

Human Beings as Creatures of Habit

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To call human beings creatures of habit does not suggest that they are creatures of steady routines. A thing too often forgotten is that there is more than one variant of the concept of habit around, and that the underlying meanings of the term are radically different. This paper explicates the more comprehensive meaning of 'habit', such that this term refers to the process character, rather than routine character of human action. Moreover, it is assumed that the habitual process of action can be open for the acting subject's reflection even while it is going on, not only retrospectively. This interpretation of 'habit' has appeared twice in history. First in classic pragmatism, about a hundred years ago, and later, during the last twenty years or so, in what is sometimes called the embodied interpretation of cognitive science. This notion of habit is then compared with social-scientific notions of action and it is argued that it offers a more useful conceptual tool for the study of action.

Introduction: Is 'habit' the same as 'routine'?

In learned discourse about mind and soul it is customary to bypass the habit, either because it is taken as something ignoble; or perhaps even more because it belongs to the most difficult concepts to define. We are accustomed to the idea of habit, yet its definition defies us. For this reason we want to give some further clarification to this concept here.

G.W. F. Hegel, ca. 1812.¹

When I assert that human beings are creatures of habit, I definitely do not mean that they should be taken as slavish followers of mindless repetitive routines. In the first place, that would not be saying anything new. As we shall see more closely later on, it is nearly impossible to find a thinker worth remembering who has not been aware of the phenomenon of habit in that sense. The image that I wish to convey is rather the complete opposite. In my opinion human beings are rational

¹ Quoted after Funke 1958, 9, English translation by E.K.

and knowledgeable creatures, interested in their social and material environments, and capable of actively transforming them. However, they are all this – not despite the habitual factor in their doings, but *thanks to* its existence! I defend a reflective interpretation of the habit-phenomenon, not its garden variety meaning which equates it with routine. The routine element in human action is real, but when its relation to reflective thinking is rightly understood, it turns out to support reflection, not hinder it. Accordingly, I do not assume any zero-sum relation between the habitual aspect of action and conscious thinking. These phenomena are possible at the same time and in some contexts can even correlate positively. Habit, to repeat, should no longer be taken as the rut of dead routine, but rather as open to the acting subject's reflection – *even during its occurrence!* We can be discursively aware of our own habits, distance ourselves from them, objectify them for scrutiny, and even change them during their course, if they seem to misguide us. However, if we assume all this, and thereby turn the meaning of the term habit upside down, why stick to the term at all? The term, it seems to me, does one good service to our understanding of action. It suggests that action should be taken as an *already ongoing process*. This is something that mainstreams in philosophy and social sciences have not realized clearly enough in their treatments of human affairs.

This radical suggestion about action as a unified process that nonetheless can be open to the subject's reflection is not my own brainchild. It has appeared twice before in history. The first appearance took place in the writings of classic representatives of what is known as pragmatist philosophy, a movement originating in the United States toward the end of the nineteenth century. Its classic figures were Charles S. Peirce, William James, John Dewey and George H. Mead. The second and more recent occurrence has its origin in cognitive science from the 1990s, in research sometimes called *embodied* cognitive science (see e.g., Clark 1997, 2008; Rockwell 2005; Chemero 2009; Noë 2004, 2009). These two traditions have independently of each other come to the conclusion that human thought and reflection need habitual action patterns as their necessary bases. Later discoverers of the idea occasionally refer to the classic pragmatists as forerunners (Rockwell 2005; Chemero 2009), but have reached their own conclusions mostly by empirical means. Not all are particularly fond of the term 'habit' (Noë 2009 is most explicitly in favour of it), but their insistence on the embodied and patterned character of the human mind and human action carries the same argumentative burden. Human thinking and corporeal action in the material world are not enemies but close friends who give support to each other – this is the underlying idea both in classical pragmatism and embodied cognitive science. Of the authors mentioned, it is Noë (2009, 97) who explicitly calls human beings "creatures of habit", and adds that "only a being with habits could have a mind like ours" (p. 98). As we begin to see, this does not suggest that a slave of routines would have a mind like ours, but that habits are to be taken as "vehicles of cognition", as my colleague and friend, philosopher Pentti Määttänen (2010) puts it. Both classic pragmatism

and embodied cognitive science understand habit (and/or the underlying idea) in this way, as a resource in action rather than as its dead inertia. One feature in this conception of action that pragmatism has highlighted perhaps more explicitly is its built-in *fallibility*. Action is to be taken as a process but not as a linear process, rather as one with a *cyclical* structure. This is because action is supposed to meet unforeseeable problems and hindrances that can stall its course. These problems, however, can usually be solved insofar as the acting subject makes use of her or his reflective resources. This principle was put on paper for the first time in what philosophers call C. S. Peirce's 'doubt/belief model of inquiry', some 135 years ago.

Accordingly, a proper discussion of what kind of role habit plays in sustainable consumption cannot take it just as a nuisance without which we would be better off. Such a supposition brings to my mind a proverb from the days of the American civil rights movement, though I turn the proverb round on its axis: Habit cannot be part of the problem, because it is part of the solution. By this, in jest, of course, I mean that 'habit' might also contain some resources for the treatment of the problem of sustainable consumption. I do not pretend that it provides a panacea – even if the phenomenon is rethought in the manner that I suggested above. However, the study of human action seems to be at a turning point at the moment, and this re-evaluation of the habit-phenomenon is a part of it. As consumption is a kind of action, it follows that a re-consideration of 'habit' may also have a role in the treatment of consumption. What *kind* of role it eventually turns out to have is a matter of further study. What I do know is that there are analyses of consumption that take the habitual side of human action into account. One notable author, who takes it in the ordinary sense and otherwise follows the assumptions of neoclassical economic theory, is Gary S. Becker (1996). Another, one who understood 'habit' in the pragmatist sense discussed above as an ongoing process, and did not follow neoclassical assumptions, was Thorstein Veblen about a hundred years ago. In this paper I unravel the action-theory preconceptions that Veblen followed, such as where "human nature [is] restated in terms of habit", as his own saying went (1899/1994, 136). (For a modern introduction to the discussion of 'habit' in economic analysis, see Hodgson 2004).

Pragmatism and Cartesianism in contemporary cognitive science

The two theoretical movements that have suggested a radical new interpretation of 'habit', classical pragmatism in its day, embodied cognitive science today, have one thing in common. Both of them have reached their conclusion about the ubiquity of habit in explicit opposition to the Cartesian mind/body dualism and to those interpretations of thought, action, and their mutual relation that it yields (regarding pragmatism, see Joas & Kilpinen 2006). My suggestion that embodied cognitive

science carries on the pragmatist argument gets apt though indirect support from the eminent language theorist Jerry Fodor (2008). He divides contemporary cognitive science into two opposing camps, Cartesian and pragmatist, as he calls them. He takes the side of the Cartesians, means by 'pragmatism' the embodied interpretation of cognition, and asserts that it dominates cognitive science today. This may be questionable (cf. Chemero 2009), but the interesting thing is that Fodor's revisit to the language-of-thought argument (his own famous brainchild from some 35 years back: Fodor 1975) is also meant as a demolition of the embodied-*cum*-pragmatist position. His description of the latter is presented in negative terms, but nonetheless is just to the point (Fodor 2008, 12, 14):

From [our] Cartesian point of view, the genius of pragmatism is to get all explanatory priorities backward: Cartesians think that thought is prior to perception (because perception is, *inter alia*, a kind of inference). Pragmatists think the opposite. Cartesians think that thought is prior to action (because acting requires planning, and planning is a species of reasoning). Pragmatists think the opposite. Cartesians think that action is externalization of thought. Pragmatists think that thought is the internalization of action. In effect, pragmatism is Cartesianism read from right to left. ... [Furthermore], thought about the world is prior to thought about how to change the world. Accordingly, *knowing that* is prior to *knowing how*. Descartes was right and [pragmatism]² is wrong. Why, after all these years, does one still have to say these things?

Yes, all action worthy of the name is supposed to leave some trace in the world, even change it (or prevent a change from taking place), on this Fodor and his pragmatist opponents quite agree. This is also my reason for saying that his account is more to the point than most summaries provided by contemporary 'neo-pragmatists'. But is not thought prior to action, in the sense that action requires planning, as Fodor says? His assertion is predicated on a particular assumption about action, one that occurs more often in philosophy books than in real life. It is the assumption that in action the acting subject puts into effect thoughts (intentions they often are called) that she or he has entertained before the actual deed. This is the model of one-action-at-a-time characteristic of analytic philosophy in particular. However, the fact remains that all action is performed by some subject, "who performs not only this one action", as the social theorist Hans Joas (1996, 146) aptly notes. How about these other action-occasions? It makes better sense to think of them as constituting a unified process rather than a sequence of discrete individual happenings. Pragmatism does not declare the one-action-at-a-time model downright invalid, it is a passable abstraction in some contexts, but pragmatism assigns to it a particular place in the action-process. That place is the phase when the action-process has stalled and needs to be reconstituted (see above).

2 In the original Fodor mentions here the British philosopher Gilbert Ryle (1949/1970), who has made the 'knowing how vs. knowing that' distinction famous. However, this distinction and Ryle's general position are quite close to pragmatism (see e.g. Kilpinen, forthcoming a).

However, action in general can just as well be taken (some people are beginning to maintain, should be taken) as consisting of self-propelling, habitual processes, “agent-managed processes”, as the leading contemporary process philosopher Nicholas Rescher calls them (2000, 48). One such process is reasoning, or inference, which does not have to be conscious, let alone verbal, as Fodor seems to assume (on its unconscious character, see Edelman 2006). Pragmatism, both classical and the re-born variant, takes thinking and reasoning as modes of action, not as something opposed to it. The latter option appears natural only to a committed dualist. Fodor apparently takes it for granted as he calls action “externalization of thought.” Externalization is real but also begs a question: Whence does the agent have those thoughts and intentions that he or she now externalizes in his or her concrete acts? Apparently they are somehow internalized prior to this action occasion, unless the agent is supposed to be born with them.³ Pragmatism, in both versions, assumes internalization and externalization as mutually constitutive rather than as in a zero-sum relation. Living creatures live in an inherent relation to their surroundings, material and social, and the traffic between these two sides is in both directions. Dualist thinking resorts here to double-entry book-keeping: places action here and perception (internalization) there, in separate columns, but this is precisely what embodied cognitive-science’s treatment of perception (and action) finds untenable – on *empirical* grounds (Noë 2004). The double-entry understanding about the agent’s relation to the world tends to lead to the assumption that intention and its ensuing corporeal execution are two separate phenomena, and intention the more important of them.

Pragmatism, however, does not understand thinking as a mere mental factor that *precedes* the more material acts, as Fodor assumes together with many others. In my sarcastic moods, I sometimes have the bad habit (*sic!*) of calling that assumption the ‘mind-first explanation’ of action, stealing this phrase from the philosopher Dennett (1995).⁴ The point is not whether mind is present at all in the action process, but about its correct place and correct role. However, today there are even more radical opinions that begin to give downright negative answers to the question, *Does Consciousness Cause Behaviour?* (a book title by Susan Pockett and others, 2006). Fodor maintains that consciousness does cause behaviour and assumes further that thinking about action precedes and is more foundational than action proper. My own opinion is that consciousness does not cause behaviour, but is present in it and guides its ongoing course.

The Cartesian model of action as the externalization of thought makes sense if it is assumed in the same ontological context where it was originally put forth,

3 D. C. Dennett remarks, half-jestingly (1991/1996: 192n-193n), that Fodor sometimes seems to maintain such assumptions, although he has never been interested in evolutionary viewpoints.

4 By the so-called mind-first explanation, Dennett (1995) refers to the idea of ‘intelligent design’ in theories of evolution.

in the static ontology that was available to René Descartes in the seventeenth century. It assumed that the world stood mostly still and that change was a contingent exception. I do not know about Fodor's explicit ontology, but I do know that philosophers (and many social scientists) regrettably still tend to think about action through this picture where an active subject is confronting a more or less steady and passive outside world. In process ontology change is a built-in feature (Kilpinen 2009b; on process ontology generally, see Rescher 2000), and this has consequences also for the understanding of action. If one wants to use the terms 'internal' and 'external' at all, one may say internalization of reality to be more basic than externalization of thought. Not only in a process world, where this conclusion follows as a matter of course, but even elsewhere, because what else is learning, if not the internalization of reality, material and social, into the subject's mind, action-dispositions and habitus? However, there are also such scholars who think that the division internal/external can be taken as downright redundant (Määttänen 1993; 2010). If we want to use these terms as analytic abstractions, then the proper term for internalization apparently is the term habit, understood in its pragmatist and embodied sense. (For empirically based criticisms of Fodor's position in cognitive science, see Chemero 2009; Noë 2004).

However, from the above discussion it does not follow that we can just make short shrift of the mind/body dualism as erroneous altogether. Embodied cognitive science also suggests that "we all act like dualists", as the neuroscientist Michael Gazzaniga entitles one of his chapters (2008: Ch. 7). We act like dualists in the sense that we automatically suppose living beings in general, human beings in particular, to be provided with intentionality and agency. This is so built-in a feature in us that the cognitive processes with which we handle information from animate and inanimate objects are different, that is, involve different perceptions and inferences, as Gazzaniga informs us (2008, 268f.). For the study of action this means that the sore point in the dualist assumption is not so much its use as such, as its uncritical taking for granted. If taken uncritically for granted, it too easily turns an analytical distinction into an ontological one. Analytically, however, one may distinguish between mind and body. Above, I have myself talked about 'mind' without further ado, though, following pragmatists I take it more as a function than as an entity *sui generis*.

To sum up the discussion thus far: When I emphasize that habit plays an inalienable role in action, I am not referring to the routine character of action. I suggest instead that descriptively action is to be taken as an already ongoing process – for *this* the term habit. It is a process that at irregular intervals runs into difficulties, but these can usually be resolved. Regarding the acting subject, the habit-term refers to her or his dispositions and tendencies to action. These tendencies do not exclude the mind's contribution. Above I noted that thinking or inference can be understood as a *kind* of action, as pragmatists and (some)

cognitive scientists understand it. It surely is a very peculiar kind of action, as it does not leave immediate traces in the world, a criterion on which I agreed with Fodor above. Originally, however, thinking (mind, if you like) has emerged to guide action. “If the body had been easier to understand, no one would have thought that we had a mind”, said the neo-pragmatist Richard Rorty (1980, 239), though he did not follow the idea through to its logical consequences, due to his infatuation with language (where he is curiously close to Fodor). About mind, body and action, however, the neurologist Antonio Damasio (2006, 89-90) argues that “Not all behaving organisms have minds”, and goes on to specify:

that is, not all have mental phenomena (which is the same as saying that not all have cognition or cognitive processes). Some organisms have both behaviour and cognition. Some have intelligent actions but no mind. No organism seems to have mind but no action.

This speaks not only about the evolutionary order of things from merely blind activity to mind-guided activity to independently operating mind activity, but also makes an interesting suggestion about intelligence, to which I shall return. The idea that action is the way in which human beings exist in the world seems to be making slow but steady headway in the cognitive disciplines and to be gaining ground vis-à-vis dualist mind-centred views. However, one cannot quite say the same about the situation in the social sciences.

Action reported missing in Sociology

“There is no action in *any* of the existing, designated ‘theories of action’ in the discipline of sociology”, the British sociologist Colin Campbell asserted some fifteen years ago (1996). He explained why there is no action there by saying that sociology usually presents the human individual “as someone who reflects, recognizes, identifies, plans, comprehends, and interprets, but not really [as] someone who *acts*, who in the last resort actually *does anything*” (Campbell 1996, 8, 15; original emphases).⁵ I quite agree with this diagnosis, though I do not agree at all with Campbell’s suggested cure, a return to Max Weber, or with his general thesis that social action is just a myth, a derivative from individual action. To treat first this latter question, which is relevant for the self-understanding of social sciences: Cognitive science suggests that the truth is rather the opposite, social action is the original phenomenon and individual action is a derivative. Findings about human cognition in fact support an even stronger thesis, namely, that human subjectivity is based on intersubjectivity and that they are both constituted on a pre-existing, already ongoing process of action (a reminder in favour of our interpretation of

⁵ The latter passage refers to Alfred Schütz’s phenomenological sociology, but I believe that the author means the description for contemporary sociology generally.

habit; see Bogdan 2000; Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008; Carruthers 2009; for the idea's pertinence to the social sciences: Gärdenfors 2009; Franks 2010; Kilpinen, forthcoming b).

However, Campbell apparently had a point when he pointed to the negligence of action in sociology, and the point is that to study what people say or think about action is not the same as to study action proper – unless you are a committed Cartesian dualist. I also think that the situation has not improved much since the time of Campbell's writing. The movement known as 'actor network theory', (ANT; see Law & Hazzard 1999 for introduction), might seem a counter-example but actually is not. The reason why is that it is more interested in those networks than in action proper, and its term to refer to the latter problem field, 'actor,' is in itself dubious, for action-theory purposes. Here I agree with Pierre Bourdieu (1990, 9) and Margaret Archer (2000, 11) that *agents* come before actors or subjects. The same goes for the movement known as the 'practice turn' in contemporary theory (see Schatzki, Knorr Cetina & von Savigny 2001 for introduction): it does not quite deliver what its name promises. It shows an awareness of the problem of action, but does not offer ingredients for its solution. An indication of this comes from a participant in this movement, the philosopher Stephen P. Turner (1994; 2002). As he contends, most discussions about practices tacitly assume a more prosaic notion as its necessary foundation. This notion is the phenomenon of habit. It is not so often explicitly mentioned, but more often tacitly assumed to sustain practices in time and history. "Habit, then, seems to be an ineradicable element in the notion of practice" is Turner's conclusion (1994, 57). This observation, however, brings us back to where we started, because I once had occasion to remind Turner that there is more than one variant of the notion of habit around (Kilpinen 2009a), though he does not seem to be sufficiently aware of this. If we assume the more advanced description of habit, (outlined above), we can conclude that traditions and practices may indeed rest on this phenomenon, but this does not render them as hopelessly opaque as Turner fears.⁶ It all depends on what kind of habit-concept you are using in your theory. The advanced description of habit refers to action as an already ongoing process. This assumption should not be unpalatable in sociology, judging by the fact that not so long ago it was prominent in this discipline.

The one to propound it was the British sociologist Anthony Giddens, who, in various works, contended that human individuals are knowledgeable beings who know a great deal of what they are doing. These doings, in turn, are to be conceived as "reflexive monitoring of the process of conduct in the day-to-day continuity of social life", as Giddens's perhaps happiest definition went (1984, 44). He explained his general intent as follows (1979, 55; original emphasis):

6 In personal communication Turner has acknowledged this remark as valid.

'Action' or agency, as I use it, does not refer to a series of discrete acts combined together, but to a *continuous flow of conduct* ... as involving a stream of actual or contemplated causal interventions of corporeal beings in the ongoing process of events-in-the-world.

This comes curiously close to the pragmatist position, curiously in the sense that Giddens has not in public expressed any fondness for this tradition. Nevertheless, both Giddens and the pragmatists discard the idea about action as a series of discrete acts and take this notion to be a consequence of dualist assumptions about the subject. Only one thing – however, this is the needed capstone – appears to be lacking in Giddens's model, namely, the concept of habit, understood in the pragmatist sense to *include* thought and reflection. Giddens uses the term only seldom, and one telling case is the following: "[Terms like] 'habit' or 'convention' imply activities or aspects of activities that are *relatively unmotivated*" (1979, 218; original emphasis). This reveals that a trace of Cartesian dualism remains even in Giddens's thinking, although his announced purpose was to overcome it. He does not reach the conclusion that motivation need not be based on a singular explicitly held motive. Motivation can also reside in 'habit', if this is interpreted in a more advanced sense than the following of a convention. However, with his problematic conclusion, that to acknowledge the presence of habit seems to imply negligence of the role of motive (or some other act of consciousness), Giddens is in good company. Most previous users of the habit-term (or its equivalent) have landed in just the same dilemma.

'Habit' in the history of philosophy: You cannot find a non-user

The notion of habitus has been used innumerable times in the past, by authors as different as Hegel, Husserl, Weber, Durkheim and Mauss.

Pierre Bourdieu

I quote Bourdieu to give credit to his awareness that the notion of habit or habitus has indeed popped up innumerable times. It has perhaps even more often been tacitly assumed without explicit mention, throughout history. Bourdieu's list of names is not even a tip of the iceberg of previous famous users. In truth, one is hard put to find a non-user, some such author who would have had no use for 'habit', 'habitus', or some cognate term. However, nearly all users of these terms have also wanted to *contrast* them with human thought and reflection.

This interpretation is sustained by Charles Camic's excellent article 'The Matter of Habit' (1986), which is required reading particularly for sociologists trying to find their legs in this problem field. It gets further support from Gerhard Funke's earlier extensive treatise *Gewohnheit* (1958) on which Camic draws. Camic's paper is

not quite faultless, even by the standards of its time, in that he too often makes do with mere mention of the term 'habit', and does not pay attention to its different uses by different authors. For example, John Dewey's principle that "thought which does not exist *within* ordinary habits lacks means of execution" (1922, 67) has escaped him though he refers to the book in question. Even more important is his missing of Dewey's and other pragmatists' explicit assumption that *habit can be open for the acting subject's reflection*, the idea that I am propounding in this paper. However, Camic's article made a genuine service in demonstrating that the negligence of habit in sociology is a recent phenomenon, mostly the doing of the post-WWII interpretation of sociology's history that Talcott Parsons (1937/1949) and his disciples initiated.

That historical purge is strange in view of the central finding in Funke's 600-page monograph (1958). That finding is that practically every philosopher, whose name has survived, from Plato to the twentieth century, has had something to say about the habit-phenomenon. One might imagine that a rationalist and dualist like Descartes would have little use for it, but no: Funke needs eight pages (263-71) to sum up his position. Kant's usage of the term is even wider. However, while the existence of habit has been acknowledged, it without exception has been taken only as a nuisance with which one has to live. It has been understood as hindering our consciousness and rationality in executing their proper work. One to suggest this was the classic empiricist philosopher David Hume. In his *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739-40) he uses terms 'habit' and 'custom' as each others' synonyms (e.g. p. 134 in the 1985 edition), arguing that "we call every thing CUSTOM, which proceeds from past repetition, without any new reasoning or conclusion" (152). The reason why this phenomenon is so prevalent is that "the custom operates before we have time for reflection" (153).

The key term in this definition is repetition, because Hume adds just a bit later that "a habit can never be acquir'd merely by one instance", but once it is acquired, this repetitive sequence "admits not of the least change" (154, 158). That what is being repeated is some such previous action that was done consciously and intentionally when it was performed for the first time. If it is repeated often enough it tends to assume a self-propelling character. This self-propulsion leaves little if any chance for our mind to do its work, because it "operates before we have time for reflection", as we heard. Definitions like this have been commonplace in the history of philosophy. They also explain why the term 'habit' has those negative overtones that are often associated with it. Because habitual repetition takes the reins so quickly and easily, it disturbs thinking, perhaps hinders it altogether. Later centuries did not bring much improvement to the situation, rather the opposite. As empirical psychology discovered the phenomenon of conditioning, this seemed to support the received view about habit as an automatic unconscious routine that easily takes over unbeknownst to us. This was why Parsons and his followers, who

wanted to see human social life most of all as rational, disliked the whole idea. However, before them there had also been other reactions to the problem.

As habit was perceived as a universal aspect in action, though always the less important aspect, and was seen as an opposite to conscious and rational action, this dilemma of a situation of course called for solution. Toward the end of the nineteenth and early in the twentieth century two bodies of thought attempted to do something about this habit/consciousness dualism. The solution of classical sociologists was to take it as a relative rather than an absolute opposition. The solution of classical pragmatists was to overcome the dualism, in the full Hegelian sense of *Aufhebung*. However, before we move to discuss these parallel attempts at a solution, we need to know a bit more about the intellectual background of the latter attempt.

Charles Darwin's revolution in the life sciences also led to a change of perspective in human studies. It had consequences for the understanding of 'habit' too. Darwin himself uses the term in *The Origin of Species* (1859/1968, 67, 74, 156f. etc.), though not in any specific sense, just to refer to established behaviour patterns in animals (and in a sense in plants too). These patterns are due to living beings' successful adaptations to their circumstances. One to receive inspiration from Darwin's work was the British philosopher and physician Joseph J. Murphy (1827-1894). To my knowledge, his work *Habit and Intelligence* (originally of 1869) is the first to suggest that these two phenomena, habit and intelligence, might go together and even correlate positively, instead of being at war with each other.

Such a correlation becomes possible, Murphy maintains, if both phenomena are taken in a more comprehensive sense than is usually the case. As he says (1879, 87), "we generally use the word 'habit' with special reference to the mysterious border-land between the conscious and the unconscious function", but he also wants to widen the term's coverage to include conscious activity. He also does a similar widening operation with regard to the term 'intelligence'. It has usually been taken (and even today often is taken) as an attribute of the mind, particularly of the human mind. Murphy's insight was to change the order of things and widen the 'intelligence' term's domain, so that its denotation becomes "almost coextensive with life", as the philosopher George H. Mead (1938, 68) later on came to say about his own intelligence-concept. We have met an idea very much like this above, where intelligence is taken as the wide and basic phenomenon and mind, or consciousness, as its particular sub-case. We heard it from Antonio Damasio, as he explained that some organisms have "intelligent actions but no mind" (2006, 90). This is also the position of Murphy and the pragmatists: In the beginning there were intelligent activities, which *later on*, in order to develop even more intelligent, needed an intelligent mind to guide them. From Murphy's fecund insight and altered order of things it was only a short step to conclude that if habit could go

together with intelligence it might go together with consciousness too. This was the conclusion that the classic pragmatists drew, from Peirce to Dewey and Mead. It is not known whether they used Murphy's work on their way to that conclusion, but they drew the same conclusion concerning habit, intelligence and mind and also developed all these notions a step or two further.

Should they alternate – or should they overlap and fuse together? Sociology and Pragmatism on the dilemma of the relation of consciousness vs. habit

1. Mind intervenes when needed – the sociological solution of alternation

Now we take a closer look at the two solutions that sociologists and pragmatists proposed while facing the dilemma that the habit/consciousness dualism causes. At least three classical sociologists have paid explicit attention to the habit-phenomenon and its role in human conduct, namely, Ferdinand Tönnies, Émile Durkheim and Max Weber. In his foundation-laying sociological treatise *Community and Civil Society (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft, 1887)*, Tönnies relates mind to corporeal action in two alternative ways. Mind can either be continuously present in action (this case being called the 'natural will'), or precede it according to the traditional mind-first pattern (this being called 'rational' will). The latter kind of will "precedes the activity with which it is concerned and remains detached from it", Tönnies says, so that the acting subject's body is taken "as a mere inert object" (2001, 95). However, once the will has jerked the body out of this inertia, by "mechanical compulsion", as Tönnies argues, the action can assume a self-propelling character and often does so. Tönnies finds this self-propelling or habitual character quite prevalent, so that he is one of those who explicitly call the human being "a creature of habit" (2001, 104). However, his notion of habit does not extend all the way to thought and rationality and to the idea that they might be located *inside* habit. One might say that despite his basically naturalist approach Tönnies has remained closer to Hume than to pragmatism in his understanding of the relation between habit and consciousness.

Durkheim goes a step further in this respect. As he writes in the middle part of his *Suicide (1897/1966, 158-9)*,

Reflection develops only if its development becomes imperative, that is, if certain ideas and instinctive sentiments which have hitherto adequately guided conduct are found to have lost their efficacy. Then reflection intervenes to fill the gap that has appeared, but which it has not created. Just as reflection disappears to the extent that thought and action take the form of automatic habits, it awakes only when accepted habits become disorganized.

This is a most interesting passage, because in it one can perceive the basic outlines of the ‘doubt/belief model of inquiry’ that Durkheim’s contemporaries, the classic pragmatists, were propounding at the time. The basic idea in both versions is that reflection awakes and intervenes if and when ongoing conduct has been “checked”, as was Mead’s (1938, 79) term for such an occasion. The difference between approaches is that this was the culminating point of Durkheim’s reflections on habit and consciousness, whereas for pragmatists it was the starting point. They were quick to take the next step, to observe that *reflection can also see through ongoing habits*; it does not have just to wait obediently for its turn, until an explicit problem arises (see below) – although pragmatists did retain this idea as their first premise. However, Durkheim stands out from run-of-the-mill theorists in that he was also able to see valuable aspects in the habit-phenomenon in its own right. In his posthumously published lectures, *Moral Education* (1925/1961), habits are precisely the locus where morality resides, and they must be inculcated in young children before it is too late. In his own words, “Morality thus presupposes a certain capacity for behaving similarly under like circumstances, and consequently it implies a certain ability to develop habits, a certain need for regularity. So close is the connection between custom and moral behaviour that all social customs almost inevitably have a moral character” (Durkheim (1925/1961, 27). When this regularity is broken, then it is time for reflective consciousness to intervene, but Durkheim does not take into account the possibility that it might intervene even before the breakdown, that is, anticipatorily. Admittedly, he does grant that *parents’* consciousness might and should intervene anticipatorily in the habitual conduct of their *children*, to give them educative guidance. However, he also restricts this discussion, where ‘habit’ is prominent, to *elementary* moral education. In the more intellectual morals of adults, habits are supposed to play a much more restricted role and eventually be superseded by reflective thought (see further Camic 1986).

Max Weber has basically the same understanding about action as Durkheim. Not so much on account of what he explicitly says about habit (whose existence he recognizes all the time), but for his understanding of the constitutive role of *fallibility* in action, so that the development of reflection “becomes imperative” precisely at the moment of failure, as Durkheim said above. Weber is more laconic, as he pauses to remark in a footnote to his rather unfocused series of economic essays, *Roscher and Knies* (originally of 1903-06), that “precisely a divergence between that which is intended and that which is actually attained, – the *nonattainment* of the purpose – is indisputably constitutive for the psychological genesis of the concept of purpose” (Weber 1975, 276, n94 to ch. 3; original emphasis).⁷ Mere striving after a purpose is only a most elementary form of purposive or intentional action, to use the philosophers’ vernacular. A more advanced notion needs to

⁷ In the German original the note appears on p. 128 of *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre* (1951).

include the unavoidable failure, its correction at a later try, and action's concomitant development toward a self-corrective but never completely infallible process (for general descriptions, from the viewpoint of cognitive science, see Määttänen 1993; Bogdan 1994; Dennett 1996, ch. 4). However, this ingenious insight does not appear as unambiguously in Weber's other writings. In them, most prominently in the posthumously published *Economy and Society* (1922), he has presented his famous ideal-typical catalogue about possible modes of action, in which the habitual aspect plays a central role, but he has not been as explicit about the constitutive role of fallibility in action. (For a more systematic comparison between Weber and pragmatism, see Emirbayer 2005).

To sum up about classical European sociologists, in their work a particular assumption about the human psyche, sometimes called 'faculty psychology', is still rather prominent. It is the idea that cognition, emotion and conation are *separate* faculties of the mind that do not meddle in each others' businesses (see Lakoff & Johnson 1999, 410-15 for a brief introduction; for a historical discussion, see Hilgard 1980). Durkheim does not cause many problems of interpretation in this respect, as his conception of the human individual is both programmatically dualistic (see Durkheim (1914/1964) and relies rather explicitly on faculty psychology, from early on (cf. Durkheim 1893/1984). Tönnies claimed above that 'will' and rationality go partly together, but he is also famous for taking (together with most of his contemporaries) women as more emotional, men as more rational. In such thinking there are two faults: its implicit sexism, and its reliance on faculty psychology (which I take to be the severer fault, as it, at least in this case, causes the former). Weber's case is most curious. The ideal-typical method that he follows in his typology of social actions supposedly allows overlap and shading in between those action-types, rational, affective and traditional. However, Weber violates his own rule, as he puts the instrumentally rational mode of action (*zweckrationales Handeln*) in a special position. He writes about it (1978, 26) that it "involves rational consideration of alternative means to the end, of the relations of the ends to the secondary consequences, and finally of the relative importance of different possible ends. Determination of action either in affectual or in traditional terms is *thus* incompatible with this type" (emphasis added). Accordingly, Weber's criterion is the presence or absence of those 'rational considerations', whose general model is on the same page told to be that kind of thinking that "the [economic] principle of marginal utility" represents. That certainly is an ideal type of rationality, but whether Weber is entitled to call (as he does) 'irrational' all those actions that fail to meet that criterion depends on whether one follows faculty psychology or some other conception. Today, faculty psychology is being definitely superseded (Damasio 1994/2006; Lakoff & Johnson 1999), and classic pragmatist philosophers were among the first to question it. Here thus is another problem field where the sociological understanding of action does not quite reach the same level of development that pragmatism reaches.

2. *Mind can see through the habit – the pragmatist solution of Aufhebung*

Above I compared Durkheim's action model (implicit in Weber too) where ongoing habit and reflection take turns with what philosophers call the 'doubt/belief model of inquiry', the model where pragmatism has its starting point. It was originally introduced by C. S. Peirce in two articles of 1877-78 (see chs. 7-8 in Peirce EP 1). What philosophers do not usually bring out clearly enough are the following two points: (i) that Peirce was aware of the relevance of this cyclical model for action-theory and probably intended it also for this purpose (though it is mostly associated with the philosophy of science; see Kilpinen 2010); and (ii) it was shared at least to an extent by all classical pragmatists. They all held the idea that G. H. Mead (1938, 79) formulated as follows:

Reflective thinking arises ... for carrying out some hypothetical way of continuing an action which has been checked. Lying back of curiosity there is always some activity, some action, that is for the time being checked.... The solution of the problem will be some way of acting that enables one to carry on the activity which has been checked in relation to the new act which has arisen.

Unlike in the passage from Durkheim above, the crucial term 'habit' does not appear explicitly here, but it is implicitly present, as Mead assumes continuous action to be the rule, a 'check', an exception that must be overcome to enable the action to go on. And as I said, this model of alternation between an ongoing habitual flow of action and its 'check' was for pragmatists the starting point that they assumed and developed further. In that development, 'habit' came to refer to the continuity of action, not to its iron cast character of repetitive routine. Peirce provides a telling example, when he says (NEM 4, 143; 1898)⁸ that "Habits are not for the most part formed by the mere slothful repetition of what has been done", a statement that is in direct contradiction to what Hume said above, for example. The contradiction deepens as we remember Hume's assumption that 'a habit can never be acquired merely by one instance'. According to Peirce, one instance may suffice, or rather, no 'instance' of repetition is needed at all, as he once asserts that he "would not hesitate to say [that] a common match has a *habit* of taking fire if its head is rubbed, although it never has done so yet and never will but once" (Peirce MSS 104, 13, n.d., original emphasis). As Peirce says this in full earnest, it is obvious that the concept of habit has undergone a complete transformation on its way from Hume to Peirce's final position. Peirce's expression tells us that he refers by 'habit' to the *disposition(s)* of the acting subject, to genuine tendencies to act so and so in circumstances that call for that type of action. All such circumstances need not ever materialize, but the disposition remains real nonetheless. The interpretation of habit as disposition means that it is "the *would-acts* of habitual behaviour", not

⁸ For abbreviations in Peirce quotations (an established practice among Peirce scholars), see the list of references. The original year of writing or publication is also provided if known.

any “agglomeration of actual happenings”, that is, individual ‘actions’ one by one, that constitutes habit, as Peirce maintains (EP 2, 401-02; 1907; original emphasis).

However, our main problem concerns the role of consciousness in habit, as I have asserted throughout this paper that the pragmatists were able to burst the conceptual wall that hitherto had kept those phenomena apart. Peirce provides a first signpost along the way. Simultaneously as he asserts ‘habit’ not to depend on repetition, he also avers (RLT, 191; 1898) that human beings can possess “direct consciousness of habit-forming or learning”. Perhaps they can in concomitance with learning, a sceptical reader might answer, but can it be so also with established habits? Even they are supposed to be open for the subject’s own reflection, as Peirce characterizes them to be “self-analyzing because formed by the aid of analysis of the exercises that [have] nourished them”, so that the proper name for them is “deliberately formed, self-analyzing habit”, as he adds (EP 2, 418; 1907). As we see, though Peirce does not relate habit to repetition, he does relate both mental and corporeal habits to an ongoing action-process – but this is but another way of saying that he has discarded the dualistic assumptions behind their ordinary treatments. The following words sum up the pragmatist interpretation of the mutual role of consciousness and habit, as they appositely were addressed for the first time to Peirce’s friend and fellow-pragmatist, William James (Peirce CP 8.304; 1909): “Consciousness of habit is a consciousness at once of the substance of the habit, the special case of application, and the union of the two”.

The next thing to be noted is that though this new interpretation takes action to be an ongoing process, and as such open for the subject’s reflection, this does not inflict any harm on the concepts of motive and individual action, that philosophers and social scientists have traditionally taken as most basic. They remain at our disposal, as they can be analytically singled out from the larger totality of the action-process. Motive need not mentally precede the corporeal action, but consideration of motives belongs nonetheless to the study of action, as Peirce notes specifically (EP 2, 418). Individual actions, in turn, are accessible as something that can be analytically abstracted and separated from the larger action-process. Perhaps the following metaphor might be of help here.

Surveillance cameras are prevalent in contemporary life and they record what they ‘see’ in real time. However, if something untoward happens and gives cause to consult those recordings, it is not advisable to run them at original ‘live’ speed. Investigators rather watch them at a reduced speed, perhaps stop altogether at some still frame that allows them to see unambiguously what actually has taken place, say: ‘see, the man wearing black smashes the window and then they enter the building’. The logical structure between habit, interpreted as a process, and the individual actions that it contains, is analogous. In some contexts, particularly in the normative contexts of ethics and jurisprudence we are interested first of all

in some individual deeds that have been done. Empirically and descriptively taken, however, human life rather consists of habitual processes.

This was the conclusion that Peirce's pragmatist followers were quick to draw and develop into a principle of social thinking. John Dewey maintained polemically that "thought which does not exist *within* ordinary habits of action lacks means of execution" (1922, 67; emphasis added). The other side of the coin was for him that "habits deprived of thought and thought which is futile are two sides of the same fact" (*ibid.*). Those formulations reveal that Dewey belongs to those thinkers for whom habit and thought not only go together but need each other. Furthermore, this concerns not only ordinary thought, but even that form of thought that is traditionally taken as the most valuable, knowing. Even that is for Dewey related to habit, or rather, dependent on it: "The scientific man and the philosopher like the carpenter, the physician and politician know with their habits, not with their 'consciousness.' The latter is eventual, not a source" (1922, 182-3). By now we are attuned to catch Dewey's intended meaning. He does not say that consciousness would have no business in such experts' knowledge, but he does assert that it must be built into their habits. As these habits are taken as open for the subject's reflection, access to that knowledge need not be particularly difficult. Mead's position about the status of knowledge and habit is similar. "A labourer with acquired skill for which he has no theory", he says (2002, 166), "approaches the condition of the purely instinctive animal. He becomes helpless the moment he is out of the environment to which his habits are adapted". Such a fate, however, can be avoided, according to Mead, and it is to be avoided by bringing theory to those adapted habits and skills. The reason why Mead takes this to be the proper cure is his conviction that "Theory, after all, is nothing but the consciousness of the way in which one adjusts his habits of working to meet new situations" (2002, 169). Such a labourer – the point of course concerns all of us – who possesses this kind of theoretical knowledge can not only effectively solve the problems that he or she encounters during the course of action. By means of theoretical habits he or she can also foresee the appearance of problems and hindrances and guide his or her course before it stalls at them – though not always. Let Dewey (1925/1958, 281) sum up how the habit-phenomenon, understood through its pragmatist re-interpretation, appears in the modern social life of humans:

Communication not only increases the number and variety of habits, but tends to link them subtly together, and eventually to subject habit-forming in a particular case to the habit of recognizing that new modes of association will exact a new use of it. Thus habit is formed in view of possible future changes and does not harden so readily.... By a seeming paradox, increased power of forming habits means increased susceptibility, sensitiveness, responsiveness. Thus, even if we think of habits as so many grooves, the power to acquire many and varied grooves, denotes high sensitivity, explosiveness.

Dewey's observation about how precisely the habitual character of action also makes possible high sensitivity and explosiveness, – by which he means creativity, – demonstrates that I perhaps was not much exaggerating when I once called the change of perspective that pragmatism has occasioned in the study of action with its newly-interpreted concept of habit a 'Copernican Revolution' (Kilpinen 2009b, 171f.). However, the question is not merely whether a human individual qua individual may have those habits, grooves, or whatever you choose to call them. Actually, they are not something to be had, in the first place. We rather find ourselves *in* them, as they are the relations that tie us together with the surrounding world. From this follows the conclusion that we cannot hope to do away with our habits, only alter them, and this alteration of habits, "the habit of changing habits", as Peirce called it, is precisely the human condition, according to pragmatism.

Reasons for favouring the pragmatist option

That a few philosophers, perhaps interesting in themselves, suggested some novel things in their time, a hundred years ago or so, does not of course prove that those suggestions were correct. However, as I said at the beginning, quite a few of their conclusions have since then been reached independently and on empirical basis, by cognitive scientists. When one of them, Alva Noë (2009, 97), asserts today that "Human beings are creatures of habit", that "habits are central to human nature", and even in such forceful a sense that only a being with habits could have a mind like ours (pp. 98, 125), I believe that his notion answers rather closely to that of pragmatists before him. He goes on to maintain, in the spirit of Peirce, Dewey and Mead, that intelligent modes of thought and behaviour "are expressions of understanding and intelligence precisely *because* they are habitual" (pp. 118-19; emphasis added). The final proof to the effect that Noë too has an altered order of things in mind is his assertion that "a habit-free existence would be a robotic existence" (p. 118).

This sounds baffling to such a person who knows only the received meaning for the habit-term. Is not the truth precisely the opposite? Doesn't 'robotic' characterise aptly just the habitual mode of life, as it refers to repetitive action, to mechanical accommodation to one's circumstances, without any suggestion of changing them? So it may seem – but only seem. We can be creative creatures only in so far as our actions are based on the established bedrock of action patterns on which we can draw, according to the demands of the situation. As Noë (124) puts it poetically, to "boldly go where no man [or woman] has gone before", one must first travel to the limits of the known world. That means, less metaphorically, that one must master the skills and habits that form the groundwork. It is in this sense that habits are "basic and foundational aspects of our mental lives" (125) – not to

mention our corporeal lives. In the interpretation followed here, these two aspects intertwine closely with each other in any case.

Giacomo Rizzolatti and Corrado Sinigaglia do not use at all the explicit term ‘habit’ in their path-breaking report on brain science, *Mirrors in the Brain* (2006/2008). What they do, however, is to point out, on empirical observations, that the higher functions of human cognition need established behaviour patterns as their bases. These patterns are on-going, but not mere routines that repeat themselves automatically; they rather undergo continuous, though usually just incremental, modification throughout their course. Furthermore, in capturing the real point in all this, we must not take just the acting subject into account, we have to look further. Action is a *relation* between the agent and the surrounding environment, material and social, in which relation both sides have a say. This is the reason “why our everyday interaction with objects is almost always performed in the same manner”, as Rizzolatti and Sinigaglia (2008, 46) note. They are performed in the same manner if the outside reality demands this. The traditional error has been in searching for the key element only inside the subject.

So, what does that kind of action look like?

It is now high time to correct an omission that has been present throughout this paper. I have proclaimed that a novel interpretation for the phenomenon of habit exists, one that is more ‘reflective’ than its predecessors, but I have not yet given one single descriptive example about what kind of action is actually meant. In particular, what does such action look like from a social-science viewpoint? I take my first outlines from an existing text though develop its examples for my own purposes.

I have found a collection of essays by a Swedish sociologist and social psychologist Johan Asplund (b. 1937), *Det sociala livets elementära former* (1987), which means ‘Elementary forms of social life’, to be one of the best introductions to sociology. According to Asplund, those elementary forms are *social relations*. This sounds familiar enough, but a more specific meaning begins to emerge, as for Asplund those relations are not relations of social being but of social doing. He characterizes them by the term *social responsivitet*, which means approximately ‘social reciprocity’. Again the idea sounds deceptively familiar, deceptively so, because Asplund pauses to make a specific pedagogic point. He maintains that in order to understand the idea correctly we cannot begin from inter-human reciprocal relations. To get the idea the right way round, we have to simplify it, and begin with relations between a human individual and a physical object. These relations are relations of activity and Asplund (1987) uses as examples the following two: Flying a kite and driving a car.

The point in these two examples is that in both of them the acting subject has to act *responsively*, as Asplund calls it, even though one simultaneously also wants to put one's own intentions into effect. As we fly a kite, we of course want the kite to soar handsomely into the air. To accomplish this, one has to react by adjusting one's own movements to the kite's movements; you cannot fly a kite as you move a pencil on top of a table, for example. The situation is similar in driving a car. One does not steer a car like one steers a wheelbarrow, one has to *react* to the manner in which the car handles. For example, if the road is slippery, we mustn't turn the wheel too abruptly, whereas on a dry road this is less important. And we are supposed to know all this, both discursively and as a physical skill, and negotiate our curves accordingly, says the Highway Code.

As one sets out to find more serious examples than these elementary ones, there is not much literature to draw on. However, *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983/1991) by Donald Schön is a case in point. The subtitle tells us that the book is intended to spell out *How Professionals Think in Action*, or "what is the kind of knowing in which competent practitioners engage", as Schön (1991, viii) adds further.

The author's name for that kind of thinking and knowing recurs as a central term throughout the book; it is "reflection-in-action" (pp. 21ff.). It is easy to see in what sense this is meant, the expression's critical target is the 'reflection-*before*-action', or 'mind-first explanation', as I said above. Schön finds that traditional models fail to capture how competent professionals, such as "gifted engineers, teachers, scientists, architects and managers" go about their jobs and solve the problems that they encounter in the midst of them. As he puts the matter, a bit sarcastically (p. 50),

both ordinary people and professional practitioners often think about what they are doing, sometimes even while doing it. Stimulated by surprise, they turn thought back on action and on the knowing which is implicit in action. They may ask themselves, for example, "What features do I notice when I recognize this thing? What are the criteria by which I make this judgment? What procedures am I enacting when I perform this skill?"... Usually reflection on knowing-in-action goes together with reflection on the stuff at hand. There is some puzzling, or troubling, or interesting phenomenon with which the individual is trying to deal. As he tries to make sense of it, he also reflects on the understandings which have been implicit in his action, understandings which he surfaces, criticizes, restructures, and embodies in further action.

The sarcasm in the passage lies in Schön's point that competent agents think about what they are doing *while* doing it, not just before doing it, as academic action models too often would have us believe. With this principle the passage illustrates also the notion of 'reflexive habituality', as I have sometimes called it (Kilpinen 2009a), an interpretation of action as embodied and proficient, though Schön does not use the specific term 'habit' and it is not listed in his index.

Somewhat paradoxically, most instructive treatments of the habit-phenomenon often make little explicit use of this term. One to use it and to understand it in the sense that I favour is the British sociologist Chris Shilling (2008). He relates this term and its underlying idea to “crisis” (i.e. failure in action), and is aware of the pragmatist origins of this dialectic. He maintains that precisely the notion of crisis “offers us something sociologically distinctive” (2008, 18). One good reason for saying that it does so is the variety of historical and sociological examples to which Shilling unites his usage of the central term (see chapters 7-9). However, whilst I welcome Shilling’s contribution as important, I think that one can go even further. As he writes (p. 19),

pragmatism maintains that all action is caught in the tension between ‘unreflected habitual action’ and the experience of disruption and crisis as circumstances change and habits become ineffective. This is because the relationship between the external and internal environments of action is ultimately unstable.

Yes, that relation is unstable, and all this is in the spirit of pragmatism. The basic doubt/belief model, the origin and common denominator of this action-conception is still to be perceived in this rendition. However, as I have said above, habitual action is not necessarily ‘unreflected’ in so far as we follow the pragmatist interpretation. Above I went to pains to prove by text-examples that according to this philosophy ‘knowledge is habit’ (Peirce CP 4.531; 1906; see Dewey too) and this concerns both tacit and discursive knowledge. The point is that knowledge is not a state of mind but something we *do* (cf. Noë 2009, 64), and something that we do continuously (otherwise it would not amount to genuine knowledge). Now, the point in my mini-examples about kite-flying and car-driving is that they in a sense demonstrate how we can be aware – though not necessarily discursively – about our ongoing habits, ‘see’ where they tend to take us, and correct them accordingly. If, say, driving on a dark road I perceive that the car does not hold the road quite properly, I draw the conclusion – not necessarily discursively though even this is possible – that the road is turning slippery. Accordingly, I’d better reduce my speed, lest there be trouble. In driving or kite flying we react by little, mostly unconscious movements to how the object of our action is behaving. The general lesson is that we by such ‘little’ moves anticipatorily avoid bigger collisions with reality, knowing – again, not always discursively – that we cannot avoid contact with reality altogether. Reality is bigger and mightier than us; we are doomed to live on its terms. Those who disbelieve this had better jog their memory about earthquakes, tsunamis and other such nasty occasions where reality shows its darker side.

And I submit, as a conclusion, that an action-conception more or less like this, where an acting subject is facing an *active* (but yet objective) surrounding reality is what the world needs today. Traditional notions where an active subject faces a *passive* outer reality have had their day and have proved insufficient. Many people

agree that contemporary social problems ultimately boil down to environmental problems. The crucial step to take is to understand the environment as active. Not in any personified sense, but yet in the sense that it sometimes can take the initiative and nastily surprise us. The problems that are inherent on the road toward sustainable consumption also stem mostly from this source. And in treating those problems, and outlining a conception of an acting subject, the thing to be remembered is this: Intentionality without habituality is empty; habituality without intentionality is blind.⁹

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