status functions that exist in virtue of collective intentionality, further, the status functions carry 'deontic powers'. Deontic powers carry rights, duties, obligations, requirements, permissions, authorizations, entitlements, and so on. Searle differentiates between kinds of deontic powers:

1. The positive deontic power, when I have rights.

2. The negative deontic power, when I have obligations.

3. The conditional deontic power, my power, for example, to vote Democratic Party if I register as a democrat. I have a power to vote but only conditionally on registration.

The disjunctive deontic power would be my power, for example, to register either as a democrat or as a republican, but not both.

Apart from brutal facts, there are institutional facts. Brutal facts, Searle points out, exist independently of any human institution and example is 'the Sun is 93 million miles from the Earth'. Institutional facts are objective facts, but they are only facts by human agreement or acceptance, they are facts that require human institutions in order to exist at all. An example is,[1] Trump is president of the US. The definition of human institution given by Searle is that an institution is a system of constitutive rules, and such a system automatically creates the possibility of constitutive rules, and the fact that Trump is president, or the fact that I am a licensed driver, or the fact that a chess match was won by a certain person and lost by a certain other person, are all institutional facts because they exist within a system of constitutive rules (Ibid.: 11).

In his 1975 Searle introduces a claim (he himself calls it a strong claim) that the status functions are created by declarations; all institutional facts, and therefore all status functions, are created by speech acts of a type that Searle baptized as 'declaration'.

He explains what he meant by a speech act of declaration type: some speech acts function by purporting to represent how things are in the world: 'the cat is on the mat', 'snow is white', 'Socrates is mortal'. These are statements that purport to represent how thing are in the world, and they can be assessed as true or false, depending on the extent to which they do successfully represent how things are in the world. Let's think of these speech acts as if they have word to world direction of fit, Searle says, as hovering over the world and pointing down at it, as having fitting or failing to fit the world (literally, you can say they are true or false, true if correct fit exists, false if it does not).

There are lots of speech acts that are not in the business to tell us how things are in the world, they are trying to change the world to match the content of the speech act. For example, I order someone to leave the room (this is aiming at

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[1] Searle uses Obama in his examples, for accuracy I have changed the name to Trump as he is now the president of United State of America.

causing obedience and to get your behaviour to match the content of the speech act). I promise to come and visit someone on Wednesday (this is aiming at causing fulfilment and creating a reason for me to come and see you on Wednesday). I don't report by them how a thing is in the world, but I am trying to change the world by producing a speech act. These cases have the world to word direction to fit; the point is to get the world to change to match the content of the speech act.

There are other speech acts but we don't need to go them for this investigation. There is another class of speech act that combines both the world to word and the word to world in a single speech act; these are the cases where we change reality to match the propositional content of the speech act and thus achieve world to word direction of fit. Searle says, the amazing part is that we succeed in doing so because we represent the reality as being so changed. Searle named these 'declarations'. He stated that J Austin (Austin 1962) created the term 'illocutions' and there are five types of illocutionary speech acts:

1) Assertives (used to tell how things are; statements or assertions);

2) Directives (used to tell people to do things; orders and commands);

3) Commissives (used to commit ourselves to doing things; promises and vows);

4) Expressives (used to express our feelings and attitudes; apologies, thanks).

5) Declarations (used to make something the case by declaring it to be the case; declaring war and adjourning a meeting). Austin also called some cases of declarations 'performative utterance'; they are cases that you make something the case by explicitly saying that is the case. For instance, you make it a case by saying 'I apologize' or 'I promise', 'I order', etc (Searle 1995: 12).

All of institutional reality, and therefore, all of human civilization is created by speech acts that have the same logical form as declarations. Declarations are not just something that we have to linguistically treat or describe, refer to, or talk about, or think about an object in a way that creates a reality by representing that reality as created.

In the work '*The Construction of Social Reality'* Searle points out that all institutional reality is created and maintained in its existence by sets of linguistic representations that have the same logical form as declarations. We do not always need actual words of existing languages, but we do need some sorts of symbolic representation for the institutional facts to exist. To explain how constitutive rules fit in; the acceptances of the constitutive rule, which is part of the constitution itself, is sufficient to commit the participants in the institution to accepting that anybody who satisfies such and such condition is the president-elect. There is an interesting class of exceptions, for Searle, he points out linguistic phenomena themselves; we create semantics to create reality that goes beyond semantics, and we use semantics to create powers that go beyond semantic powers. But the linguistic facts, the fact that such and such an utterance counts as a statement or a promise, are not facts where the semantics goes beyond the semantics. On the contrary, semantics is sufficient to account for the existence of the statement or

the promise. The semantic content of the speech act by itself; is sufficient to make statements, promises, requests (Ibid.: Ch. 4–5).

Searle sees language as both biological and social (Ibid.: 65), and the sociality of language as unique. Language is not just one social institution among others in the society he explains; everybody from Aristotle has accepted that language is constitutive of social reality, but the problem is in the explanations given on how language is constitutive. Searle's view is that all institutional reality is created by declarations and is maintained in its continued existence by representations, thought as speech acts that function like declarations, but language itself is not created by declaration.

Why there is this asymmetry between language and other social institutions?

What is the difference between linguistic and non-linguistic or extra linguistic institutional facts? Searle states that the non-linguistic institutional facts require linguistic representation in order to exist. But these corresponding sentences in language do not require further linguistic representation to be a sentence. The performative creation of linguistic institutional facts is quite different from the performative creation of non-linguistic institutional facts. These two differences have to do with the nature of meaning and the role of meaning in the two cases. In the creation of non-linguistic institutional facts, we use meaning, the semantic powers of language, to create a set of deontic powers that go beyond the semantic powers (Ibid.: 100).

Semantic powers are simply the powers to represent in one illocutionary mode or another, and these include the power to create speech acts through performative utterances. However, in the case of non-linguistic institutional facts, when we use language, we create more than position or special condition to generate non-linguistic institutional facts (Ibid.).

Elsewhere Searle writes on why there are differences between 'Making the Social World' and 'The Construction of the Social Reality' books[2]. The differences are explained in the following way: *This article extends and develops a theory I began in my book, The construction of social reality. Its aim is to explore social ontology in a way that will make it clear that social ontology is both created by human actions and attitudes but at the same time has an epistemically objective existence and is part of the natural world. The fundamental concepts necessary to explain its creation and continued existence are: the distinction between observer-relative and observer-independent phenomena, the distinction between the epistemic and the ontological sense of the objective-subjective distinction, the notions of collective intentionality, the assignment of function, and constitutive rules. The upshot of the discussion is that the basic notion in institutional ontology is that of a status function. Status functions are the glue that holds society together because they create deontic powers, powers that work by creating desire-independent reasons for action. Thus, social ontology locks into human rationality* (Searle 2006: 12).

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[2] *Making the Social World* and *The Construction of the Social Reality* are both are books written by John Searle. The first one published in 1995 and the second published in 2010.

Searle distinguished between 'observer independent' phenomena, which are those features of reality that exists independently of (us) observers; such as electron, mass, force of gravity, the solar system, etc. And the 'observer relative' facts, which are like $100 paper note, US Government, or 'Trump is the president of United States', etc. The latter are facts that depend on (us) observers for their existence, that is to say, if no human existed they wouldn't have existed too, they wouldn't have been created. Here the attitude of humans is involved, and the necessary condition for money, of its being money is that people have to intend it to be a money. Searle further argues that the 'attitude' itself which human have for the money to be a money are not 'observer relative' but are observer independent. Whilst, the gravitational relationship between Earth and Moon, electrons, the solar system would have been there/existed regardless of human existence and regardless whether we do know them. Therefore, social science is about observer relative facts, and natural science is about observer independent facts. So, the social institutional facts are epistemically objective even though human attitudes are part of their mode of existence. For instance; pieces of paper which are $100 are epistemically objective fact, the attitude is observer independent, the money/fact exists only relative to the attitudes of participants engaged in activities selling and buying, etc. He states that it is possible to have epistemically objective knowledge about money for instance, but the kinds of facts about which we have epistemically objective knowledge are themselves all to a degree ontologically subjective.

Searle emphasises that language is essential for all of that, the essentially constitutive role of language is not just to categorize and give us power, is not just to enable us to reach rational agreement, it has fundamental functions; for language is presupposition of the existence of social institutions, the social institutions are not a presupposition of language because they cannot exist without language, while language can exist without these institutions, for instance, marriage institution, governments, etc. *We need the distinction between observer relative and observer independent facts. We also need a distinction between epistemic objectivity and subjectivity on the one hand and ontological objectivity and subjectivity on the other hand. Most of the phenomena that we are discussing, such phenomena as money, governments, and football games, are observer relative. But at the same time, they contain components of observer independent but ontologically subjective human attitudes. Though the constitution of society thus contains ontologically subjective elements as absolutely essential to its existence, all the same the ontological subjectivity of the domain does not prevent us from getting an epistemically objective account of the domain. In a word, epistemic objectivity does not require ontological objectivity. If it did, the social sciences would be impossible* (Ibid.: 55).

Further, Searle points out that although human society is complex, it has a logical structure, for human attitudes are constitutive of the social reality (like political parties, social events and economic transactions) and those attitudes have propositional contents with logical relations. The underlying logical struc-

ture consists of the imposition by collective intentionality of status functions. If we are to describe the basic structure of social-institutional reality, we need:

(i) Collective intentionality; when Searle at some point introduces his concept of 'collective intentionality', he says that collective intentionality is the psychological presupposition of all social reality. He defines social fact as any fact involving collective intentionality of two or more humans.

(ii)The assignment of function; humans have the capacity to assign functions to objects, the objects do not have the function intrinsically but only in virtue of the collective assignment. Functions are observer relative; an object has a function only relative to attitudes of humans.

So far: the collective intentionality and assignment of function can be combined.

(iii) Constitutive rules and procedures; Constitutive rules are different from regulative rules.

Further, Searle describes the logical form of the assignment of status function: *"when it becomes regular, and thus a matter of a rule, as that of the constative rule of the form, X counts as Y, or more commonly, X counts as Y in context C."* Status functions are the vehicles of power in society. Searle argues: we accept them and when we do, we accept series of obligations, responsibilities, duties, authorizations, permissions, and rights, entitlements and so on. All of these are referred to as deontic powers, in Searle's argument, deontic powers are both negative and positive and what we have in the society is a set of deontic power relations.

Some of Searle views discussed above are revised views from his earlier book on social reality[3] in which he builds the structure of his next book '*Making the Social World: the Structure of Human Civilization*'. Searle's claims are strong claims and like any other strong philosophical claim generate strong reactions. His project is to give a theory of social ontology, where this contains many components that can clash and can sometimes be interpreted wrongly. Both books generated a good deal of interest and some criticisms. Here, it is not my intention to make a detailed survey of them, nor on his fundamentalist aspect charges brought on by his critics, for it will be an impossible task to perform in these few pages. However, I would like to point out that criticisms directed to Searle's view can be viewed mainly from two directions: a large set of criticisms comes from some trends in the anti-realist camp; the other direction of criticism is targeting specific aspects of Searle's social ontology, for example Ruben (Ruben1997:443) argued against the distinction Searle makes between constitutive rules and regulative rules. Ruben sees the distinction to be merely linguistic one.

Concerning the anti-realist criticisms on Searle social ontology, I would add that for anyone who endorses realism Searle's social ontology should not present much problem, while for the anti-realists Searle's ontology is a different project altogether.

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[3] John Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (Penguin, 1995).

Others for example, make a direct criticism on Searle's social reality view that comes from outside of philosophy. In the social and political field, Steven Lucke has argued that Searle's thesis has both misunderstanding and inadequacies in its formulation, he added that Searle has not paid attention to unintended consequences of the social reality thesis. Lucke's view about Searle's project can be captured in this: *Searle's project is to distinguish social from biological and physical reality, but that, it is argued, offers a restrictive account of what social scientists study, which extends well beyond linguistically-constituted institutions to include the 'brute realities' of social life and, most significantly, the interactions between the 'institutional' and the 'brute', for example between 'institutional' and 'brute' power. Searle's critique of Durkheim's social ontology is, in part, endorsed but also criticized for focusing on the latter's methodological pronouncements rather than on the ontology implicit in his substantive work* (Lukes 2006: 5).

Conclusion

Social ontology is about studies of nature, character, basic features, structures, elements-constituting social life. To this end, Searle's account is one that stands out as ground breaking basis to explore what society is, for it is about understanding and defining what is there as social existence.

Regarding criticisms on Searle's ontology, in general Steve Lucke and John Searle hold different views. Based on different views there can be different social ontology accounts, for instance: one can be based on anti-realism view, while Searle social ontology is one of realist account, in which there are observer independent phenomena, features of reality exist independent of us; like electron, mass, gravity, solar system. There are observer relative facts like dollars, government, these are dependent on us to exist and by our collective intentionality they have powers.

Searle project is one good argument that put us back into one world, one explanation of how we create and maintain the society that we live in. Searle rejects postulating different ontological worlds. He urges that we should explain instead how human social institution reality fits into one reality. cashes out how the institutions are created and maintained, he examines the nation state with all its modes; money, corporations, parties, clubs, and so on, within all other different phenomena such as the force of gravitation. All of which are part of one world that we live in. For Searle, language is both biological and social, but language is constative of social reality, because language itself is not created by declaration. The non-linguistic social facts need institutional facts, need linguistic representation, while language itself does not require that.

On Searle's account, all institutional facts are linguistically created and maintained. I too think that language should play a central role in any social ontology, and furthermore in social epistemology, as well as in understanding society. But when we bring in language and make it the central focus and fundamental for explaining how society created and function- runs, then it is inevitable for this to bring with it the diverse views in theories of meaning and how they do contribute

diversely in that creation and maintenance. Other questions and clarifications still need answering among them concerning what is known as 'problems of group belief justification', for it is not clear how that fits into Searle's project, and how the individual belief becomes community belief in first place with in the society.

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