**November 29, 2017**

**Reading considered today:**

Butt Chapters 7, 8

**Butt Chapter 7 – The Sense of Self**

 The agency/structure debate

Berger & Luckmann

“a decentred self that makes history, but not in circumstances of its own making” p.126

Reconciling our experience of self with the role of social context and joint action

 Self as owner of the body, a Cartesian ghost

 Self as a discourse production, a discursive mirage

 Self as a process (that has its roots in social interaction)

Body-subject – the body as we experience it, even before we are aware of it. Our **pre-reflexive** body gives meaning to the world around us.

 The person as a form of motion, being

 Awareness of ourselves as agents and objects, *I* and *me*

 Awareness prompts **reflection**

 Reflexive projects of self and identity

 Changing nature of relationships

 Therapy as an expert system to assist this project

 The existential self

 The vital order and the human order; the natural and the cultural

 The Schneider case – inability to place himself in time and space

“Deliberation before action requires my immersion in the symbolic universe of the human order.” p. 131

“what ‘having a self’ means is having a constructive relationship to the past and the future” p. 137

 A ‘core role structure’

 A construction built through experience in the world

 Construing and anticipating the construals of others

 **Not** a cause or director of behaviour

What is the relationship between one’s sense of self and one’s actions/interactions?

Butt’s study of being yourself

 Lending yourself to joint action

 **Not** necessarily being consistent across situations

 Finding and constructing ourselves in interactions with others

One’s interactions with others are primarily pre-reflective

 Does this mean caused by the past? Informed by the past?

 Personal agency and reflection/anticipation

 How the past and future appear to us, how we make sense of it

 Self as the private reflective and deliberative phase of our construing

Internal conversation

Dialectical relation with our pre-reflective being-in-the-world

“thought, feeling and action each inform the others and cannot be separated out” (p. 138)

The Repertory Grid Method

 A method for helping people reflect on the way things appear to them

 Generating bipolar personal constructs, not necessarily opposites

 Butt’s example: Considerate, Irritable

 Ratings of elements on the constructs, not necessarily accurate

 Elements can be people, places, things, …

 The range of a construct

 Discussion question #1

**Butt Chapter 8 --- The Unconscious**

 Preconscious, Unconscious, Conscious

 Projection as an example of role of unconscious

Butt’s understanding of the unconscious from an existential phenomenological perspective

 Not an unconscious with a complex set of laws and logic

 Splits in a person’s consciousness and life-world

 Kelly’s summary of the nature of the existential project

 Choice, responsibility, blame

 Four points on page 158

The dynamic unconscious

 Explaining the irrational

 A mechanistic, reductionist endeavour

 The psychic censor of unbearable thoughts and images

 A maximum-security prison

Resistance to attempts in therapy to treat one’s problems

 Anorexia, phobia, shyness and personal agency, responsibility

 Agency continuum

 Self-defeating behaviour

Analyst encourages the part of us that wants to change by seeking to make the unconscious conscious through transference

 Unconscious phantasies (with internalized objects)

 Klein’s envy, hatred, omnipotence, greed, …

 Schemas that distort the way things are

 The natural and the cultural

Hermeneutics of suspicion

 Butt’s position

Feelings arise in interactions and confrontations with the world before we think about them

Everything we do is unconscious to begin with, and only becomes conscious when we **reflect** and spell out our engagement with the world