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**DOI**

[10.4324/978131565690-14](https://doi.org/10.4324/978131565690-14)

**Publication date**

2016

**Document Version**

Final published version

**Published in**

Practice Theory and Research

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**Citation for published version (APA):**

Weenink, D., & Spaargaren, G. (2016). Emotional Agency Navigates a World of Practices. In G. Spaargaren, D. Weenink, & M. Lamers (Eds.), *Practice Theory and Research: Exploring the Dynamics of Social Life* (pp. 60-84). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/978131565690-14>

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# Emotional agency navigates a world of practices

*Don Weenink and Gert Spaargaren*

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### Introduction

The past two decades witnessed a prolific revival of practice theories. Sociologists and social philosophers such as Davide Nicolini (2012), Andreas Reckwitz (2002), Theodore Schatzki (1996, 2002, 2010; Schatzki, Knorr Cetina and Von Savigny, 2001), Robert Schmidt (2012) and Elizabeth Shove and collaborators (2003, 2012) have elaborated, deepened and refined practice theories that were developed in sociology in the 1970s and 1980s by Pierre Bourdieu and Anthony Giddens in particular. To put it succinctly, practice theories are grounded in the idea that social life consists of socio-material interactions through which people transform their world and themselves. In the words of Schatzki (this volume) these socio-material interactions comprise ‘bundles of practices’ and ‘material arrangements’. The former should be regarded as ‘open spatial-temporal manifolds of activity’, while the latter consist of ‘interconnected human bodies, organisms, artifacts, and things’.

Since the older generation of practice theories had neglected the material dimension of practices, current formulations aim, in critical engagement with material semiotics or actor network approaches, to make practice theory more receptive to the role of material elements and objects, of both human and non-human origin, in social practices. In addition, current practice theories emphasize their potential relevance for the governance of social change while at the same time distinguishing themselves explicitly from some of the prevailing theories of social transformation. At a time when a number of authors seek to reconcile practice theory with transition theory (Grin *et al.*, 2010; Spaargaren *et al.*, 2012; Shove *et al.*, 2012; Hargreaves *et al.*, 2013), Theodore Schatzki (this volume) is keen on pointing out the differences that exist between both kind of theories. The crucial difference in the way they study long term, structural changes is the fact that practice theories reject the claim of transition theories that there are different dynamics at play on different levels of the social. Notions such as large-scale structures, overarching culture, macro-meso-micro distinctions or niche-regime-landscape hierarchies are judged ontologically inappropriate. Instead, practices theories claim that processes of becoming and change unfold at just one level: the level of practices. Hence, the

ontology of practice theories is said to be flat (Schatzki, this volume), and allows for understanding processes of change as open ended and at least partly contingent. By emphasizing complexity and contingency, practice theories provide a realistic understanding of the limited possibilities that single (policy or governance-) actors and organizations have when they seek to manage processes of social change in a linear, direct and instrumental way (Evans *et al.*, 2012). The message for those involved in the management of social change is to improve the quality of interventions by connecting policy strategies to the dynamics of practices as sets of inter-related doings and sayings.

Although early formulations of practice theory by Bourdieu and Giddens in particular emphasized the need to go beyond structuralism and instead offer an agency-inclusive formulation of social interaction and reproduction, the relationship between agency and social change remains underexposed in many contemporary practice theories. The ways in which human agents intervene in the ongoing flow of events in the world and their involvement in bringing about changes in their socio-material environments and in themselves, remain insufficiently explored and conceptualized. As a result, the more recently developed practice theories do not provide convincing answers to issues of agency, emotions and power which might help to explain what brings about social change in a flat world consisting of practices. Why do practices appear and disappear, what makes them more or less widespread, stable and mature, and why are some practices more meaningful, attractive and intense for human actors than others? These questions all revolve around the issue that practices (are made to) matter for people. People engage with innovation, reproduction and social change in the sense that they develop a meaningful relation with the practices they help to reproduce and change, they themselves becoming different persons in the process. If we accept the idea that social life is a vast and continuous 'open-ended spatial-temporal manifolds of actions and material arrangements', which individuals experience as sets of more or less relevant, meaningful, coherent, and interrelated doings and saying (Schatzki, 2002: 59–122; Schatzki, 2010), then we must develop notions of agency, power and social change which help us to understand what it is that makes people move through/engage with/find their ways in social life in the first place. Issues of agency and power are about how people navigate a world of practices.

Agency is conceptualized differently in different streams of social theory. In Weberian conflict theories for instance, agency is rooted in the competitive urge for privileged positions. In rational actor theories agency is about optimizing profits, and in symbolic interactionism it revolves around the capacity to give meaning to self and others in social situations. In this chapter we aim to develop a conceptualization of agency that not only remains within the contours of practice theories – practices rather than individuals are the central unit of analysis – but which is also distinct from the ways in which agency is approached in other social theories. To put it in a short and radical formulation, we argue that agency resides in emotions. Emotions are (re)produced in social practices and people experience the world and engage in it emotionally. The focus on emotions helps

to explain why practices make individual human agents engage with and actually care about the doings and sayings around them. Emotions are connected to practices in a number of ways, and they provide (positive and negative) valences to both practices and their practitioners. In this way, emotions-in-practices help explain what matters to individuals and how they are set into motion by emotions. On the individual side of the equation, we argue that the human capacity to act (back) upon the world resides in the ‘emotional modes of being’ (Freund, 1999) of individuals. On the practice side of the equation, we will show how practices produce emotional energy (Collins, 2004).

The concept of power is even more debated and coated with controversies than the concept of agency. When reviewing the concept of power in sociology, Manuel Castells (2009) has suggested that in contemporary network societies the classical concepts of power as for example derived from the works of Weber and Parsons on the one hand and Marx on the other, are in need of revision. The concepts, which organized debates in sociology and political sciences since their inception, need to be complemented with new notions of power that are particularly suited to analyse social change in contemporary, ‘horizontally organized’ societies, which are composed of networks. One of the dimensions of power that need to be articulated and re-invented has to do with ‘the relationships between emotion, cognition and politics’ (Castells, 2009: 7). Although the work of Castells does not seem to go along very well with the flat ontology of practice theories,<sup>1</sup> we argue that his discussion of agency and power can be used to highlight dynamics of change in a world of practices.

### ***Outline of the chapter***

In the sections to follow, we review the key concepts of agency, emotion and power in more detail, also exploring their relevance for the analysis of social change in (networks of) practices. We start with the concept of agency as it is discussed in theories of practices. Then we seek to explore the concepts of emotions, emotional agency and emotional energy, staying within the framework of practice theories but using insights from neighbouring theories like the sociology of emotions and Randall Collins’ (2004) theory of Interaction Rituals. This will be the most extended section of the chapter, since emotions and how they navigate the world of social practices are at the centre of our analysis. A discussion about transitions in (configurations or networks of) practices however cannot do without the concept of power. Again building on authors – Collins and Castells – who are commonly not perceived as social practices theorists, we conclude our chapter with a discussion on power, agency and social change.

### **Agency in theories of social practices**

Practice theories differ from one another in the degree to which they consider human agency (Nicolini, 2012: 44–69). Some forms of practice theory hardly

offer a discussion on the key characteristics of agency and its role in social change. This seems to be the case for practice theories that are inspired by science and technology studies and actor network approaches in particular. The analyses offered by Shove *et al.* (2012) and Reckwitz (2002) serve as two examples. Shove, Pantzar and Watson emphasize the need to decentre the human subject when exploring the overall dynamics of practices. They urge to do so in order to distance themselves from cognitivist views of agency in which individuals are rendered as value-oriented subjects who consciously shape their futures and identities by pursuing lifestyles (Welch and Warde, 2015). In contrast to this cognitivist portrayal, Shove *et al.* offer a discussion on the performance<sup>2</sup> of practices mainly in terms of combinations being established between the three components of practices: materials, competences and meanings. For the institutional analysis of social change, they offer an extensive and interesting discussion on linkages between (components of) practices. By highlighting the role of components in the processes of (de)linking practices and by emphasizing the embeddedness of practices in larger constellations of adjacent and connected practices, they seem to suggest that the study of social reproduction and change could be conducted mainly with the help of institutional analyses, bracketing the strategic actions, motivations and emotions of individual human agents. As a result, their image of the world of practices is coloured primarily by complexes, arrangements, infrastructures, chains, nexuses and bundles.

We recognize the merits of using concepts like circuits of reproduction, feedback-loops and dominant trajectories since they are instrumental for recognizing the relationships between practices and the ways in which these relationships change over time. By emphasizing interrelations and interdependencies between practices, they bring some flesh on the ‘institutional bones’ of practice theory, especially vis-à-vis competing neo-institutionalist theories that claim to offer causal explanations of social innovation and change. With the strong focus on institutional analysis of (networks of) practices, Shove *et al.* certainly help moving away from the individual human subject as the cherished and unique source of social reproduction and change. However, the ways in which this decentring of the individual human subject is to be combined with a discussion of agency, power and social change, remains in the dark. With Shove and colleagues (2012), emotions, motivations, identities, reasons and beliefs, the reflexive monitoring of action, practical intelligibility and practical understanding play a less prominent role in the analysis of social change. In fact, in the perspective offered by Shove *et al.*, individual human subjects are not just decentred but effectively positioned at the periphery of practice theory, so it seems (Welsh and Warde, 2015).

A similar decentring of subjects can be found in Reckwitz’s (2012: 256) frequently cited overview of practice theories, where he notes that ‘the social world is first and foremost populated by diverse social practices which are carried by agents – body minds who carry and carry out practices’. The term ‘carriers of practices’ to typify the role of individuals in practices has become common

usage amongst theorists in this domain in a rather short period of time. For instance, Nicolini (2012: 4) sees the *homo practicus* as a ‘carrier of practices’ and also Shove *et al.* (2012) suggest adopting the carrier concept in theories of practices. Although being a carrier does not exclude some form of engagement with that what is being carried, the metaphor of the Greek god Atlas ‘eternally carrying the world on his shoulders’ brings in associations not just with hard work and punishment but with passivity and repetition as well. When the carrier concept is combined with an emphasis on the routinized, habitual and taken for granted nature of practices (see the overview by Nicolini, 2012), there is a risk of portraying social change in a rather determinist way. Individuals-as-carriers suggest human agents who simply do what others did before them, more or less automatically incorporating a shared history of bodily know-how, understandings, motivations and affects. Reckwitz (2002: 252) comes close to suggest just this as he states that practice theories do not rely on the kind of dialectical reasoning that can be found in what he calls ‘intersubjectivism’, a branch of theorizing – exemplified by George Herbert Mead’s conceptualization of the Self – which he typifies as allowing for ‘the interaction-mind-interaction’ dialectic. As a result, the position of Reckwitz could be (mis)understood for its mechanistic understanding of social change in ways similar to a reading of Bourdieu’s work in which the habitus is depicted as a set of pre-structured dispositions determining the trajectories of social reproduction and change.

In comparison with formulations of practice theories that are inspired by science and technology studies and actor network approaches, the versions offered by Giddens and Schatzki consider the notion of agency in much more detail. We will shortly depict some of their main concepts and ideas that are most relevant for the discussion on agency and social practices. For Giddens (1984), a notion of agency is required to understand where creativity, innovation and social change originate from. He does not stop emphasizing throughout his work that people are knowledgeable and capable actors or human agents, knowing how to go on in everyday life, drawing upon the sets of rules-resources which make interaction possible, and changing the world while reproducing it. Even in situations where power relations are very unequal, there is always some room for manoeuvre left to subordinated human agents who can put their transformative capacities into situational use. The ‘could have acted otherwise’ phrase, indicating that there is no room for a zombie-concept in structuration theory, belongs to the frequently quoted expressions from Giddens’ work. The formulation of practice theory as put forward by Giddens resorts under the category of theories in sociology that Elliott and Turner (2012) labelled ‘Society as Creation’. Although structuration theory shares with other theories of practices an emphasis on the routinization of many everyday behaviours, Giddens (1984) makes ample conceptual space for the agency of human actors involved in the reproduction and change of social practices. Three key concepts are important with regard to agency: the reflexive monitoring of action, practical consciousness and transformative capacity. While routinization might bring the suspicion

of conducts being enacted on the automatic pilot, the concept of reflexive monitoring indicates that human actors know about and continuously keep in touch with the ongoing flow of events in the world. When being involved in the flow of events, they are able to shift from going with the flow in a practical manner (a state of practical consciousness) into discursive and deliberative forms of enacting practices as soon as situations ask for it (a state of discursive consciousness). Finally, the notion of transformative capacity of individual human agents is used to give agency a central place in the reproduction of social (power) relations within and between practices. Because of the assumption that every human agent possesses the transformative capacity to interact with the material and social environment, Giddens' structuration theory can be said to depart from Marx's notion of species being (Giddens, 1979, 1984). For Schatzki (2002: 105–122) human agency is a crucial topic as well, for example where he – contra actor network theory – argues that only humans carry out practices, not objects. While objects have performative power as they exert influence on the ways practices unfold, they lack intelligibility, intentionality and affectivity. Eventually, 'the world is such that human activity takes the lead in the mesh of practices and orders where human coexistence takes place' (Schatzki, 2002: 119). But then the question is what it makes for human activity to take the lead. We will discuss Schatzki's view on agency, its relationship with emotions and how both concepts can be understood as being among the 'drivers' of change in more detail in the next section.

Our short excursion on the role of agency in practice theories illustrates the different ways in which individual human beings are being decentred and human subjectivity is being (re)defined by different authors. What they have in common is the inclination to give conceptual priority to practices rather than individuals, also in matters of human agency. Agency is seen as a result of practices, meaning that the capacity of human beings to understand and to act intentionally upon them 'always results from taking part in one or more socio-material practices' (Nicolini, 2012: 214). They are social practices that provide horizons of practical and general understandings, motivations and affects, and it is by engaging in practices that people incorporate these understandings, motivations and affects (see also Reckwitz, 2002: 256). Although practices are in the lead, that does not mean however that acting individuals simply imitate or replicate the practice-bound understandings, motivations and affects. In George Herbert Mead's (1934/1962) conceptualization of the Self, the 'Me' unconsciously projects and consciously reflects upon what is done so far and what might be done in the future, while the 'I', the acting Self, knows what to do, how to do it and when, without projecting or reflecting on these actions.<sup>3</sup> Following Mead, one could argue that the acting I brings spontaneous changes and creativity into social life. Doings may surprise individuals while they 'just do', for example when a lively conversation with participants being engrossed in a creative dialogue unexpectedly brings about some new, previously unthought ideas, insights or plans. When practices are enacted, also production, innovation and social

change are made to happen as an inherent characteristic of society as creation. Change is inherent to social practices, also when they are not being performed and managed with the goal of social transformation in mind, and also when they bring about unintended consequences next to aimed for outcomes. Individual human actors are part of this process and key sources of innovation, even when it is rightfully argued that practices have the lead.

## **Agency and emotions**

Most practice theorists have not been very specific about emotions, although they do not neglect them altogether. The work of Giddens offers an illustration in this respect. While being strong on agency in general, his structuration theory has been criticized for its neglect of bodily experiences and the ways in which people respond to structures on sensual and sensory grounds (Shilling and Mellor, 2001). The main message from prior work in the field of practice theories is that the emotional mood that people experience while engaging in a set of doings and sayings are not a property of themselves but of practices. Practices bring certain affective tones with them. The source of this insight is Heidegger, as Nicolini (2012: 36) points out. Experiencing the world, being in the world, means to encounter objects and other beings. This experiencing of the world is necessarily emotional, in the sense that our engaging in practices is not disinterested or cold, but ‘biased’ instead. Reckwitz (2002: 254) goes so far to note that ‘every practice contains a certain practice specific emotionality. Wants and emotions thus do not belong to individuals but – in the form of knowledge – to practices’. This statement however generates a number of questions. First, it seems ontologically misleading to state that emotions do not belong to individuals since emotions involve complex neuro-endocrinological processes that take place in individuals as a result of their experiencing and engaging with practices. Second, and more importantly for our discussion, the quote can be read in a way that the affective order in practices assumes a homogenous form which is incorporated by each and every practitioner in an equal manner. The ‘feeling rules’ (Hochschild, 1979, 1983) that are part of practices here seem to function as a code which programs participants’ desires, motivations and wants from the outside. In our view, however, it is more realistic to allow for variation in the way participants perceive of, feel about and react upon feeling rules while also recognizing the linkages between emotions and power.

Schatzki in his *The Timespace of Human Activity* (2010) offers one of the more elaborate treatments of the concept of emotion in the field of practice theories. A precursor of this 2010 discussion can be found in his earlier treatment of Heidegger’s notion of signifying (1996: 122–123). Here, it becomes clear that the affective dimension of signifying – what matters to people: moods, emotions, feelings, affects and passions – plays a crucial role in activity. For it ‘omnipresently structures the stream of behaviour ... by affecting what is teleologically signified as the thing to do’. One of the central concerns in Schatzki’s later

Heideggerian theory is the teleological character of activity which ‘consists in people performing actions for ends’ (Schatzki, 2010: xiii). Note that these ends can be determined by cognition (beliefs or perceptions), emotion, moods or desires, needs and wants. They can be conscious and acknowledged, or remain hidden to the individual. In all cases however, ends are inherent to action and to social practices since for Schatzki ‘human activity remains centrally and pervasively teleological’ (Schatzki, 2010: 111). His treatment of emotions offers a discussion of the ways in which also ‘irrational’ emotions can be made fit into this teleology. Before we examine the role of emotions with Schatzki in some detail however, we need to shortly discuss his notion of ‘practical intelligibility’, as this concept is crucial to understand Schatzki’s account of human action. Practical intelligibility is the feeling, sense or urge, conscious or not, to do something, to perform an action. The determination of what to do, or, in other words, what action is signified by practical intelligibility, arises from what an individual experiences, believes, perceives, and imagines to be the ‘state of affairs’, given that it makes sense to perform an action for the sake of a desired, wanted, needed etcetera ‘state of being’ (2010: 114–115). For Schatzki (2010: 114), practical intelligibility ‘animates or informs the frequent redirections and restarts that mark the flow of conduct’. While individuals need not to be consciously aware of it, practical intelligibility is always teleological as it determines what people do next in the flow of daily life.<sup>4</sup>

With this concept of practical intelligibility in mind, we now can turn to his discussion of emotions and how they feed into human action and the realization of ends. Schatzki (2010: 121–130) distinguishes three ways of how emotions determine action. First, emotions play an important role in shaping practical intelligibility. They (co)determine practical intelligibility by selecting and lighting up what matters in a specific situation. Emotions foreground the ‘ways of being’ and the ‘states of affairs’ which determine what it makes sense to do at a certain moment (Schatzki, 2010: 121). Second, emotions also indicate which specific actions it makes sense to do, given these states of affairs and ways of being. And because emotions are at play, what it makes sense to do can diverge from what seems rational to do for the actor.<sup>5</sup> Third, emotions may determine action directly, – bypassing the sense-making of practical intelligibility or actions. In these situations, people are ‘in the grip of’ emotions, their actions just ‘happen to them’ while they do not sense they want to do it, neither do they sense the purpose of what they are doing – only afterwards. Think of very fast, automatic bodily reactions out of fear, such as braking immediately when a child suddenly runs across the street while you are driving. These emotions are overwhelming and total, in the sense that they take full control over the body. Typically they are also infrequent and of short duration, but of high intensity. Nevertheless, people can and do try to control and manipulate these overwhelming emotions, for instance in military training, with variable degrees of success. For our discussion it is important to note that only the third form of emotional action is causally determined in the sense that emotions are the causes

of activity prior to their execution. In the other two cases, with emotions foregrounding state of affairs and indicating the actions that are relevant to do, there is an indeterminate relation; which emotions actually determine practical intelligibility and action is only settled the moment people act (Schatzki, 2010: 176).

With this analysis of practical intelligibility, emotions and their relation with activity, Schatzki shows how emotions bring about actions of individuals who are always caught up in teleologies. Because of this focus on emotions in relation to individual human actors, Schatzki's 2010 account at this point is not very explicit on how emotions should – in line with practice theories – be analytically attributed to and distributed over individuals and practices. It is to this issue that we turn next, making use of insights from the sociology of emotions, the work of Schatzki again, and Collins' theory of interaction rituals.

### **Emotions and the human body**

When discussing how emotions navigate a world of practices, we first discuss how emotions are connected with human bodies. Here we rely on the sociology of emotions (Turner and Stets, 2005; Franks and Smith, 1999; Kemper, 1987). This branch of sociology is grounded on phenomenological theory (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/1962), pragmatic social theory (George Herbert Mead, 1934/1962) and elaborated further on the basis of neuroscientific insights (Damasio, 1994; Ledoux, 1996; Gazzaniga, 1998). To put it very simple here – given the variety and neural-endocrinological complexity of emotional processes – emotions are negative and positive valences that move people into action, including thought. As Franks (2010: 100) notes: 'Without an emotional predisposition, one is left endlessly thinking of alternatives, giving everything equal weight whether they are relevant or not'. Emotions are what matters to us, what we care about. Emotions therefore move us, quite literally: all bodily action systems are closely connected by the emotion processing systems in our brain (Turner and Stets, 2005; Gazzaniga, 1998; Damasio, 1994). Note that this is not only true for the fast, overwhelming and total emotions or impulses we discussed above. All emotional reactions are always bodily reactions, but they differ in intensity and duration. In this respect, Collins refers to undramatic emotions that are long-lasting, the underlying tones or moods that permeate social life, ranging from 'a readiness for contact with the environment' at the high end to 'disinterest and apathy' at the low end (2004: 105–106; and 387, note 11, the reference to Frijda, 1986: 13, 71). Humans are biologically preconditioned to process all lived experience emotionally and it is this relentless emotional processing that directs our acting, thinking and feeling (Turner and Stets, 2005). Indeed, the brain's main activity is to ceaselessly process experiences (Gazzaniga, 1998; Ten Houten, 1999). The emotional processing may encompass parts of the brain (the *neocortex*) where these experiences are mentally projected, thus becoming part of our conscious self. The larger part of the processing however does not take this neural route, and remains hidden to people (Damasio, 1994; Gazzaniga, 1998; Franks and Smith, 1999).

Both neuroscience and the sociology of emotions rely on phenomenological insights to arrive at the notion that human beings are emotional beings: we can only ‘be’ through the emotional experience of practices (Freund, 1999). Note the double meaning of experience here: it means both undergoing a particular practice as well as the learning (through storage with emotional tags in the brain) of its understandings, motivations and affects. The phenomenological perspective on emotions fits well to the notion of practical intelligibility, which aims to capture the structure of experiential acting, that is, the experience of being in the world as one acts (Schatzki, 2010: 119).

### ***Emotions with individuals and practices***

Emotions provide the ‘interactive coupling’ between individuals and the world of practices (Slaby, 2014: 37). Slaby (ibid.) refers to this coupling as a ‘hybrid system’ that gives rise to neural and bodily processes that ‘the organism “on its own”, decoupled from the relevant environmental structure, would be incapable of instantiating’. Obviously, practices would neither emerge ‘on their own’ without these neural and bodily processes. Connecting this to the issue of agency as discussed above, it can be argued that it is through the relentless interactive coupling of past and immediate experiences, that emotions enable people to direct their actions, both immediately on the spot, but also reflexively. Emotions navigate people through a world of practices and their horizons of opportunities for engagement, significance and meaning.

To say that individuals engage in practices as emotional modes of being does not mean that people are in a constant state of intense emotional arousal however. What it does mean is that all our actions, including decision-making and planning, is based on emotional valences. Since practice theories often emphasize that practices are routinized, habitualized patterns of doings and sayings in which actors rely on tacit knowledge and practical understanding, one could expect motivation and emotions being remote or absent in these behaviours for most of the times (Giddens, 1984; Warde and Southerton, 2012). Recurrent and routinized practices however are not without emotions and could be interpreted as having a rather neutral feel for the participants. Participants in routinized performances may experience either low intensity positive (feeling confident, at ease, satisfied) or negative (feeling bored, dull) emotions. When interpreted in this way, recent insights from the sociology of emotions allow to connect emotions to agency in a manner that fits the ontological commitments of the practice approach. This means reasoning from the sets of doings and sayings and how they matter to the human actors involved in social practices. When describing emotional agency from a practice theoretical perspective, there is no separate level of the ‘individual personality’, where agency must be located. That means that our conceptualization of emotional agency remains flat, while allowing for a dialectical relationship to exist between individual human bodies, emotions and practices. Let us now be more specific on what emotions do for practices and the ways in which they are performed.

### **Emotions and the 'hanging together' of practices**

When discussing how emotions contribute to the integration of practices, we follow Schatzki's (2002: 59–122) conceptualization of how practices hang together and then consider in some detail how the hanging together is related to emotions or emotional agency. Schatzki distinguishes four integrative elements of practices: practical understandings, general understandings, rules and teleo-affective structures. All elements connect to emotional agency in a particular way.

First, practical understanding is a notion that captures the very heart of every practice. It comprises a feel for the game, the visceral, ingrained ways of 'knowing' of how to do things on the spot, in the middle of the action. It concerns routine, non-reflexive and habituated behaviours in ways that are expressed by Giddens' concept of practical consciousness and Bourdieu's concept of feel for the (practice-)game.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, it is through practical understanding that the participants are able to mutually align their actions in split seconds, thus creating coherent and recognizable sets of doings and sayings. As the learning process that produces practical understanding consists of interactive coupling with the environment, such know-how necessarily involves emotional processing. In fact, these experiences can only be stored as visceral memories *because* they capture emotional loadings in ways as discussed above (Gazzaniga, 1998; Turner, 2007). While the emotions that are attached to practical understanding are most often not consciously manifest, they provide strong bodily-emotional dispositions and inclinations that direct individuals' everyday doings and sayings.

The second integrative element is termed general understandings. General understandings are conceived as projections – what we think, dream, fantasize, feel – of what a set of doings and sayings entails. General understandings provide an answer to the question about 'what we are doing', to understand that a series of actions belongs to, for example, cooking, fishing, biking or moving house. These projections thus tie the various activities of the participants together into a coherent set of doings and sayings as they give the participants a shared sense of what is happening, and what they can expect to happen next. However, individuals can also project a practice while doing something else, like thinking about a meeting while gardening, or imagining to play football while driving. They can even project practices they have never engaged in, or practices they most likely never will engage in. The ability to project practices allows individuals to act intentionally upon practices because they are always already emotionally charged: even without actually executing a practice, the projected practice matters to them, provides them with the energy to engage in them, change them or avoid them. Like the actual practices people engage in, such emotionally infused projections offer a flow of images that carry them along, navigating the stream of daily practices.

The third integrative element of practices mentioned by Schatzki refers to rules. With Schatzki, rules are explicit guidelines and instructions for the practice that specify what should be done at a certain moment. In this way, rules

provide a diachronic order in the tasks and activities that are carried out in practices. Rules help to orientate participants (even when they do not agree with the rules) to what should happen or should be created in the course of the practice. Rules thus provide a focus on the future. The enforcement and enactment of rules in practices cannot be understood without considering the inherent relationship of rules with power and normative sanctions. Rather than using coercive force, however, the ones in power more efficiently seek to rely on the emotional arousal that goes along with (not) complying to the rules. They make use of the inherent connection that Goffman and Giddens claim to exist between rules and normative sanctions. The rules as guideline become the normative rules of compliance. Power then rests on the threat of being 'out of face' (Goffman, 1967) and of being exposed to shaming and blaming in public. In most practices it is impossible for the powerful to enforce adherence to all the rules for all the participants all the time via direct surveillance. For practices to be sustained and not fall apart, it is for that reason important that rules, even those of the explicit and formalized kind, are internalized by the participants to a certain extent. The execution of the internalized normative rules operates through the mechanisms of (both positive and negative) emotional arousal. Massey (2002) argues that it is only possible for normative rules to influence behaviour when they are stored with emotional tags. A norm should invoke emotional arousal for it to have an impact on behaviour. The most important form of emotional arousal concerning norms is fear.<sup>7</sup>

Fourth and final, Schatzki outlines the teleoaffective structure as an integrative element. The teleoaffective structure comprises a set of ends that participants should or may pursue, a pattern of shared expectations considering the future situation that the practice will bring. These expectations are not neutral, they have some compelling or even coercive force, both in the negative (fear) and in the positive (enthusiasm) form. In the words of Nicolini (2012: 166), the teleoaffective structure comprises direction and oughtness. Not just with regard to the aim the participants should be pursuing and how the various tasks should be executed, but also concerning the kind of emotions which go along with the enactment of practices. The affective structure thus concerns Hochschild's (1983) feeling rules, prescribing which emotions – both positive and negative – participants should experience and how they should express them in a certain practice. Feeling rules may become manifest when saying and doings are maladjusted and seem to bring out a different future than was anticipated. As with Goffman's embarrassment, Schatzki's normative emotions in this case are expected to sustain the situational order. Feeling rules can however also be revealed via positive emotions, as when practices are being enacted successfully.

To conclude, emotions are implied in the successful performance of social practices by serving the integration of the practice. They help integrate sets of doings and sayings in four circumscribed ways. First, they play a crucial role in practical understanding through the execution and memorizing of bodily know-how. Second, they provide the (positive and negative, strong and neutral)

valences attached to the general understandings of what is going on in a practice. Third, they tag and enforce rules through emotional arousal, thereby securing the impact of the rules on behaviours. Fourth, emotions make people execute practices in a certain way and toward a certain goal through following, experiencing, reproducing and innovating the positive or negative feeling rules which belong to specific practices.

### ***Emotional energy as generated in and through practices***

We have argued above that emotions provide valences, hence enabling people to direct their actions. Furthermore, we have indicated that these emotions emerge through the interactive coupling of individuals and practices. In this section, we will be more specific about how exactly emotions come about in and through the reproduction of practices. The question we will try to answer is how practices produce the emotional energy that allows people to navigate their worlds of practices. Here we rely on Randall Collins' (2004) *Interaction Ritual Chains*. Interaction rituals, when they are successful, are emotionally intense practices and they can be more formal or natural in character. A moving funeral or an exciting pub conversation might serve as respective illustrations of both types. These examples also indicate that a successful interaction ritual can be connected to both negative (sadness, sorrow, anger) and positive (excitement, joy, arousal) emotions. Collins uses the term interaction ritual in reference to both Durkheim and Goffman. In Durkheim's (1912) theory of religious life, rituals are crucial. Rituals are gatherings of people who mutually adjust their actions and attention toward a single focus. Durkheim mentions the example of the religious meetings of Aborigines, who dance and sing themselves into a trance before their totem. However, such rituals are not restricted to the Aborigines. Durkheim (1912/2001: 322) writes that:

no society can exist that does not feel the need at regular intervals to sustain and reaffirm the collective feelings and ideas that constitute its unity and its personality. Now, this moral remaking can be achieved only by means of meetings, assemblies, or congregations in which individuals, brought into close contact, reaffirm in common their common feelings...

If the focus is strong, a great enthusiasm flows through the participants. At these peak moments, 'effervescence' emerges, the experience of strong feelings of group membership (Durkheim 1912/2001: 157–158; 285). Goffman (1967: 57) used the term interaction ritual to denote situations where the presence of an object with 'special value' (the self, in Goffman's analyses) requires people to 'guard and design the symbolic implications' of their acts. In this definition, Goffman not only highlights that the situation rather than individual propensities or motives determines behaviour, he also points to the focus of attention and mutual alignment towards the object of special value. Building upon Goffman

and Durkheim, Collins' theory specifies how interaction rituals produce feelings of group membership, symbols of group membership and also emotional energy for their practitioners. Collins' theory advances earlier work as it specifies the bodily emotional attunement processes involved, introduces the concept of emotional energy and because it allows understanding that the Durkheimian and Goffmanian objects of special value are brought about by interaction rituals, rather than a given.

Collins (2004: 42) describes emotional energy as 'feelings of confidence, strength, enthusiasm, and desire for action'. Thus if we understand agency as the capacity to intervene in and navigate through the world, for Collins then agency resides in emotional energy. In discussing emotional energy Collins is in line with practice theories, since his interaction ritual theory gives priority to situations rather than individuals. While it is individuals who experience emotional energy, it 'arises in interactions in local, face-to-face situations, or as precipitates of chains of situations' (Collins, 2004: 6). Following Collins (2004: 48), for an interaction ritual to bring about emotional energy, a gathering of participants should start to develop a shared focus of attention as well as a common emotional mood. Feedback loops intensify the group feelings: the attention and actions of the participants become more and more oriented toward the common focus, and as they become increasingly aware of their mutual attunement, they experience the sharing of their emotions more intensely, which in turn reinforces their common focus. The experience of these intense group feelings, of being absorbed in the group action, generates confidence, strength, enthusiasm and elation to engage with their environment; it gives people a boost of emotional energy.

Navigating the world of practices with Collins is about individuals seeking emotional energy as it is being (re)produced by the interaction rituals they take part of (Collins, 2004: 157). In everyday life, people move from interaction ritual to interaction ritual, not unlike bees and flowers. The navigating brings them variable amounts of emotional energy. The more emotional energy they gain from an interaction ritual, the more attractive the interaction ritual is to them and the more likely they will try to experience them again in the future (Collins, 2004: 44). Alternatively, if people are trapped in interaction rituals that generates low or even negative emotional energy, their navigating through social life can be oriented to reduce losses in emotional energy, rather than seeking maximum positive emotional energy (Summers-Effler, 2002). When depicting the emotional dimension of the social, it is the flowering plants and not just the bees that provide the better picture of the overall structure and distribution of emotional energy. So both practice theories and interaction ritual theory adhere to Goffman's adage 'Not, then, men and their moments. Rather moments and their men' (1967: 3). Individuals, in the sense of (lifestyle-specific) personalities that consist of unique combinations of preferences, disposition, urges, inclinations, needs and desires, are the result of their prior involvement in (chains or nexuses of) practices. They are 'transient fluxes charged up by situations' (Collins, 2004: 6)

who carry chains of interconnected interaction rituals that form their personality (the history of all emotionally charged practices they participated in), and shape their preferences for future involvement in social practices.

In summary, when analysing how emotional agency and emotional energy navigate the world of social practices, we have to decentre the individualized human subjects without losing sight of the crucial role of subjectivity in the reproduction and transformation of the social.

### ***Emotional energy, symbolic objects and linkages between practices***

So far, our analytical lens has been zoomed in on situated practices and the human actors involved in their performances. When we now start considering linkages between practices, we are zooming out (Nicolini, 2012). What we then 'see' is an enormous vibrant web of interconnected practices. Practices always intermesh, overlap and connect to other doings and sayings in different ways and to various degrees. Consequently, Nicolini (2012: 180) warns that asking questions such as: 'Where do practices end?' and 'What are the boundaries of a practice?' can be misleading since practices are never impermeable and discernable as neatly bounded units in clearly defined networks. When we view practices in the zoomed-out modality, we also use other analytical tools and ask different kind of questions. To prevent the risk of reifying practices – for example in terms of categorizing neatly defined practices after mapping and classifying their components – Nicolini's suggestion is to 'start with processes and to take the emergence and creation of provisionally identifiable units as the thing to be explained'. While participants may experience a practice as a coherent set of doings and sayings, the researcher should always keep in mind first that coherence is brought about by the intermeshing of the doings and sayings of participants and the material arrangements and second that such a set of doings and sayings is always in many ways necessarily and inextricably connected to other practices. Nevertheless, the tasks and actions that belong to some sets of doings and sayings may be more distinctively expressing the hanging together of that set than the tasks and actions of others sets. Practices thus vary in the degree of connectedness and openness, not unlike the hanging together of ecosystems and their being embedded in wider sets of ecosystems. It is this openness, connectedness, stability and change of sets of socio-material practices that we want to explain and analyse in more detail with the lens zoomed out.

When discussing interconnections between practices, we again argue that the emotional processes and factors as described above play an important role and deserve to be taken into account when researching social change from a practice theoretical perspective. However, it should be clear that we are not arguing that the reproduction of practices and their linkages are exclusively brought about by emotions. As Shove *et al.* (2012) have convincingly argued, competencies and material elements are crucially involved in both the reproduction of and the

linkages between social practices. We do think however that the role of emotions in this respect is underestimated in practice theories so far. One obvious way to move forward from an emotional agency point of view is to look at objects and symbols travelling between practices while being charged up with emotional energy.

Objects occupy an important role in most versions of practice theory. Objects are the focus of the transformative efforts of human beings. Through the teleo-affective structures that integrate the doings and sayings of the participants, these objects are worked upon and transformed into collectively projected outcomes. Objects appear in both material (artefacts, natural things, hybrids) and ideational (symbols and signs to interpret the world) form. Practices are object oriented in the sense that they focus the attention of the participants toward the projected transformation of the object (Nicolini, 2012: 110). Objects in the context of social practices bring alive the transformational capacity of human beings, and this arousal can be regarded an emotional process. The question is then how do objects manage to become attractive targets for the transformational capacity of human beings. The answer again must be found in practices or – with Collins – in interaction rituals.

The process of emotional and bodily attunement in interaction rituals not just produce emotional energy in the participants, but emotionally charged symbols as well. The symbolic objects represent the group of actors involved in the interaction ritual. Collins describes these symbols or sacred objects in terms of ‘emblems or other representations (visual icons, words, gestures) that members feel are associated with themselves collectively’ (Collins, 2004: 49). The situational solidarity that emerges from intense interaction rituals is what generates the charged-up symbols of group membership. The charging happens when an object becomes the focus of the bodily and emotional attunement processes in intense interaction rituals. Peak moments of solidarity raise an object above normalcy. Now charged with feelings of group membership, they become special (sacral, in Durkheim’s analysis) and subject to rules about how they should be treated, by whom and at which moments (Collins, 2004: 95–101). Any object can be turned into a symbol, be it scientific ideas, fast food, slow food, butterflies, houses, football matches, computers, celebrity stars, dogs, money, cows, books or cars. Collins (2004: 81–87) notes that people use these symbols to revive feelings of group membership. The objects or symbols – loaded with emotional energy – are important bridges or linkages between different, both present and future interaction rituals. People ‘celebrate’ their symbols again in subsequent practices in order to invoke the group feelings again and to realize the increase in personal levels of emotional energy they are looking for.

To discuss how symbols and their emotional energy are involved in making linkages between practices, Collins (2004: 95–101) distinguishes between three forms of symbol circulation. First order circulation of symbols refers to the original interaction rituals which generated the symbols. What kind of practices coined the symbol or object in the first place, and when and how did it happen?

Second order symbol circulation refers to the traveling, reproduction and uses of symbols outside the settings in which they were originally produced. People start using the symbols in situations that follow-up on the original ones. People involved in other practices start taking up the symbols and try to integrate them in practices that differ from the original context of the symbol. They may talk about the symbol or act toward it in various ways (such as worshipping, exhibiting or carrying the symbol around). In terms of practice theory, second order distribution is not only about the travelling of the original object to other practices, but also about the transfer of the integrative elements of the original practice in which that object became an emotionally charged symbol. The symbolic object brings practical understanding of knowing how to deal with the object, the general understanding of the meanings of the doings and sayings related to that object, the rules of proper treatment, and finally the teleoaffective structure that provides both a future orientation and the implicit feelings rules that are associated with engaging with the symbol. In this way, the circulation, travelling and distribution of symbols infuse new elements in existing practices and connects them to each other in novel ways, spreading new understandings, motivations and affects through the plenum. Collins also mentions a third order circulation, whereby people use symbols in their thought processes, reminding them of and reviving feelings of group membership. In practice theory, this concerns general understandings, which enable participants to project the practice in which they act upon the symbol. When people think, dream or fantasize about such symbols they may feel enthusiasm and pride and/or they may be reminded of something good and worthy they had been undertaken with others. In this way, symbols that carry group feelings in them provides people with emotional energy, without the need for direct participation in the practice in which these symbols emerged. Individuals carry various emotionally charged general understandings with them, and these stocks of symbols provide the emotional map through which they make their way in a world of practices (Collins, 2004: 151–158; Maller and Strengers, 2012). From the viewpoint of the individual, some practices allow for the successful meshing of their package of generalized understandings/symbols, resulting in an interaction ritual that provides them with high levels of emotional energy. But in other practices, their stock of symbols does not connect to that of others very well, so that they are not able to contribute to the bodily/emotional attunement process, with the result of less emotional energy being generated. This happens when one feels in the wrong place, not knowing what to say, unable to switch the group's focus to a topic that is related to one's emotional resources (Collins, 2004: 151–158).

As noted by Durkheim in 1912, the peak moments of high intensity rituals are sources of social change. It is in these situations of collective effervescence where new ideas are born or where existing ideas are strengthened or brought to live again. The emotionally charged symbols and the related practical and general understandings they generate then spread through the vast intermeshing of practices, reverberating changes in each of them. In this way, the rise of, for

example, new social movements, collective political action on a massive scale, or the worldwide uptake of eco-labels can be grounded realistically on the emotional and bodily attunement processes in interaction rituals where new symbols are created. However, the emission of these emotionally charged understandings, motivations and affects through the plenum will never be emulated and imitated exactly in other practices, as they will be confronted with already existing understandings, motivations and affects as well as existing material arrangements. The existing constellations differ in the degree to which they are open to and match with the new elements, thus resulting in different patterns of social change (Geels *et al.*, 2015).

Throughout this lengthy section we have discussed several aspects of the relationship between human agents, practices and emotions. We started by discussing the relevance of the body and its brains for understanding the processing of emotion by human agents. We then discussed emotions as part of a hybrid system of human actors and practices, arguing that in practice theories emotional agency must be analysed as always being distributed over human agents and practices. Our practice theoretical perspective on emotional agency was further elaborated by exploring what emotions do to practices (being involved in their integration in different ways) and what practices do to emotions (generating them through interaction rituals). We concluded with a discussion on how emotions affect the linkages between social practices. Our discussion aimed to show that emotional agency in all these dimensions deserves to be investigated and discussed more often by practice theorists since emotions help explain innovation and social change. Participants of practices navigate and are navigated through a world of practices while being guided by emotions. Navigating a world of practices also refers to the flows of emotional energy that are running through chains and networks of practices. These flows are being carried along both by human agents and objects. The nature of the emotional energy flows determines the likelihood that new practitioners, symbols, objects and understandings will become part of the practice-arrangement bundles in the future.

While emotional agency must be considered a crucial factor for explaining the dynamics of social change in a world of practices, a comprehensive analysis of social change cannot do without looking at the relationship between (emotional) agency and power. It is to this topic that we turn in the next section.

### **Agency, power and dynamics of change in networks of practices: some preliminary remarks**

Agency has the connotation of creation, innovation and change (Elliott and Turner, 2012). Emotional agency can be regarded as a driver of change, a motivating factor for finding your way in the world of practices. With the concept of power, the associations are most of the time not on the enabling but on the constraining aspects of the social. Think about the disciplining dynamics as described by Foucault, or the Weberian approach to power which emphasizes

the restrictions for realizing ones goals by the ambitions and strivings of other actors. In theories of practices, power has not been a central issue so far. Giddens' structuration theory might be regarded as one of the more explicit attempts to give power significant analytical weight regarding social reproduction and change (Giddens, 1979). With Giddens, power is given two faces: an 'agency face' in the form of transformative capacities of human agents, and an 'institutional face' with power as structures of domination. While Giddens seems to distribute power over individuals and an apparent overarching structure, we position the former 'face' of power in situated practices and the latter in the chains or networks of practices in our discussion of power below.

### ***Agency and power in situated practices***

Power manifests itself as a relevant factor in the performances of social practices in a number of ways. First, there are differences in competences between practitioners in a certain practice. The concepts of capital (Bourdieu, 1986) or transformative power (Giddens, 1979) are referring to what an agent can do in a specific practice given her access to and mastery of the rules and resources relevant for the practice and for the specific tasks and projects the actor aims to realize. We have already discussed extensively how emotions are co-determining what an agent can do. Emotions bring a certain state of affairs and modalities of action to the attention of the actor, they tag experiences and rules in ways that make them have an impact on future doings and sayings of the actor, and they are implied in the energizing of peoples and objects during intense interactions.

Collins (2004), and in a more explicit and elaborate manner Theodore Kemper also (2011), discuss how emotional factors, power and status go together in the reproduction of interaction. The actors and objects with most emotional energy tend to be the energizing factors in the reproduction and innovation of social practices. High emotional energy-actors take the lead, position themselves and other sacred objects in the centre of the process, show themselves to be experts in the (feeling) rules and resources to be applied, and because of all this, they find themselves in a position to receive status and to give orders. At the other end of the status-power matrix we find actors receiving orders and paying proper tribute to those claiming high status. The status-power relations within practices help explain why actors with high levels of emotional energy are in a position to further enhance their power, while those with low levels of emotional energy end up in a position that makes them lose even more energy. Positive and negative valences are distributed unevenly both among and within practices.

### ***Agency and power in networks of practices***

With the lens being zoomed out and targeted at the clusters, networks or bundles of practices, the agency performed by human actors is temporarily put in between brackets. The focus is on the specific ways in which practices are

embedded in wider networks, arrangements, bundles or complexes. The more institutionalized the relationships, the more visible and stable the patterns are in time-space, with structures of domination reflecting the distribution of power throughout the network.

Because of the methodological advice to bracket performances when doing institutional analyses, there is the danger of re-constituting the micro-macro and agency-structure dualism when doing actual empirical research with the help of practice theories. Power structures, dominant circuits of reproduction, value chains, practice complexes etcetera are then being discussed without constantly bearing in mind that there are human agents involved in the reproduction and change of these institutions. Some socio-technical systems and relations are so firmly anchored in time and space that it seems almost natural to refer to them as social structures in the mode of reification, as if they have a life on their own.

The main achievements of Castells' (2009) analysis of power in the global network society is the fact that he provides an elaborate analysis of the reproduction of power structures without losing sight of the agency dimension involved in the making and breaking of linkages between social practices. In the language of Giddens' structuration theory, he balances social- and system-integration when analysing social change (Giddens, 1977: 76). Power for Castells is about connections and connectivity: the more connected, well embedded and integrated in (global to local) networks, the more power in terms of transformative capacity. The worst thing that can happen for an organization, a country, a particular social class, or a region is to be left on your own, to be judged irrelevant for the network, to not being connected. Connectivity is key to power, innovation and social change. Networks strive to connect with new nodes or practices which are instrumental for the further increase of the power of the network. Once a node/set of practices in the network is no longer performing well in terms of empowering the overall network, attempts will be made to disconnect or decouple the practices. This gatekeeping and decoupling work is done by specialized groups of actors who are trained to exert 'networking power'. They know about the gains and losses which are likely to result from new connections being made and obsolete relationships being done away with and they know how to create and break connections. Next to gatekeepers, Castells also distinguishes groups of 'switchers' and 'programmers' as being specialists in the making and breaking of links between networks. They know about the (importantly emotional) codes, standards, general and practical understandings and how to create them. Switchers and (re)programmers are employing 'network-making power', a new form of agency and power that Castells claims to be the most important in the network society. Note that we can ground this form of power and agency in emotions as well: both switchers and programmers seek out the network opportunities that generates most emotional energy to them. Moreover, emotionally dominant switchers and programmers manipulate and transform their network environment such that it offers opportunities for interaction rituals to develop in which they themselves or their creations are the focus of attention.

While not being developed in the context of a theory of practices, Castells' analysis of agency and power in the network society can be valuable for practice theorists who aim to investigate the practice-work involved in the making and breaking of linkages between (sets of) practices and thereby for the reproduction and change in wider complexes or networks of practice-arrangement bundles.

## Conclusion

Our analysis of emotional agency, power and social change has been short and selective, as the topics are widely discussed in the social sciences. The criteria for selecting the topics and concepts we put under scrutiny are derived from our aim of contributing to the further conceptual development of practice theories in a way that makes them applicable to the analyses of social change in contemporary societies. For practice theories to offer an original and practice specific account of the dynamics of change in (networks of) practices, we argued that two challenges had to be confronted. First, the relationship between agency and emotions had to be explored in connection with social change. Second, the concept of power has to be invented anew in the context of practice theories. We conclude the chapter by summarizing the results of our preliminary investigation of these two topics, indicating as well the work that still has to be done.

First of all, if we account for agency as emotional experience, new research questions appear on the agenda of practice theories, in particular with regard to social change. We can start to formulate questions about why some practices generate many followers, whereas others perish in terms of the emotional experiences they generate. Also, if changes in the participation patterns in certain social practices reflect changes in emotional agency, we may trace these changes in the history of emotionally charged practices the followers have been participating in. We would like to highlight that when analysing emergence and decay in practices, emotional experiences need to be given separate treatment. Emotions do interact with material elements and competences in many different ways, and cannot be reduced to one of the components or elements of practices as distinguished in contemporary theories.

Second, when investigating the going together of agency and emotions, it is important to profit from the agency-structure debate that has been connected to practice theories from their inception. We suggested studying the agency-emotion theme with the analytical lens switching between different – zoomed in and zoomed out – modalities. Emotions do reside in bodies and need to be studied on that level, but what makes a practice approach distinct is the focus on how emotions and practices go together. We discussed what emotions do to practices and what practices do to emotions. Finally, with the lens zoomed out, we investigated how emotions contribute to the making and breaking of linkages between (network of) practices.

Third, while emotions are important drivers of innovation and change, they need to be connected to issues of power to prevent being naive on dynamics of

change in a world populated with practices. Power analyses with the lens zoomed out very easily make us forget the ‘agency-dimension’ of change in networks of practices. Castells’ concept of ‘networking power’ and ‘network-making’ power were offered as a starting point for reflecting on ways to connect practice theories with other theories of change (for example transition theory) without doing away with the ‘flat ontology’ and ‘human agency’ assumptions that are crucial for practice theories.

Fourth and final, we have been venturing an approach to navigating a world of practices in which some theories and authors were newly introduced to the family of practice theories. Although both Collins and Castells are commonly not perceived as practice theorists, we argued that parts of their work can be meaningfully connected to the body of practice theories. By deepening our understanding of the agency – emotion relationship (Collins) on the one hand and the agency – power relationship (Castells) on the other, we might improve practice-based approaches to the dynamics of change in contemporary network societies.

## Notes

- 1 This is not because of the central place of the concept of network in his analyses, since network analyses seem to connect very well with the flat ontology of practice theory. The differences in analysing social change stem from Castells’ crucial distinction between the ‘space of places’ versus the ‘space of flows’.
- 2 The concept of ‘performance’ is used by Shove *et al.* (2012) to refer to a mode of analysis that focuses on the ways in which the practices are being enacted and reproduced through combining three constituting components. With Giddens, this modality of analysing practices is called the ‘analysis of strategic action’. The concept of performances seems to be preferred by Shove *et al.* over the concept of strategic action in order to make room for analysing ‘acting objects’ and ‘fitting competences’ without the need to constantly consider the related actions of situated human actors who make the practice possible.
- 3 See below for a further explanation and discussion of ‘practical intelligibility’ and ‘understandings’, based on Schatzki, 2002: 74–76).
- 4 With his formulation of practical intelligibility Schatzki distinguishes himself from Giddens’ notion of practical consciousness on the one hand and from Bourdieu with his ‘sens pratique’ on the other. With Schatzki, the teleological character of action can and should be discussed without fear for voluntaristic or deterministic reasoning.
- 5 Schatzki points out that what makes sense to an actor can diverge from what is ‘rational’ to do for that person given his or her particular perspectives, goals and circumstances. People can be ‘taken by emotions’ and act in certain (dangerous, stupid etcetera) ways since at that particular moment (of being angry, drunk, etcetera), it makes ‘emotional sense’ to do so (Schatzki, 2010: 126).
- 6 Practical understandings differ from practical intelligibility, which indicates for the individual actor a sense of *what* to do next, rather than the referring to the *know-how* of doing it. Practical intelligibility governs practical understanding, as it singles out what actions individuals execute because of their practical, embodied understanding (Schatzki, 2002: 74–76, 79). This explains why practical intelligibility is not included in the list of factors that make for the hanging together.

7 Perhaps most crucial for the integration of practices is the fear of the loss of a social bond (Scheff, 2003), as norms indicate the moral boundaries of the group. Not following the norms thus means running the risk of being perceived as an unworthy group member.

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