



CONTINENTAL THOUGHT IN INSTITUTIONAL ECONOMICS

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Abstract

I will research some branches of continental thought in institutional economics. I will start with John Searle's idea of social causation as collective intentionality and (according to my understanding) even more important notion of a background. I will take a continental neo-materialist and economic approach to the subject. I will also read Slavoj Žižek as neo-material economics in continental philosophical way.

Furthermore, I will compare Searle's notions of collective intentionality and the background of the social to Maurizio Ferraris' notions of text as a replacement for collective intentionality. The problems that Ferraris addresses are understood here in terms of practices. This reading will make space for neo-material developments of economic theory as social theory. I will not directly address Alain Badiou's neocommunist but will take some notions from neocommunist in general.

Keywords

Neocommunist, New Realism, Hermeneutics, Economics as Social Theory, Social Ontology, Dialectics, Speculative Realism, Object Oriented Ontology, Posthumanism, Background, Process Ontology

Introduction

The ontology of John Searle is often seen as a kind of a basic text of social ontology and that is not itself a very comprehensible theory. The theory is based on many of the elements on which the idea of practice is based, namely, collective intentionality and the background that makes performatives function or makes them meaningful. Speech acts keep up or manifest the practice in the words of Searle's theory. In this article I will look at Searle for a basic theoretical template in order to develop neocommunist and other ideas from continental philosophy as economic theory.

Maurizio Ferraris has related a continental social ontology that is strongly tied to John Searle's kind of basic book of social ontology. Ferraris details the stages of Poland's historical borders and states at the end: "It should be clear, then, that the identity of Poland is not founded on its molecules. The identity of Poland is founded on treaties, written records, formal agreements, which all have the interesting feature of having signatures at the bottom of their pages".²

Ferraris brings to the forefront of his social ontology an element which Searle sees as essential mainly in terms of causal relationships, but which he relegates to the sidelines. At the heart of the theory of Ferraris are registers—in other words, the recordings that, through the background of the interpretation principles of the model, enable the status quo to function. I believe that linking registers of Ferraris theory to the background of the status functions to each other interpreting systems, whose differences and similarities are determined according to the situation. In other words, large principal distinctions are not made, only context-relative distinctions. Here I will combine these ideas of neo-institutional social theory [also economics] with Ferraris' contemplation for continental understanding of economics as neo-material and institutional in the sense of Ferdinand Braudel, who is important [anti-Marxist] for Manuel de Landa's understanding of the need for a new leftist neomaterialist economic theory. De Landa calls for such a theory in a 2017 interview with Graham Harman.³

² Maurizio Ferraris, *Documentality: Why It Is Necessary to Leave Traces*, transl. R. Davies (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 394.

³ Manuel de Landa and Harman Graham, *Rise of Realism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2017).

This is a great possibility for posthumanist thought, since the idea of x term as basic for status functions makes technique and material, in general, separate from humans. Material is therefore passive in Searle's theory. On the other hand, Ferraris shows how material is structured by different sets of rules, recordings, and signatures, etc. Emmanuel Renault⁴ has differentiated between substantial, relational and processual social ontologies. I will argue that by complementing Ferraris with Renault somehow, it is possible to propose relational and processual or even pragmatist/anarchist social theory as economic theory. This is, anyhow, the continental philosophical argument in many senses.

According to Renault, "The first of these two ontological interrogations deals with the types of entities that compose or constitute the social world. The second approach deals with the type of being that is proper to social reality"⁵ This idea of Searle's theory's causal explanation is similar to the practice approach in Schatzki, and other process and practise oriented (at least partly) Marxist theoreticians. Because both see structures of doing and saying as withholding each other as action and structure. This means that the background makes collective intentionality possible, which creates performatives. I will argue that since according to Schatzki there is a practice approach that is also about arrangements that are neo-material, it is possible to argue for a part of neo-material theory that is about assemblages or networks of nonhuman actors. I also also raise questions about process ontologies meaning ways to model change in risk society, such as Ulrich Beck's formulation [1992]⁶ about distribution of risks in post-industrial civilization.

In his book⁷ Geoffrey Hodgson argues about a general theory of institutional economics in a pragmatist and anarchist framework. This pragmatist framework can also be read in a continental philosophical way and is about processes that question dialectics as the basic term for Marx and Hegel in general, as has been often said in contemporary critical and continental theory. For example, Renault has questioned the dialectics in Marx, Hegel and critical theory in general in an interview with the popular philosophical magazine *Niin & Näin* in Tampere in summer 2018.

Ontological Argument

The ontological argument for social sciences with ontology is important partly because the popular practice approach draws from the same kind of explanation that emphasizes neither action nor structure. I will next go through my arguments that explain the basic elements of practice and collective intentionality as part of the same structure. This means that the whole practice as analyzed by Searle⁸ is composed of three elements instead of one.

Dreyfus⁹ has claimed that the contents of collective intentionality form the background, as Searle says. Then, according to Dreyfus's interpretation of Searle (who is writing about Heidegger's idea of practices), Searle explains the contents of collective intentionality with its twin concept, namely the background. So the idea of the practice consists of performatives that form the background and therefore create the practice as the institution, like the structure that has the collective intentionality that again allows the performatives. Derrida describes many dimensions of the text, saying that "along with an ordered extension of the concept of text, dissemination inscribes a different law governing effects of sense or reference".¹⁰

Collective intentionality, along with the background, is the basic building block of the social reality that gives the acceptance that enables different institutions to function.

The collective intentionality of Searle's theory has been criticized for its simplicity. It has been claimed that it is a problem that Searle does not explain the contents of collective intentionality or, in other words, that his meaning-giving structures are too stable.¹¹

This argument combines the approach of Ferraris that seems to claim that this problem of contents is solved by the text with the idea that the contents should be explained by something in general.

Ferraris believes that collective intentionality is better explained through arche-writing, the text as the contents.¹² Ferraris uses a different term to explain a causal factor or concept. The text, however, is in the scope of the theory, since Ferraris claims that the text is the replacement for collective intentionality. Even though the text is

⁴ Emmanuel Renault, *Critical Theory and Processual Social Ontology* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* (London: Sage Publications, 1992).19-23

⁷ Geoffrey M Hodgson, *The Evolution of Institutional Economis: Agency Structure and Darwinism in American Institutionalism* (New York/ London: Routledge, 2004.).125-129

⁸ John R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (London: Penguin, 1996).

⁹ Hubert L Dreyfus, *Being-in-the world: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time. Division I* (Cambridge/Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991). 30-50 (point in general)

¹⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Disseminations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). 25-27

¹¹ Anthonie W. M. Meijers, *Can Collective Intentionality Be Individualized?* in Koepsell & Moss, *John Searle's Ideas about the Social Reality: Extensions, Criticisms and Reconstructions* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 167-184.

¹² Maurizio Ferraris, *Documentality: Why It Is Necessary to Leave Traces, transl. R. Davies.* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013) 145-159

a somewhat similar entity to Searle's term the *background*, it differs in the sense that the background does not include collective intentionality. The point is that Ferraris seems to claim, as I do, that the background is part of the same structure as collective intentionality, in the sense that the background is the content that is missing in Searle's term collective intentionality, according to Meijers.

Therefore it creates the practice in the same way as Searle. The text and the performatives as the contents and the acceptance, or the background, the collective intentionality and the performatives are basically the same parts: the contents and the acceptance and the deeds that can be performed in this framework. The concept of contents, therefore, has many qualities that function in different ways to keep up the social world, as Dave Elder-Vass and Brian Epstein have claimed.

There are differences in the terms that explain how the social world and performatives function (or rather, how many and which terms explain its functioning), and this is where the idea of practice comes into the picture. Practice is understood as the background that creates collective intentionality or the text. Can the background create collective intentionality as one of its functions (which is still only a part of the process)? There we need process ontology to make sense to this situation.

Could and should we explicate which terms we use to analyze the particles of the practice and different combinations of their relations? In addition, which are the relations of these terms as particles of practise? The terms compared here are, as mentioned, the background, collective intentionality and performatives. We have here a threefold analysis of the situation. The practice does have the same function on both sides. As the rules governed the structure that humans use in order to achieve certain goals, the performatives have little variation in the stylization capacity.

The performatives as the monotonically used vehicle also have certain secondary functions, keeping the institution in question intact. People name the boat performatively, but also keep up the institution of naming boats in general, even though they mostly don't talk about it. So collective intentionality and some parts of the background are influenced by performatives. I pose the question: what makes the social world function, according to Searle's social ontology? The immediate answer is the performative that is, on the other hand, partly created by collective intentionality, the background or perhaps some other more complicated process.

Ferraris claims that collective intentionality can be replaced by the text.¹³

The social in Searle's social ontology¹⁴ (Lawson, 2013) is a separate realm that is governed in terms of structural action. According to Lawson, "Generally speaking then, the *explananda* of the social realm, the phenomena to be explained are the practices in which people engage and the *explanans* are the physical, social and psychological conditions the relevant action. This leads us towards the background causation of Searle from the text, since the text is a less analytical category of the same phenomena and I am looking for analytical distinctions.

According to Johansson, performing a successful speech act is related to a general theory of speech acts according to which speech acts rely on institutions and may fail when the speakers or listeners do not meet the right kind of position in the institution. When we are talking about the president's acts and their implications for the speech acts, however, as such assumes that the speech acts will be successful. When talking about speech acts and their effects, it is assumed that speech acts are felicitous. As an example of a speech act that an official authority does from the right kind of position but that fails, Johansson represents a situation where a declaration causes rioting and destruction¹⁵ On the other hand, Searle writes that an ultimate system of status-functions can only operate if it is backed up by a monopoly of violence in general.¹⁶

Ferraris uses the concept of registration to refer to facts stored in the mind. From this perspective registrations are part of collective intentionality. On the other hand, Ferraris classifies documents in many categories. In my view these classifications help explain how registers, documents and codifications relate to performatives. These categories are only important according to the idea that the social world is flexible and non-real in that it consists of many factors that affect each other through representations. For example, the concept of money is represented by actual money, and the meaning attached to it is only one part of the problem. It is also a convention that is not connected to any inherent value. On the other hand, the leaves of a tree are special material components that can move energy from one place to another. This will be important later when I respond to the posthumanist discourses.

How the concept of collective intentionality should be understood is an interesting question. Some problems concerning collective intentionality could be seen as artificial, if it is perceived from a perspective where the starting idea is the commonsense understanding of collective intentionality. I think it is easy to understand

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Lawson, Tony, *Economics and Reality* (London, Routledge, 1997), 193

¹⁵ Ingvar Johansson, *How Philosophy and Science May Interact: A Case Study of Works by John Searle and Hernando de Soto* in B. Smith, D. Mark, I. Erlich (eds.) *Mystery of Capital and Construction of Social Reality*, (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 2008), 88.

¹⁶ John Searle, *How Philosophy and Science May Interact: A Case Study of Works by John Searle and Hernando de Soto* in B. Smith, D. Mark, I. Erlich (eds.) *Mystery of Capital and Construction of Social Reality* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing, 2008), 34.

where this kind of critique comes from, because from the individualistic perspective, collective intentionality is understood as an individual phenomenon, and the main problem is: how could it be shared with other subjects? I argue that this problem may be framed too tightly. The real problem in this study will be more technical in two senses. At first I mention that in the second part of this article I will look at the technical ways and concepts that can be used to understand the contents of collective intentionality. Now in this first half of the article, I will look at what the boundaries of collective intentionality are, also through speech acts. I will ask if they are connected to psychological or neuropsychological facts, and so on. In general, what are the boundaries of collective intentionality in the sphere of the social and natural? How is this divide between nature and society possible?

On the other hand, collective intentionality could be understood as a natural product that is not problematic in the sense many theories claim it would be. In other words, collective intentionality could be perceived as a flexible phenomenon that does not need theorizing about the phenomenon itself but rather how the concept works. For example, many animals have collective intentionality, so perhaps it should not be seen as a phenomenon but completely normal, comprising the way we perceive the world and learn from others. If so, the problem of collective intentionality would come to be framed in a different way. It would not be about the sharing of collective intentionality only, but rather concern more broadly the whole mechanics of communication and registration, which would in this question have the status of collective intentionality as a whole.

Still it keeps the area of collective intentionality confined to the mind's capacity to reach understanding of the world in a collective manner. I think this is misleading. If others are not communicating or registering ideas and meanings there could be no such thing as collective intentionality, because people simply could not know how and where to point their minds. I am tempted to think that the formation of collective intentionality is not a fixed process, but rather a constant stage of negotiation in a similar manner to negotiation as commonly understood. According to this idea, there could not be a stable general collective intentionality, but rather many collective intentionalities that concern the same elements in the world, and those many collective intentionalities are in constant change.

The assumption that the constructivist account belongs to the twentieth century is supported by Scott Lash. He challenges the assumption that critical theory is modernist and post-structuralism is post-modernist¹⁷ The constitutive idea of modernity was in many areas that while space and material itself had previously been only an instrument to show something or to tell a story, in modernity the space itself was the thing that was being transformed and researched through, for example, theatre. John W. Cook argues that Wittgenstein's Humean view of causation did not change during his philosophical career.¹⁸ In this area of conversation more generally about causation this could mean that the modernist monopoly on violence that was celebrated in the twentieth century builds on the idea that things are somehow random. On the other hand, the theatre space (that was used as an example) is transformed as something that is also material and cannot be separated from the social. Therefore, as Renault has argued, process ontology is the most complex ontology.

So if collective intentionality is a pseudo-problem and the background is the scientific phenomenon, what then is the meaning and the function of writing? The text in Ferraris' sense governs the social, so what is the distinction between the material and semiotic or symbolic culture? Namely, the superstructure. Therefore the idea of Ferraris seems to be intact compared to the basic structure of Searle's theory. The background is a kind of combination of discourses and the material environment. In this sense the discourse can only be a systematic version of material deeds. By material deeds, I mean the idea that certain dispositives govern our actions, in a Foucauldian sense.

In Searle's theory the performatives form the background that is the contents of the collective intentionality, which is supporting them. In other words, the content of the collective intentionality is the collective intentionality but it is the background that allows it to happen. Text seems to be exactly the same structure just in a way that the background and collective intentionality are both replaced by a single notion of the text synonymous to arche-writing. So if speech acts want to be understood in this posthumanist sense, then there is only one substance. We are not distinct from the environment. Collective intentionality is made possible in the first place by the environment.

Let's look at the concept of collective intentionality on the broadest possible (in some senses) scale. The concept of collective intentionality in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* is a broad one:

Collective intentionality is the power of minds to be jointly directed at objects, matters of fact, states of affairs, goals, or values. Collective intentionality comes in a variety of modes, including shared intention, joint attention, shared belief, collective acceptance, and collective emotion. Collective intentional attitudes permeate our everyday lives, for instance when two or more agents look after or raise a child, campaign for a political party, or cheer for a sports team.¹⁹

¹⁷ Scott Lash, *Sociology of Postmodernism* (London: Routledge, 1990), 153.

¹⁸ John W. Cook, *Wittgenstein's Metaphysics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 177-181.

¹⁹ (Bernhard H. Schweikard, David P.; Schmid, Hans Bernhard, 2013, Internet Source)

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/collective-intentionality/>

Derrida²⁰ has referred to arche-writing in the Freudian sense in his essay “Freud and the Scene of Writing.” In my thesis I will concentrate on the Freudian side of Derrida’s thinking. The most important aspect of the Freudian side is the aspect of unconsciousness that most of the facts that shape our knowledge and understanding are not available to consciousness. Also, the idea of archives represented in Derrida’s book *Archive Fever*²¹ is important for a Freudian reading of Derrida. There Derrida uses the ideas developed in “Freud and the scene of writing” to understand the meaning of archives which consist of traces, documents, etc. in the same sense that Ferraris uses these terms.

When the mind is directed towards the object it sees, then the object is sometimes part of the viewer as posthuman. When social facts are understood as the social (which, of course, implies a distinction between nature and the social) then Searle’s approach becomes more reasonable. According to Searle, social facts are in some sense collective intentions. They contain collective intentionality²². So if institutional facts are necessarily constituted by collective intentionality, what is the role of more historical processes that are embedded in the notion of practice? This is the question posed for process ontology, since if Searle’s theory is monistic in the sense that social facts can and should contain collective intentionality, then the condition of their possibility is a *process*-related mechanism.

Searle seems to be developing some kind of practice approach that is maintaining distance from the more collective senses of the modelling reality. This can be seen by the vagueness of the terms *background* and *collective intentionality*. They are developing in top of the ontology consisting of the performatives. On the other hand, collective intentionality seems to be a concept that can be deemed unnecessary and thrown away, as Buekens et al.

Therefore, I think the concept itself needs a more precise formulation in many ways. The interpretation according to which Searle’s concept of collective intentionality is problematic, could be applied to suit many different approaches to Searle’s system of the causation in social ontology.

One point of view is that Searle seems to be opposed to individualism. That is a fact. The more important notion, however, is that he tries to save some aspects of individualism in the mechanisms and expectations of his system. Maybe Searle’s project drops into the box that Hargreaves and Varoufakis²³ (1995, 108) assign to the ventures outside the rational choice model by introducing conventions. They describe them as “half-disguised invitations to Wittgenstein, Kant or Hegel.” This is only partly true, since Searle’s ideas of collective intentionality and the background imply an entity in the social that is not individual. It is a convention. This is one of the basic particles of the practice approach.

Searle claims that the negation of collective acceptance does not need ongoing maintenance, opposed to conventional power, which typically requires constant maintenance in one way or another.²⁴ So the practice that enables the effects that need to be maintained is different from the practice that is in process. This is what Searle basically says in relation to the idea of the status function. If we think it through in a posthumanist sense, there is the situation where, for example, some service or possibility is privatized and a large number of people need to live without this service, etc. connected to their personal system of expectations. Does this not need maintenance even more than the old system that was stable? This is the Foucauldian idea that power constitutes power and there is no power-neutral point zero somewhere.

This theory of causality is understood to be performative in Searle’s framework. By the performative framework, I mean the basic idea of cause and effect between somebody uttering a sentence and the effect it causes. This process is at work, for example, in the declaration of war. It basically works in the following way: I say something that you recognize as the declaration of war (in large or small scale). The words establish the fact.

Another question, however, is, what is the status of causality, in itself as outside part of this process? This question can be answered by using Roy Bhaskar’s (1979) idea of causal effects as potentials that work on the tendency principle, which means that tendency can be actualized as an actual force, etc.; however, it exists even in a potential form. The same is often true in human institutions. This idea is true, for example, of a word. There is the potential to make a declaration even if no one ever makes it. The important point here is that understanding the nature of conventions, (un)consciousness, etc. is crucial for understanding causality according to the performatives. Collier (1994) writes about critical realist understanding of unconsciousness. The idea of the unconscious, as mentioned earlier, is a common notion in the discussion about performatives. It is very much present, for example, in the famous Derrida-Searle debate.

There is the question that some words (or utterances) cause different kinds of effects. The notion of cause is not understood in any deeper way (scientific, conceptual, etc.); rather, it is understood only as a conventional relation between meaning and object (the effect). Causality is not important in itself (nor is it for one of my main points of reference, namely John R. Searle), but causality is understood as the successive performatives which in

²⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge, 2001). 246-291

²¹ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1994). 57

²² John R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (London: Penguin, 1996), 23-26.

²³ Shaun P. Hargreaves-Heap and Yanis Varoufakis, *Game Theory: A Critical Introduction* (Routledge, 1995), 108.

²⁴ John R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality*, (London: Penguin, 1996), 109.

turn cause effects that are not tied to the performative causing these effects in any essential way. The level where the brute facts cause the effects is an emergent level of the social, according to Searle. If I say that a meeting is started and bang the table with a hammer and other conventions from then on are followed, it does not mean that the banging on the table would necessarily lead to such effects.

The plane of practice is therefore separate from any other level. So in this idea, Searle is not separate from the practice approach. He makes the separation by drawing his theory closer to the neo-materialist theory by admitting the material nature of the status function in his 1995 social ontology. I will look into the question of causality of the performatives through the ontology of Searle. It is important how the material background enables differences.

At the bottom the problems could be about Derrida's idea of the possibility of an illocution. An illocution means that the speech act is enforced and does surely succeed. On the other hand a perlocution is more random in its effects. The text cannot work causally if no difference exists between the perlocution and the illocution, because only the illocution has the billiard ball touch. To say it in another way, is it possible that causal patterns that are connected to social facts, or are they an impossible combination if social facts are understood to be socially constructed? The answer is, we learned from Bhaskar's account of causality (connected his practice approach to social sciences) that potential/tendency is the main source of a social sphere. So in Bhaskar's notion, nature is not separate from society in some sense in the same way as, for example, Latour.

This leads us to a posthumanist notion of everything as one. Then everything can re-contextualize, everything is on both a micro and a macro level, and therefore nothing would have any structure (meaning global theory here). There is an interpretation of the background (which is usually seen as the context C in status function) as the practice itself because the first is coded in the other. $X=y$ in C.

The background is seen as similar sized (theoretically) a part of the practice of collective intentionality as noted earlier. On the other hand, the background can always change. Therefore, this would lead to a certain amount of perlocution from every speech act because there are complex combinations of material and discursive elements *under* every social practice (which as earlier noted, can be in some sense reduced to the context in general).

The rules are very vague in the sense that the context is governed by practices that are not very explicit rules. Rules are again not functional in themselves but depend on collective intentionality that, on the other hand, depends on the background. This notion of the background is what makes the rules vague. This same idea is represented by the idea that the text is always beneath the practice.²⁵ There is a process of deeds that creates the practice. The practice is, according to Searle, basically rooted in conventional power.

This is a very important addition to the ideas that concern the functioning of the social world. It makes sense to not split the idea of causality into two separate pieces like Searle's conception of causality in his social ontology, which splits into collective intentionality and the background. This is so Searle can do battle on two fronts.

He can be a collectivist who tries to smuggle Wittgenstein and Kant into social sciences, at least to cover some areas instead of rational choice theory. On the other hand, he is developing an ontology that rejects many parts of the collective intentionality understood as the unconscious process that is a social fact—if social facts (as Searle says) are always embedded as part of the collective intentionality that is in part constituted by the background.

This is the weak spot in Searle's theory. Basically, the practices are connected to the power underneath those very same practices. According to Searle, destruction of a conventional power advances through collective acceptance not through the content of collective acceptance (Searle, 1995, 106). This makes it pure power, which is not connected to the large contents of the concept. This means basically that the rules and the background that keep the practice intact are not important in themselves; the acceptance comes from the fact that everybody repeats the same movements and same practices with the background knowledge that often understands that deeds are made to achieve certain outcomes.

On the other hand, all this is unimportant for the destruction of conventional power. When collective acceptance ends, it just ends the practice as a whole. That is the implication of Searle's theory. Here we must keep in mind the thesis of Ferraris that registrations are the basic building block of social reality. By registrations Ferraris means the same thing as Derrida with the text. Ferraris does explain the problems in Searle's theory of collective intentionality. In this view collective acceptance only changes the text to a different format. There is no entity without history, which is the text. In this sense the end of one acceptance makes the text different at one part but most likely does preserve some parts of the original text. The parts that govern the activities in this are partly overlapping. In the Latourian sense this history is more like an alliance between actors. The actors can be also nonhumans²⁶, as Latour explains in his introduction to actor-network theory.

²⁵ Maurizio Ferraris, *Documentality: Why It Is Necessary to Leave Traces*, transl. R. Davies. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013) 145-159

²⁶ Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor Network Theory* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

According to Searle two basic modes of conventional powers are approval and requirement²⁷ The idea of Searle where rules are the clear on/off type is sketched in Searle claims that the negation of collective acceptance does not need ongoing maintenance, as opposed to conventional power, which usually requires maintenance one way or another.²⁸

This implies that rules do not vary or change over time but actually go on or off. If they are off, no work for their maintenance is needed. This is Searle's mechanical idea of the nature of the social world. The idea of practice is in many ways a kind of middle path between Searle's analytical tradition and the Foucault-Deleuze inspired posthumanism. If this is titled "Searle as practice theoretician," what does it mean?

Searle as a Practice Theoretician

In order to shed light on these questions I will go through Searle's ideas with various twists and turns. It is important to note for the nuances of material parts of the textual formations.

In Searle's theoretical framework, the causality is understood in the performatives, which function as a part of collective intentionality and the background. By the performative I mean the basic idea of the cause and the effect between somebody uttering a sentence and effects it causes. This means that the performatives are the function in which individuals use institutional practices for their own ends or, rather, cause effects in an institutional framework. I refer to the practices that are beneath single performatives as the background structure.

I will look into the principles behind how the performances are organized as the background structure in order to form collective intentionality in Searlean terms. With the complex institutional structure beneath, it is hard (or impossible) to explicate all the underlying rules and institutions. In common speech act theory, the rules that make some speech acts possible are always clear. This is, however, an illusion that does not take into account the idea that the background is beneath the collective intentionality²⁹ Then the rules are clear, but the practices around the speech act are not clear in the same way.

There is the question that words cause different effects. The performatives are therefore understood as a variation of the practice that seems to follow specific rules as an individual speech act, which has been catalogued by Searle himself. These performatives aim to cause certain effects and also have the secondary function of upholding the practice that allows the effects to take place. These secondary effects are not always controlled by such straightforward rules as I have noted in understanding the background as a part of the secondary function. In other words, the background is a part of the thing that the secondary functions create—for example, to name a boat so it can be called by its specific name. Calling the name of the boat in general in its variations is then the practice that is a part of the practice bundle that gives meaning to the naming of a boat as a *useful function*.

Ferraris has criticized Searle's view of collective intentionality by asking that if collective intentionality is the glue of social ontology, what then is the function of documents³⁰ Theodore Schatzki writes that the idea of an expressive body (that is at the center of the performative culture theory) can be seen as the Wittgensteinian vision of the social practices that create a social reality by expressing meanings through bodily practices. On the other hand, Schatzki claims that the Wittgensteinian idea strongly resembles Judith Butler's performative theory of gender identity, because like Wittgenstein, Butler also rejects the notion that a person's gender or sex would be a substance, or metaphysical substrate, whose identity lies in the continuing possession of specific "inner" properties.³¹

According to Butler's somehow Wittgensteinian notion, the performative gender is a process that is not rooted in brute physical facts. In Butler's notion it is somehow unclear if she overemphasizing the difference between the nature and the reality in the sense that doesn't give the material reality a clear enough role in her theory in posthumanist sense. The word stylized, from the reference paragraph from Schatzki, refers in my view to the concept. So the point where all these claims about the construction of social reality seem to return is the network of these elements of social reality. It is small changes that relate to the background practice in things like graffiti when there often is not very explicit collective intentionality, but the variation of practices like avoiding the cops and writing your name in varied styles. The style is important as such sometimes.

Searle is talking about this network but from my view, his theories seem to lack the necessary sophistication to really describe the networks. Anyway, the idea of network is at the very center of the causal

²⁷ John R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality*, (London: Penguin, 1996), 108.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 109.

²⁹ Hubert L Dreyfus, *Being-in-the world: A Commentary on Heidegger's Being and Time. Division I*, (Cambridge/Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991).

³⁰ Maurizio Ferraris, *Documentality: Why It Is Necessary to Leave Traces*, , transl. R. Davies. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 154.

³¹ Theodore Schatzki, *The Site of the Social: A Philosophical Account of the Constitution of Social Life and Change* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 46.

explanation of the social reality in Searle because in his 2010 later theory, he bases the collective intentionality and declarations in the notion of the background network power.³²

The debate on the status of the collective intentionality is, in my view, not important in itself in the context of this work, because I'm not trying to argue how collective intentionality works in itself. I only try to prove that Searle's idea of ceasing and destruction of forces is flawed because it relates to the negation of deontic forces that work through collective intentionality. Therefore, it is possible to think that effects of speech acts based on reiteration of texts are outside the definition of collective intentionality and therefore also social forces, if it is assumed that a solution to this question is found, when the importance of contents in terms of the causation is understood well. In this case one may think that the contents of the collective intentionality could work like the recordings in the theory of Ferraris.

I will now only find that the definition of the contents of collective intentionality based on the registrations would probably lead to the rise of perlocutive acts if this distinction from the Searle/Austin axis is held onto. In other words, the textual deeds would not have a clear cause deed relationship, but the effects wouldn't be so closely tied to the signifier, so the situation would be different than what Searle claims, because the possibility of illocutionary acts would be undermined. This leads in some cases to growing importance of non-agentive functions (if analyzed in relation to Searle's theory. The acts would no longer be clear because they would be interpreted through the recordings or, to use Searle's terminology, through values—in other words, acts would be “real” powers, to use Derrida's interpretation of Austin).

³² John R. Searle, *Making the Social World: The Structure of Human Civilization*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010), 154.