

Review of: "Significance and its role in the historical constitution and transformation of social reality. A conceptual approach from enactive cognition"

Endre Kiss¹

¹ Eötvös Loránd University

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare. No competing interests. E.K,

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The work is an attempt to provide a practically complete description of the “constitution of reality” (now: our term) by updating Varela’s and Maturana’s evolutionary epistemology. This is precisely the possible difficulty for the editorial team in publishing this work.

1. Maturana and Varela do not create a truly new epistemology; they create a terminology for our specific way of describing cognition. It was ultimately a meta-theory, without any actual theoretical breakthroughs.
2. Unfortunately, what was relevant in this description of thought processes was also not original; these concepts have even been formulated several times in the history of philosophy.

That’s why it’s really difficult to decide how to bring these consequences of entire paradigms to use in the case of one specific author. With new terminology, many valuable insights in philosophy are rewritten (directly - in comparison to the entire philosophical tradition, or indirectly – in comparison to Varela and Maturana). Even the leading term (“enactivism”) is a tautology that should renew the old concepts. It’s about the constitution of the sciences, again without objects. Coreographies of “correct” thinking are danced without these sciences would have confronted with real objects.

This whole approach is not about a concrete theory, nor about a theory of knowledge. It is actually an essentially tautological description of the cognitive process itself. You can also call it a metatheory. This quasi-metatheory does not need stricter verification. A relatively loose discourse emerges that reformulates the most important moments in the constitution of reality; everything remains in the sphere of abstraction and reflection and could not be verified. This author also creates a conceptual network and only moves within the network she created, and thus remains sterile and tautological. So no objective problems are discussed, it doesn’t even come close to objective problems that could possibly have verified the individual concepts.

In this way, no real elements of knowledge and objects arise, nor any perspectives from which one can recognize. So

there is nothing specific about these ideas; the constructivist idea always becomes abstract and, in this abstraction, omnipotent. The evocation of Weber, Simmel, Elias, or Bourdieu is therefore not legitimate because they were actually constructivists, but also achieved material achievements. The construction of social reality is talked about several times, but you don't read a word about social reality. You really have to consider that.