

## CONCLUSION OF SPECIAL ISSUE: LINKING TWO THEORIES

### **SRT AND DIALOGICAL SELF THEORY: A DIALOGUE THROUGH IMPLICIT META-FRAMES**

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**Abstract.** The relationship between person and environment is repeatedly presented as an important epistemological issue underlying many theories in human and social sciences, including the social representation theory (SRT) and the dialogical self theory (DST). The participants in this Special Issue relate DST and SRT by referring to the relationship between the Self and the environment. They do this around meta-frames that seem to organize their texts or discourses in an implicit way. Taking an ecological approach, I name three implicit meta-frames underlying the contents of the different papers in this Special Issue. I do this by examining how space and time are implicitly depicted in the relationship between the Self and the environment. I also suggest an elaborated third model by referring to distance and time irreversibility.

**Keywords** ecology, space, time, social representation theory, dialogical self theory, distance, time irreversibility

The relationship between person and environment is repeatedly presented as an important epistemological issue underlying many theories in human and social sciences (Overton, 2006), including the social representation theory (SRT) and the dialogical self theory (DST). This is a contextual issue, since the conception of the relationship between a person and the environment is arbitrary as well as the way it is inserted in space (Heidmets, 1984) and time (Lyra & Valsiner, 2011). Space and time are viewed and constructed through this relationship whose analysis allows me to identify some of the participants' underlying and sometimes implicit "logics"—as discursive spaces—in the texts in this Special Issue.

How do the participants relate DST and SRT? They do this by reflecting on the relationship between a person (the Self) and the environment (often conceptualized as a society) in different ways, around implicit models. I refer to meta-frames that seem to organize the participants' texts or discourses in an implicit and, to a large extent, unconscious way. The opposite is also true (probably more); the discourses organize the meta-frames.

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Yet, my own thinking and discursive activity plays a big part in the construction of these models. I do not *identify* already known meta-theories (see Overton, 1998); rather, I delve into the unknown by *constructing* new ones. For this reason, I venture into this constructive and uncertain task that is largely based on my intuition and my way of “experiencing” the texts in this special issue. I conclude this special issue by giving voice to the content of the texts (discourses) around such implicit meta-frames and by suggesting new directions to explore.

Taking an ecological approach, and fully aware of the risks of decontextualization and objectivation that accompany communication, I name three implicit meta-frames underlying the content of the different papers. The first two are more salient, and the third is more marginal. I do this by examining how space and time are implicitly depicted in the relationship between the Self and the environment. After presenting the two meta-frames (models) that I consider the most predominant as surfacing in the Special Issue, I synthesize them to show what they have in common and to identify their missing aspects,<sup>1</sup> which I in turn depict in the third meta-frame or model. I present the general and specific features of each meta-frame or model and then show how these characteristics take place—implicitly—in the participants’ discourses (texts). Next I articulate the two first models (meta-frames) in the third (henceforth: meta-model or meta-meta-frame). I conclude by referring to the epistemological and theoretical implications of the dialogue between SRT and DST.

### **First Meta-Frame: Past-Oriented Inclusive Separation of Hard Structure**

#### **Presentation of the First Meta-Frame**

In the first meta-frame, the emphasis is on the structural aspect of *a* social representation and *a* dialogical self (DS) (not specific structures, but generic ones), both *structures* being relatively well demarcated or at least detectable by researchers. Core structural properties—contents (SRT), anchors (SRT), voices (DST) or I-positions (DST)—are clearly identifiable when structures are not.

From an analytical point of view, the Self and the environment are first inclusively separated<sup>2</sup> (we will return to this point later) while researchers consider their interdependence and the contextual aspect of the phenomenon under investigation. The environment—**representational field** and “*society of the Self*”<sup>3</sup>—is generally placed in the forefront. The Self is located *in* the environment with respect to the structural components of the latter. This meta-frame is grounded in a reversible conception of

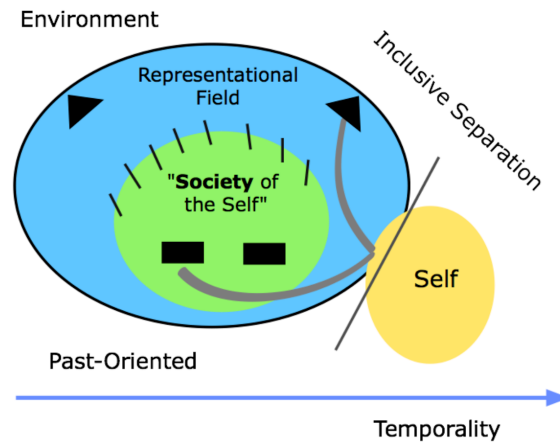
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<sup>1</sup> I refer to some of the texts’ subtle references to a static approach, but I can also find some direct indications of the latter (sometimes related to an associationist logic).

<sup>2</sup> Authors often refer to Valsiner’s concept of inclusive separation.

<sup>3</sup> Focusing on the Self, the second meta-frame (model) emphasizes the *Self as* a society while the first meta-frame focuses on the *society of* the Self, which implies that society (the environment) is external to the Self.

time; the process is to a large extent obscured by the entification of reality (making it a solid entity, thus evacuating the aspects related to dynamics and processes) and reduced to the structural (“hard” structures) components at play. This tendency is reinforced by the focus on the past. Below, I schematize (the humoristic and visual reader will perceive a funny face) the way that DST is related to SRT through the above-mentioned aspects, that is, the relationship (put in reversible time) between the Self and the environment, which is composed of structural aspects.



**Figure 1.** Inclusive Separation of the Self and the Structured Environment, then Integration of the Former into the Latter

In this meta-frame, the environment is generally defined by two embedded layers: the **representational field** and the “**society of the Self.**” The later (micro level)—thanks to its extensive nature (horizontal line in the Figure 1)—is located in the former (macro level). Both ecological levels are composed of core structural aspects. Indeed, the micro level of the “society of the Self” (DST) is composed of I-positions and voices (black squares) and the representational field (SRT) is composed of anchors (black triangles). It seems that the relationship between the anchors and the I-positions needs to be specified.

From a conceptual point of view, the Self, which is firstly kept separate from the environment, is secondly located (green arrows) in the environment in relation to its constituents. Participants refer to the relationship between the Self and the anchors or I-positions in a way that suggests a preliminary separation between the Self and the environment then their articulation. The latter is not “free”; it is oriented by an emphasis on the environment. In effect, the Self relates to what is *already there* in the environment, picking and choosing specific resources (I-positions, voices, anchors), hence the idea that the Self is *relatively* free. To use a metaphor, the Self takes a position like someone takes a chair that is already part of the environment. Thus,

importance is placed on the past: arriving in an *already* structured environment, the Self chooses a chair (anchors, I-positions) to sit on.

- To summarize and systematize the characteristics of the first meta-frame, DST and SRT are articulated through the following aspects:
- The “society of the Self” (micro) and the representational field (macro) correspond to two embedded layers of a structured environment, which is an important background to link DST and SRT.
- In a first analytical operation, the Self is separated (in an inclusive way) from the environment, then, in a second analytical operation, the Self is (*re*)located in the environment (here the *representational* activity of the researchers).
- This relocation means that the Self takes place in a well-demarcated and structured environment; the Self uses and chooses the “furniture” that is already there as a resource.
- While, from a metaphorical point of view, the Self can paint the chair to spread its own colour in the environment it inhabits (personalizing the environment or the chair through internalization). The Self uses external resources as raw material instead of creating something new in an empty room with its internal resources.
- Transversally, the entification of reality is a central characteristic of the reversible conception of time that is at the core of the first meta-frame.

### **Anchoring of the first meta-frame (model) in the texts**

In this section, I present how the first meta-frame is anchored in the texts. I do this relatively to each of the two following points: the Self’s relationship with a structured environment (principally) composed of two embedded layers and time reversibility through entification of reality and past-oriented perspective.

#### ***Self’s relationship with a structured environment composed of two embedded layers***

The inclusive separation of the Self and the environment is present in the authors’ discourse. For instance, Raudsepp (2017) refers to the bidirectional relationship between the Self and the environment. In a similar logic, Rosa and Tavares (2017) emphasize the “dynamic relationship between the individual cognition and the knowledge shared by social groups of belonging” (p. 90). While bidirectionality is recognized as a *principle*, the movement between the two entities (Self and environment) is for a large extent unidirectional and vertical, where the Self *goes into* the environment. For Raudsepp (2017), “[i]ndividuals and groups may position themselves differently *in relation to* these dimensions” (p. 49). More implicitly, this tendency appears in Rosa and Tavares’s (2017) text with their emphasis on “the context and the relationships that the person is *part of*” (p. 86) as well as in Moreau’s (2017)

text when he refers to “theories shared by individuals evolving *in* the same social environment” (p. 165). As for Boulanger (2017*b*), he analyses the way that professionals position parents in school, as a representational (SRT) and transitional (DST) zone, thus emphasizing a unidirectional and vertical positioning dynamic.

This **unidirectionality** of the Self moving into the environment implies an emphasis on the latter as expressed by the following aspects:

- A. The characteristics of the environment determine the way the Self relates with it.
- B. The environment, as a core structure, has well-demarcated levels that are specific zones in which the Self inserts itself.
- C. As a sign of the entification of reality, the environment possesses structural properties and supplies resources taken and used by the Self.
- D. The environment provides guidance to the Self by limiting its freedom.

Using these four letters as signs, I demonstrate how these characteristics are anchored in the texts. In relation to the second point (*B*), Boulanger (2017*a*) distinguishes the societal (macro) from the micro-context (contextual and personal) by considering, in a dichotomous way, only the former as being static, albeit he quickly mentions that the society is a polemical (dynamic) space. As for Moreau, he puts the hierarchy at a horizontal level by emphasizing the core and periphery of social representations. Raudsepp (2017) defines the polyphasic nature of the *relationship* between the Self and the environment with respect to the three (she also refers to two) following layers [*B*] of the *environment* [*A*]:

- “Processes in the *societal field*: the configuration [*C*] of social relations and relative *location* [*C*] in [*A*] the sociocultural landscape; and the *coordination* of [*C*] objective external and internalized structures (*habitus*).
- Processes in [*A*] the shared representational field (collective culture): changing *regulative principles* [*C*; *D*] and ordering representations according to importance, “confronting” ideas and repositioning within representational fields.
- Process in the [*A*] *subjective meaning fields* of agents, both on the unreflective level (inertia of the *habitus*) and on the reflective level [*B*] (*taking positions in* [*A*] the landscape of mind): acknowledging semiotic potency” (p. 46).

In Raudsepp’s (2017) text, the relation of the Self with the environment seems to be a reflection of the latter’s properties as implicitly grasped by the Self, which is spatially *located* with respect to the *location* (coordinate) of the environment’s different *areas* (hierarchical zones). This reflects the author’s implicit shift from *positioning* to *positions*; the *movement* of the Self entering the environment (and internalizing or appropriating it) is partly defined by, and reduced to, the environment’s *components*.

Raudsepp emphasizes the environmental canalization of I-positions and the Self's (relative) freedom when it chooses and takes what is (already) there.

This tendency is present in Moreau's (2017) reference to "pupils' positioning [that] is *regulated* more or less consciously *by* historical narratives [D] that the program *Histoire et éducation à la citoyenneté* [...] [C] requires pupils *to appropriate* [...] by taking into consideration the *suggestions made by* [D] groups" (p. 164). As constraints, these suggestions come at play through the regulative and mediational function of the third position and the concept. More specifically, for Moreau (2017), at the peripheral level of the social representation, the Self *uses* some external resources as internal operators or as a constraints (concepts, third positions) that mediate its relationship with the environment. The external shaping of the internal world is evident by the fact that "Collective voices [...] *shape* the words and the discourses produced by *coloring the subjectivity*" [D] (Moreau, 2017) and that "these personal meanings are not only *influenced*, as may even be *invalidated and suppressed* by the collective voices" [D] (Rosa & Tavares, 2017, p. 90).

The core conception of space and its entification are salient in Rosa and Tavares's (2017) presentation of social representations. These authors view social representations as "a) relational and dynamic *organizations of* [C] knowledge and language shared by a group of individuals [D]; [and] b) dynamic *sets* [...] that [A] aim to guide [D] behaviors and social interactions" (p. 91). These shared systems are forms of *something* (knowledge, content, etc.) that provide guidance and regulation. As for Moreau, he mentions that "SRT acknowledges the *existence* [C] of objects of representation, *present in* [C] all opinions, attitudes, knowledge, and theories shared by individuals" (p. 165). The tendency to entify reality—here with respect to what exists and is present there—is related to a reversible conception of time.

***Reversibility: Entification and past orientation.***

The entification of reality<sup>4</sup> implies reducing the process (time as it unfolds) aspect to spatial dimensions, that is, to what exists "there" or could be well identifiable as such. Overall, it is not that the participants voluntarily take a static approach—in fact, it is generally the opposite since participants generally critique such approach<sup>5</sup>—, but the language they use is largely static. This mirrors a general tendency of the human and social sciences to be grounded in common sense (Valsiner, 2012).

Let's consider for instance the way cognitive polyphasia is defined as the *co-existence* (Lanaridis, 2017; Raudsepp, 2017) of *something* with respect to identifiable objects (ideas, content, positions, systems, voices) that are *there* (in X zone) or *there* (in Y zone). It is also defined as a resource (Raudsepp, 2017; Rosa & Tavares, 2017) and a

<sup>4</sup> I covered this aspect in the third point (C) above. I develop the reversible conception of time a bit more later.

<sup>5</sup> See for instance Boulanger's (2017a) and Rosa and Tavares's (2017) introduction texts.

reservoir (Raudsepp, 2017) related to organizing principles (Rosa & Tavares, 2017; Raudsepp, 2017). For his part, Moreau (2017) emphasizes the polyphasic modulation of the social representations, particularly along its periphery. He specifies that “[t]hese modulations *rest on* opinions, attitudes, and beliefs *shaping* individual *dispositions*” (p. 166). Thus he entifies this dynamic aspect while also referring to the unidirectional canalization of individual’s *dispositions*, that is, entities.

The existing entities are endowed with **human characteristics**; in this way, the environment acts (it does something) by canalizing the Self’s relationship with the environment and the Self’s location in it by furnishing resources. Generally, the social representations, constraints or collective voices—as components of the environment—are implicitly considered to be doing something in a way that “the individual is guided by culturally *available* meanings (e.g., transmitted by collective voices)” (Rosa & Tavares, 2017, p. 90). This function is also attributed to positions in the environment: “[e]ach position in the objective sociocultural space or subjective landscape of mind *provides* a specific view of that space [...]; each position *affords* a unique perspective, *providing* the person with different sets of cultural resources” (Raudsepp, 2017, p. 54). In this canalizing approach, the components of the Self’s environment can be likened to mini-actors, who paradoxically obscure the Self’s agency. I wonder where the Self is and when it comes into play if its parts are the agents.

The entification—as it relates to a reversible conception of time—of reality is also expressed by the tendency to **spatialize time**, which is an explicit dimension of the DST and is conceived through stages that are analysed according to a spatial logic. The entification of the representation process is expressed in Rosa and Tavares’s (2017) “steps” and sequential model. Raudsepp (2017) refers to how “old” and “new” regimes are separated or gathered, and thus manipulated as if they were solid entities. Referring, in the same logic, to the coexistence of positions (polyphasia) *in a* single narrative *frame*, Moreau (2017), who also depicts the representation process through a phase sequence (i.e., presenting the action of the central core of the representation first and *then* of the representation’s periphery), shows how some discourses “are discordant—in contradiction with one another—but nevertheless live together *inside* the *same* historical narrative” (p. 163). This narrative, based on a well-identifiable entity, is depicted as morphology.

In this **entity perspective**, Raudsepp (2017) refers to the concept of “generation”—which implies temporality—with respect to specific traits (typology) that characterize its members. Boulanger’s (2017*b*) efforts to emphasize hidden possibilities that could be actualized are undermined by drawing attention to their *spatial* hiddenness in a *localized* fuzzy zone. The movement towards the unknown that he refers to remains a spatial movement and not a temporal one. He focuses on making an object present or absent instead of highlighting its evolution in time. As for Lanaridis (2017), he refers to a “*set* of regularly practiced routines [...] or frames [that] can be seen as narrative

themes and plots that are communicated” (p. 142). Although he accentuates what is regular, here I want to highlight the fact that time is seen through sets that are communicable like entities.

It is in this logic that **processes** are **spatialized**. Raudsepp (2017) studies generations in a changing society,<sup>6</sup> while in a sense “reducing” this context to the new rules (entity concept) that sociopolitical regimes *establish* for the Self. Quoting Jodelet, Rosa and Tavares (2017) mention that a social representaton is “the construction of a common reality, a form of knowledge [...] that contributes *to* a social group” (pp. 90-91). The constructive process is thus related to an entity (a form of knowledge, a group).

The reversibility of time also expresses itself through the authors’ emphasis on the **past**, in particular on the *reproduction* (*representation*) of *something*. For instance, Raudsepp (2017) refers to “[d]iachronic polyphasia [that] introduces the time dimension—applying historically, biographically or developmentally *preceding forms* of knowledge” (p. 54). The past-oriented approach is also present in Lanaridis’s (2017) text when he underlines a pre-existent and solid representation structure:

What we already know and accept assumes judgmental role towards anything that is new and therefore under critical evaluation [...] illustrating the importance of a pre-existing and already established belief-system that every societal group utilizes as to communicate responses towards facts of novelty (p. 141).

The novelty is thus filtered through what *is* already there. The possible (not yet constructed) is shaped by actual resources anchored in the past: “At *every* moment, the *set of possible* identity positions (i.e., the polyphony) *depends on* the linguistic resources *available in* the sociocultural world *in which* the individual is located” (Rosa & Tavares, 2017, p. 90). In this excerpt, the effort to shed light on *each and every* present *moment*—pointing to them and separating them implies a reversible conception of time—is in a sense undermined by the implicit focus on the shaping of the Self by environmental conventions and traditions (past).

In Moreau’s (2017) account of analogy (a flexible structure located in the peripheral region of the social representation), understanding the present means looking to the past because “[i]t ensures [...] symbolic mediation by attributing the present event to a structure of ‘history that repeats itself,’ and by protecting the underlying causal structure of this attribution, which is of mythological nature” (pp. 167-168). Moreau (2017) refers to the mediation function of concepts to prevent the risk of the manipulation and static reproduction of the past that this view entails. However, the concepts he refers to are resources that form parts of the environment (implicitly its

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<sup>6</sup> Using this approach, Raudsepp (2017) brings a dynamic perspective.



traditions) the Self uses. In this sense, the Self does not create new concepts; it uses what is (was) there.

The entity conception of the process or the implicit shift from the representation process to *a* social representation is established through a **circular** (tautological) way of reasoning. Let's refer to Rosa and Tavares (2017): "*This* representation, *in turn*, becomes part of the integrational system of the individual in the social world, because what is common to a group allows its members to share communication and influence the action" (p. 91). In a circular way, *a* social representation (as a product) canalizes its own conditions of (re)production (i.e., creating another product), thus this is potentially what happens between two phases (production versus *re*production; products 1 and 2). Yet, through its "agency," the Self uses the structure to (re)construct itself:

[S]ocial representations [...] [make up] "a system of values, ideas and practices" that individuals use in order to understand the social and material world they live in and in order to establish a shared code of communication (Lanaridis, 2017, p. 141).

In fact, what the Self creates is already part of the very material it uses (the effect is in its cause). This tendency is present in Moreau's (2017) text:

Historical narratives are both cognitive and social instruments granted by a community's collective memory, which is crystallized around a common identity [...] These narratives make up a shared and institutionalized knowledge that contributes to the *re*production of traditions, practices, and mythologies (pp. 164-165).

In the form of shared knowledge and instruments to be used by the Self, collective memory provides the conditions of its own *re*production. According to this logic, Rosa and Tavares (2017) implicitly emphasize the fact that some constraints canalize their own conditions of (re)production and, therefore, canalize how the Self acts and thinks. With maintenance of what already exists in mind, a representation, as a homeostatic system, canalizes its own process to quickly reach an equilibrium again. This dimension of equilibrium is salient in Moreau's (2017) text. The analysis of the process as a state also reflects this circular reasoning. Along the same lines, Raudsepp (2017) shows that a representation's trajectory implies its change from a static to a liquid state then to another static state (here the *re*constructive aspect).

## Second Meta-Frame: (Extended) Present-Oriented Inclusion in Flexible Environmental Structures

### Presentation of the second meta-frame

In a general way, the second meta-frame (model) “shares” with the first the tendency to entify reality, particularly with respect to a reversible conception of time. However, environmental structures are more flexible than in the first model, while remaining entified. Instead of referring to core concepts, participants generally emphasize the *properties* of the structures.

Through a strong emphasis on DST, the Self is put at the forefront and, in a paradoxical way, it is part of its own environment. The focus is on the Self *as* an *extended society* rather than on the “society *of* the Self.” The Self as a society comprises an audience (social representation, collective voices, audience). Here the integration of the social representation in the Self as a society that contains an audience (a social representation).

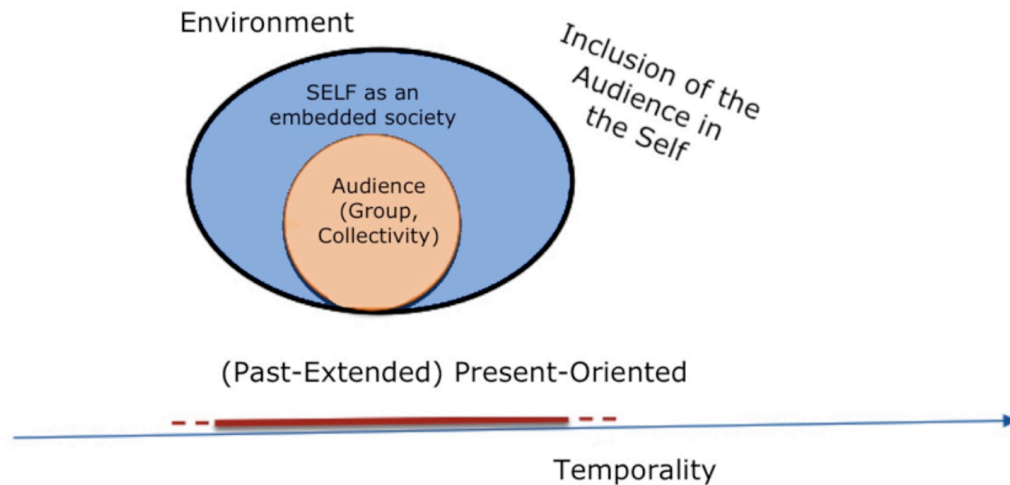
Still, the Self is (or seems to be) a bit freer in the second model than in the first, in which it is constrained by the audience that “influences” the Self *from the inside*; not from the outside like in the first meta-frame. In the second meta-frame, participants generally highlight the audience, social representation and collective voices as providing guidance (canalization function) from the inside and only secondarily as a *canal*. Participants refer to the latter when they focus on the fact that personal voices speak *through* collective voices, in the same way that a specific boat (“*My* personal boat” or “*Me* as a boat”) moves *through* a *canal* (*the* general canal used by many individual). The latter is a path *used by* the Self from the inside.<sup>7</sup>

Priority is generally placed on the present moment that is an extended (extended behind) temporal window; the Self keeps a foot in the present like a person looking from a window stays inside (see Fig. 2). This extension supposes the following aspects:

- The past “is included in” the present principally in the form of memory that is retrieved (retroactive loop) and is in a sense “fixed” in the present (which is not necessarily flowing toward the future in an irreversible logic).
- The Self anticipates reality in its (present) extensive window, largely relying on the past.

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<sup>7</sup> More specifically, the Self’s internal audience, collective voices and social representation make the Self use this canal. This is a circular reasoning in which the social representation determines its own orientations. The fact that the Self speaks through the audience shows the centrality of this “part” (audience) of the environment.



**Figure 2.** Inclusion of the Environment in the Self

## Anchoring the second meta-frame (model) in the “texts.”

Authors generally anchor the second model by viewing the Self as a society that is defined by certain spatial characteristics and properties. This view is based on DST—to a large extent through the concept of the “repertory of the Self”—allowing the social representation (an audience in the DST) to integrate. For example, this is expressed in the following excerpt: “In such light we may have to consider SRs as a process that functions in both conscious and subconscious level and lay this way a significant overlap between DST and SRT” (Lanaridis, 2017, p. 144). While SRT is **DST’s theoretical anchor** in the first meta-frame, in the second, **DST** is the main **theoretical anchor** for **SRT’s voices**: the social representation *is included in* the Self in the form of an audience (Boulanger, 2017*a, b*; Lanaridis, 2017; Rosa & Tavares, 2017).

To be more specific, I now focus on the following aspects:

- A. Self-focused (Self as a society).
- B. Properties (and functions) of a flexible structured society.
- C. Audience (environment) as a constraint from the inside.
- D. Extended present.
- E. Entification as a sign of time’s reversibility.

These characteristics are often associated with a **systemic and structural** conception of the Self (Boulanger, 2017*a*) as a hierarchical society endowed with the capacity to organize itself. This is salient in Rosa and Tavares’s (2017) text:

The *self-organization* of the self-system [A] is based on a *hierarchical* operating system. In *every* experiential moment [D], a position (or a *set* of positions) *occupies* [E] the “stage of the self-system” and *brings* [C] arguments of relevance *to the* operational center [B], which are gradually organized in arguments of higher abstraction order. These macro-level arguments, promoter signs [...] have *properties* [B] [E] of self-evaluation and self-regulation [C] (p. 92).

For these authors, the arguments provide guidance (canalization) through their **properties** and functions. This view is also expressed by Boulanger’s (2017a) depiction of the constraining function of collective voices and, in particular by Lanaridis’s analysis of promoter positions: “Significant others [C] in their broad sense can begin to *function* [B] in the world of the DS [A] as promoter positions—a self-position [C] higher in *hierarchy* and *able to regulate* the *organisation* [B; C] of the self [A] in moments [E] of emergency” (p. 145). For Rosa and Tavares (2017), the audience and collective voices are also *canal* operating from the inside: “the internal positions acquire their meaning through their relationship with one or more external position [C]” (p. 88).

The **temporal dimension** of the second meta-frame is salient in Rosa and Tavares’s (2017) text:

These macro-level arguments, promoter signs [...], have *properties* [B] [E] of self-evaluation and self-regulation [C] that ensure the *stability* [B] [D] of the current *self-system structure* [A] [B] until a new one is required. This organization is not the result of a commanding voice from a static and permanent higher order structure; it is a *property* [B] that *emerges from* [D] the combined dialogue between different I-positions. The *functional* [B] character of this self-organizing capacity is tested in *moments that* [D] [E] require a *restructuring* [D] [E] of the identity system and it is influenced by personal and contextual *variables* [E] (p. 92)

The emerging **present** is thus *fixed* in “a present window”—visually, we would obtain a topology that fixes evolving properties in the same way someone stops a movie and freezes a *flowing* image—that is *extended toward the past*. Nevertheless, in the context of suicide, this dimension is very implicit in Rosa and Tavares’s (2017) analysis of collective voices that are “taken from” (and recreated) the interior (interiorized) external world.

Even if Rosa and Tavares (2017) focus on emerging moments, what is considered as emerging from the dialogue are properties (**entified** notion). An entified moment is a moment that has X or Y characteristic and acts in X or Y way. Rosa and Tavares (2017) stress a *restructuration* of the Self that reaches stability, which implies resisting and diminishing uncertainty, through some variables (entified notion) and by

referring to *canalization*. Moreau particularly insists on the tendency to reach equilibrium, which suggests reaching for stable states.

All of the participants in this Special Issue underline *reconstructing* and **representing** *something* in a new way—here, the very meaning of the concept of social representation. This *backward* movement suggests the expression of a (re)productive process that is oriented toward the past, despite the fact that it is established in a constructive way. The reconstructive process is in a sense static and past-oriented because it is conceived through a reversible conception of time entailing the entification of reality. Moreover, positions, organized in sets, are defined through their properties. The Self as a society is thus entified. The dynamic aspect that Boulanger (2017a) wants to introduce is undermined by his tendency to entify reality:

Relating to the constructivist orientation [...], we focus here [...] on the idea that the repertory of the self *contains* all that the self presents to itself in his own way—the reference to the syllable “re” in representation—, that is *what* he represents (p. 23).

In effect, from the perspective of irreversibility, a constructive logic does not fit with such a spatialization of time. Moreover, the *movement* Boulanger (2017a) refers to cannot be put in time, at least in an irreversible perspective.

In Rosa and Tavares’s discourse, albeit defined by voices, the “collective” aspect (macro-argument) *is there*, as a state, as *an* argument instead of argumentation. The fact that “objects are not mere copies of the self [...] [but that] they are endowed with a *voice*” (Boulanger, 2017a, p. 24) is not sufficient for adopting a dynamic approach when these voices are **entified**.

Lanaridis (2017) clearly explains how the process dimension is analysed in relation to an entity perspective (reversibility):

Further to this, since DST tenets take effect [...], it is likely that significant others also *exist* on a subconscious level and are equally responsible for such influence and continuous *re*-evaluation of our self-position [...] It may therefore be that significant others *affect* the way we shape and re-evaluate music we like, operating on both our conscious and subconscious world (p. 142).

Like in Rosa and Tavares’s text, the *representation* process implies a reference to what exists, to what is there, that is, in particular, some constraints. While constraints can orient (guide) the Self toward the future (Rosa & Tavares, 2017), they are conceived of as (already) there.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Moreover, as the constraints are humanized, they are agents (in the previous excerpt, they “affect”). Thus, in a circular way the audience’s part of the Self (entified) acts on the Self, canalizing it from the inside.

### Synthesis of the Two Meta-Frames: Enclosing of the Self into the Self's Society

In the first meta-frame (model), SRT hosts DST and the social representation's environment (the society of a generic Self) is the bedrock of the Self. In the second meta-frame, DST hosts SRT and the Self as a society is the bedrock of the audience (social representation). In the first meta-frame, the focus is on the Self entering (predetermined) the environment, whereas, in the second meta-frame, it is on the audience that has already arrived or is already in the Self. In both cases, the movement and process dimensions are absent. In effect, despite being opposites, both models are based on a same reversible conception of time. The Self looking at itself in the mirror will see itself in the opposite direction, but the Self's very essence remains the same. A prisoner looking in a mirror outside his cage still sees the bars. Whether the Self is (or goes into) in a society (first model) or society is contained in the Self (second model) does not change the fact that society constrains (cage) the Self, be it from the outside or the inside. Even if the second model allows—through internalization—external reality to be personalized and actively (re)constructed from the inside, the point here is that static epistemology (reversible conception of time) implicitly “present in” the texts undermines this constructive dynamic.

What the two meta-frames have in common is a reversible conception of time translated by reality's entification and blocking the Self's innovation. The Self is constantly dependent on society's constraints, be they external or internal. In the first model, thanks to its emphasis on SRT, society is the structured space *of* an abstracted and aggregate Self. Even if the participants using DST's terminology refer to the “society *of* the Self,” society is neither the Self's possession (what is *mine*) nor its extension, in the way that a human's arm is extended into the external world. In fact, it seems to be quite the opposite. Society is there—*already* constituted—and the Self comes into it and sits on a chair. Yet, here the attention is not on the movement (sitting), but on the chair. The participants as photographers take a picture —entifying reality— of chairs in a room and then of a Self sitting on one of them. In the second meta-frame, the Self *is* a society because there is an audience (internal society) within the Self upon which the Self is dependent. In this paradoxical view, the Self is located *in* the audience; after all, the Self uses a societal and shared canal (canalisation).<sup>9</sup>

In both models, the Self's movement is lost because of the emphasis that is placed on a fixed situation. In the first model, researchers focus on either the separation of the Self from the environment or the presence of the former in the latter. By doing this, researchers neglect the dynamic and interdependent movement of the Self going into the environment in a co-constructive manner. In the second model, researchers

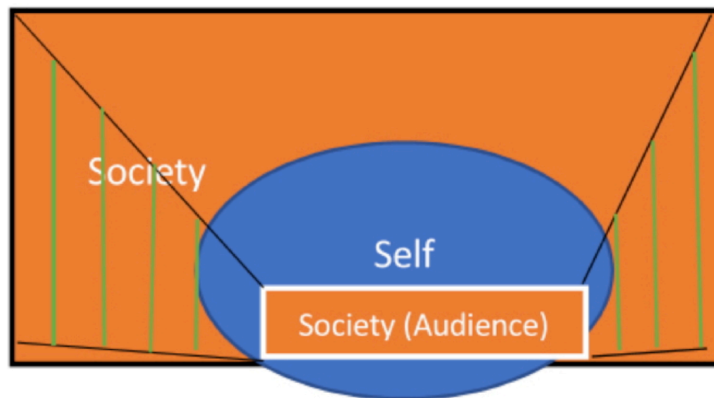
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<sup>9</sup> Yet, an external (detached from the Self) reality is missing. For this reason, the Self's movement is even more constrained because it is not likely to have enough distance between itself and an omnipresent Other (audience).

sometimes refer to the internalization of the audience (the environment entering the Self), but they conceptualize internalization as a state or they stress its product—the topological (the metaphor of the picture) environment identified in Figure 2.

In the first model, the blue Self takes a red chair in a red environment. In the second model, the Self is a blue room (Self as a society) largely constrained (limited) and defined by the red chairs it has already received from a red (external) environment voicing red colour from the inside.<sup>10</sup>

In both cases, resources (chairs) come from the external world, which speaks directly (first model) or indirectly (second model, through the internal) to the Self. The environment colours the Self. The interplay of the two meta-frames leads to a situation where the Self is enclosed on both sides of society, that is, its external and internal sides.



**Figure 3.** Self’s “Enslavement”

In Figure 3, we see that the society (audience) inside the Self is a *reflection* of the society outside that includes the Self. The reversible conception of time prevents me from seeing how the Self can be active during the switch—the movement (externalization/ internalization) from the first to the second model.

The Self “possesses” an audience because the latter is an extension of the environment the Self belongs to. This is the case, whether through the Self’s localization in the environment (first model) or the Self’s internalization—conceived of as a state or product—of the latter (second model). Schematically, we can visualize an epistemic and theoretical **switch from the extended Self to the extended society** (the green lines symbolize this extension). It is possible to see that the Self is enclosed in this extension (like a prison or a cage; the green lines symbolize the bars of the prison’s

<sup>10</sup> It shows well how the Self is still *in* the environment (its internal audience); the Self has to rely on constraints and traditions, and it has to sit (take a position, anchor itself) somewhere.

frozen window). We can also imagine the little triangle and its green extension as a muzzle that prevents the Self's free expression "in" society. To push the idea further, we can imagine Hannibal Lector (character from a series of suspense novels: forensic psychiatrist and cannibalistic serial killer) moving within the confines of a prison wearing a muzzle, but still trying to escape!<sup>11</sup> Society constrains the Self from the outside as well as from the inside. The internalization and interiorization of society are guided (canalized), in a circular and tautological way, by society itself.

The society possesses the Self from the inside and because it does not contribute so much to society (how does the Self, specifically, contribute to the social representations, the positions, anchors and traditions?).<sup>12</sup> Conversely, the Self is closed to itself because it has to use the society's resources to build something, either directly or indirectly. The Self does not construct something out of itself—freely, autonomously and in an innovative way—, apart from what its already internalized society provides. Is the socialized Self also a personal Self?

We can see in the following message that this double-blind dynamic is well-established in publicity: be yourself like everyone does in the society you are in (first meta-frame) and let us show you how to do this by listening (incorporating) to the present message (second meta-frame). How can I internalize a message that guides this very internalizing "dynamic" and while, moreover, I am not focusing on this dynamic, but rather on its state or product (partly like the participants of this Special Issue)?

To be as clear as possible in this fuzzy theoretical horizon, let's insist on the fact that the spatiotemporal movements of positioning, representing and internalizing happen *by* (canalization), *in* (fixed spatial localization) and *through* (canal) the conditions determined by society, be it from the outside (society as a frame; big square in Figure 3) or the inside (society inside, as an extension of the external society; little frame in Figure 3). The Self thus moves *into* a restricted zone, regarding traditions of society, which is a screen that prevents the Self from accessing its own internal resources.

The first model has the advantage of placing the Self outside society, thus introducing distance. However, it does this by positioning the Self in an independent and autonomous environment (as a SR that lies outside the Self) while not focusing on the Self's autonomy (freedom). The second model has the advantage of paying attention to the Self, but it emphasizes the audience that is (already) incorporated or internalized. To be constructive, internalization, positioning and representation need distance.

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<sup>11</sup> This will be possible in the third model presented below.

<sup>12</sup> Moreover, It is hard to see, in the participants' discourse (texts), how the Self brings something to Society; in this sense, while being influenced by society in a unidirectional movement, the Self as "society-contained" is closed to the external environment because the Self functions as a society (with no external horizon).

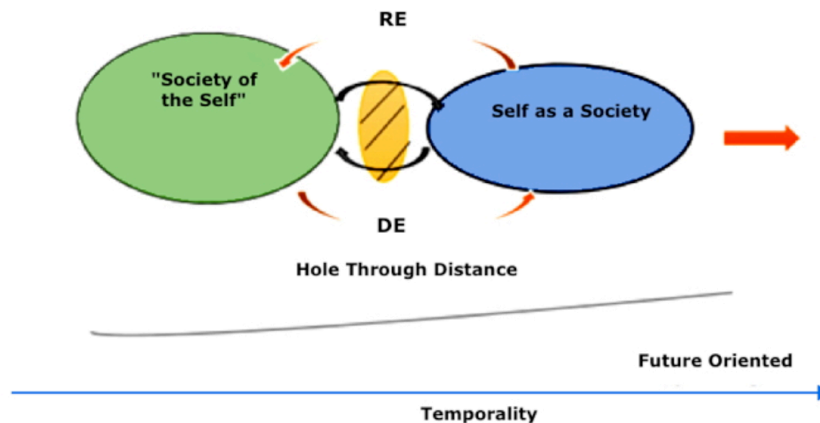


Keeping the advantages of both models, a third model focuses on both the *Self* as a society and the “society of the Self” by adding distance between them. This model is quite secondary in the texts and needs some theoretical extensions that I will partially provide. Distance, which is partially present in the texts, prevents the circularity of the Self incorporating a society it is part of. As for spatial distance, it is a condition of time’s irreversibility.

## Future Oriented: Hole Creation Through Distance

### General presentation of the meta-frame.

The third meta-frame implies a dialogue between the Self as a society and the society of the Self. The Self does not *take a* position—like it would a chair—within society; rather, the Self positions itself through its (own) orientation toward the environment. Sitting on a chair indicates a certain fixedness of the Self’s movement. Instead, here we emphasize the Self’s positioning process by means of constant *movement* through its dialogue with the environment. This requires distance between the Self and the environment, and more precisely a distancing process (creating distance). It is important to highlight that the Self not only responds to the environment’s objects and adapts itself to them, it also creates something *out of these objects* (in this sense, the Self is a personal society). Thus, the Self is a society of its own with internal resources. The Self’s creation of and reliance on these internal resources call for spatial distance (creating a hole between two horizons), which is also a condition of time’s irreversibility (going beyond the immediate spatiotemporal horizon).



**Figure 4.** Distance and Bidirectional Movement between Self and Environment

Figure 4 illustrates the third meta-frame (model). The grey arrows represent the bidirectional movements between the Self as a society and the “society of the Self”

(environment). In this model, there is a mutual /two-way/reciprocal relationship between the Self and the environment. The orange arrows symbolize the movement of the Self *going into* society and society going into the Self. In both cases a liminal zone (orange circle) is crossed through distance. This zone is a *hole* characterized by vagueness and invisibility. For this reason, the parts of the orange arrows that cross the middle are invisible or empty. The vagueness of the liminal zone stems from distance and is an important condition of time's irreversibility. What makes it important is that vagueness brings uncertainty and implies going beyond (toward the future) the immediate "here and now"; going beyond "here" is a condition of going beyond the "now." The grey curved line shows that the Self is never completely removed from personal and societal fields. Thus, while being at a distance from a specific object in this field, the Self remains in this field; it is "in-between," in an uncertain space.

### **Anchoring of the third meta-frame (model) in the texts**

I now anchor the third meta-frame in the texts with respect to the following aspects:

- Distance used as a means of dialogue between the "society of the Self" and the Self as a society through distance.
- Process of time's irreversibility.

### ***Dialogue between the society of the Self and the Self as a society through distance***

Separating two systems in an inclusive way generally involves keeping them close to each other (Figure 1), but the third model goes beyond the inclusive separation principle by introducing distance. One of the fundamental requirements for *inclusive distancing* is that each system must retain its autonomy while nevertheless being interdependent because it is in the same field. Children need to become autonomous (autonomisation) in order to differentiate themselves from their parents. However, it is precisely because children progressively leave their parents mentally and physically that they feel closer to them; as they are "there" (present) when they are "not-there" (absent). For example, when children go to summer camp (making parents absent) and yet keep a picture of their parents in their luggage (making parents present). This metaphor wrongly focuses on the past, on reproducing and representing something, whereas I want to emphasize the ongoing movement that unfolds toward the future. But let's stay with this example for the moment since it allows me to illustrate the distance dimension.

Separation, through *distancing*, is a necessary condition of being *with* others, so distance does not meet isolation. With this in mind, the bidirectional movements (orange arrows in Figure 4) of the Self *entering* and *exiting* the environment are complementary, and exiting is central.

The autonomy of each system implies that “there is *lack of isomorphism* between collective and personal cultures” (Raudsepp, 2017, p. 50). The Self can therefore position itself *at the border* (i.e., in the liminal zone; both inside and outside) of society. Although, from Moreau’s (2017) point of view, “inside” and “outside” are mythical bundles of antinomical relationships, I wish to underscore their contextual rather than their universal aspect—while also considering the *decontextualization* that occurs through distance—and personal nature. The personal nature of “in” and “out” dynamic positioning—which implies a movement process—is clearly expressed by Raudsepp (2017):

An individual can modify his position in relation to the sociocultural context along various dimensions, the most general being *distance* and *direction*, e.g. between being “in” or “**out**” of the situation, playing different roles, utilizing different **tonalities** (playful, ironic, provocative...) (p. 52)

We can identify the following ways to relate with the environment which grasp the idea of boundary:

1. Choosing positions in the environment at a distance, from the Self’s point of view (internal positioning).
2. Entering the environment from the outside.
3. Moving within the environment by personalizing positions and managing directionality.
4. Distancing from the environment and from ourselves.
5. Depositioning then repositioning by crossing the boundary.
6. Moving within the open boundary zone.

In the first case (1), the Self relates *to* the environment, as expressed in the Raudsepp’s emphasis on the “**Heterogeneity of semiosphere** and **multiplicity of subject’s relations to the environment** [that] are the prerequisites to the phenomenon of cognitive polyphasia” (p. 52). The Self can choose *from the outside* among “the **diversity of possible positions in** social and cultural fields” (Raudsepp, 2017, p. 53). This implies that the Self is *already at a distance* from the environment that *contains some positions*. Even if the environment is conceived of in a static way (first model), it does not define all the conditions of the Self’s relationship with the environment. In effect, the Self can be “engaging *with a*[n environmental] phenomenon *from* a particular point of view” (Raudsepp, 2017, p. 49), that is, its own point of view.

This implies that the Self *moves into* the environment (2). To effectively engage *with* a phenomenon is to be part of something, to be in *near* the object the Self engages with (Boulanger, 2017a). For example, parents sitting at home—at a distance from the school—and choosing from a sheet describing school events and activities that they will

be involved *in*. This *movement from the outside to the inside* does not simply require that the parents pick a chair to sit on, that they adopt a position that is already there in the environment. The parents' very movement (their choice of activity and movement toward the school) is an activity or event in itself that modifies the environment (Boulanger, 2017*a, b*). This reflects the bidirectional nature of the Self-environment relationship. To keep it very simple, we can imagine that a teacher adds three chairs at the centre of the school's meeting room to welcome three new parents who arrive late and whose presence was not expected. The room and its chairs (positions) are not pre-organized; the parents' movement creates the reorganization and *restructuration* of the space and generates positions. We can also refer to the *deconstruction* of space, in the case of a teacher removing chairs because only two of the ten parents who were expected actually showed up.

From this perspective, the Self (here the parent) is moving *in* the environment (3). Thanks to the Self's consciousness of its position within the global space, it can move inside the space and personalize it. I note that this phenomenon is understood by Raudsepp (2017) when she refers to positional polyphasia, which leads to social reflexivity through the construction of an image of the "whole" the Self is part of:

Image of the whole is necessary for orientation **in** the field: it enables to locate oneself in relation to others and to grasp the universe of options that are simultaneously offered for meaning making. [...] Representational field acts as an integrated whole and each of its individual participant has some access to this holism. [...] Each position entails specific point of view and hence has specific bias in meta-representations. Imagined representational whole functions as a context of potentialities to any actualized representation: it provides both imagined opposites (polemic representation) and imagined allies (positionally **close but different** representations). Positional polyphasia reflects the ability to *navigate* on various representational field and use collective symbolic resources for solving particular problems in certain relationships to the environment (p. 55).

In addition, *this* holism Rausepp (2017) refers to is not a fixed entity; rather, it is deeply related to the interplay of its parts. To grasp the system's underlying conception, imagine ailerons moving up and down as the plane swiftly flies. You will have the impression that there is a tick mark and a well-structured circle. However, this system (circle) consists of the constant movement of its parts. For this reason, and because the Self is itself a whole (Self as a society), the Self can create its own resources and innovate by moving within a flexible space—changing direction (Raudsepp, 2017)—

inside its periphery (Moreau, 2017; Rosa & Tavares, 2017<sup>13</sup>). This is what Raudsepp (2017) expresses with the concept of semiotic potency (related to intra-positional polyphasia): “A person may guide and constrain himself through a self-selected semiotic system, borrowed *from* the semiosphere. The capacity of semiotic potency creates the flexibility for social agents in relation to social influence” (p. 52).

To borrow an object *from* the environment implies distancing (4), otherwise the Self would remain too attached to the field from which this object was picked. The Self brings the object into itself. For Raudsepp (2017), “[d]istancing is the central operation of semiotic transformation, it is the basis for reflexivity and semiotic potency” (p. 57). This is related to the personal nature of positioning since, Lanaridis explains, “[i]t seems highly unlikely that composer and audience would *share* a common memory-stored musical pattern of emotional significance. [...] Rather, he [Nattiez] regards music as a sign that both composer and listener look at and interpret *in their own unique way*” (pp. 147-148). Not only can the Self distance itself from the environment but also from itself, particularly through a mediational process with the help of a meta-position (Lanaridis, 2017; Moreau, 2017; Raudsepp, 2017; Rosa & Tavares, 2017). This process allows both distance from oneself and from society.

Because the distant Self (e.g., composer and audience) is *still part of society* (Lanaridis, 2017) and because “distancing from the power of a particular system is self-positioning under the influence of some other system” (Raudsepp, 2017, p. 58) in the same global field, distance does not mean that the Self must isolate itself from others. In fact, it is quite the opposite: “The concept makes it possible to detach one’s self from immediate experience and to take into consideration the viewpoint of others through dialogue with other forms of historical experiences” (Moreau, 2017, p. 176). The Self distances itself from both the external environment and the Self’s personal context (its internalized audience and potentially its own personal world) in a way that enables the Self to go beyond what is immediately provided (outside and inside) and to *widen* its field.

The Self enters into dialogue with others through communication streams (Lanaridis, 2017); distance widens the field, leading the Self to meet more people. Imagine a person moving to another country; he or she will meet new people there but also along the way (e.g., at the gas station) between their first and second home, in the liminal zone in-between. The Self can leave a specific representational and positional zone (Raudsepp, 2017) to choose another one (going to another country on the same planet). To this end, the Self selects and creates resources. It does so from the outside or the external environment (distancing from one environment to choose another) as

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<sup>13</sup> Rosa and Tavares (2017) refer to periphery in this way: “Therefore, a previously central and functional I-position loses its main arguments and other arguments that emerge can *push her out of the central zone* and lead her to a secondary role or a state of ‘hibernation’.”

well as from the inside or its intrapositional field (distanciation from the environment to act more freely and to personalize its relationship with the world).

The bidirectional movements illustrated in Figure 4 represent this dialogical interplay of the Self entering and leaving itself as well as the environment. These bidirectional movements allow the Self to position itself through a constant distancing process. Overall, the participants of this Special Issue don't underscore distance since they refer to a "reprocess" (*repositioning* and *representing*).

*Repositioning* implies changing position. Without distance, in particular distanciation (creating distance), in this process people risk being closed to what lies beyond the immediate local sphere (Boulanger, 2017a). We have to leave the (local) frame in order to *reframe* our position in it. Leaving the frame entails distancing, thus a "de-process." The same logic applies to representing reality. I suggest a "de-process"—*depositioning* and *depresenting* (a concept that I propose)—to highlighting distance (5).

In Figure 4, I show the movement of the Self *leaving* the environment (symbol DE), implying distance, and the Self *returning* to the environment (symbol RE). The former is an essential condition for the latter. To present a reality in our own way (*representing*) makes sense through distance, when the Self goes beyond the local sphere (Boulanger, 2017a). Thus, *depresenting* is a condition of *representing* reality.

Let's push my reflection further by highlighting the bidirectional nature of the Self's relationship with the environment. In Figure 4, the movement associated with the DE is not only the movement of the subject moving out of the environment, but also of *the environment reaching (by being attracted to) for, and possibly entering, the Self by means of internalization* (here, an extension of the second model). While the Self *resists* the environment, the social environment is attracted to the Self and tries to move into the Self (internalization). On the other side, as Selves, the Others also *distance* themselves from the Self, while being attracted to it.<sup>14</sup> The bidirectional movements in Figure 4 entail a hide-and-seek game in which the Self and the (social) environment are *attracted* to each other *through* their mutual *distancing*. Distancing is the counter-force to and condition for social rapprochement. In this way, the Self is never completely alone when it moves!

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<sup>14</sup> I have to consider here that the Self is the environment of the Others and that the Others is the environment of the Self. The Others can meet the Self (as their social environment) when distancing themselves from their own immediate (external and internal) "local" zone in the same way that the Self can meet the Others when distancing from its own space. Hence, boundary crossing in distanciation dynamic as a condition of social rapprochement. In it in this sense that depositioning and depresenting implies both the Self distancing itself from the "local" environment and the environment of Others reaching for the Self (as far as Others are also part of a depositioning and depresenting dynamic).

It is here that the Self's "experience of otherness is what is needed to [...] reveal [...] itself to itself" (Moreau, 2017, p. 176). For Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010), depositioning means broadening our horizons. While the participants in this Special Issue generally recognize the importance of distance, depositioning is needed to fully grasp it. Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010) explain the depositioning process:

First, the specific physical position of the objects and their location in space becomes less dominant (e.g., "I ... was not at all concerned with their positions in space"). [...] Third, this experience cannot be well described in terms of "appropriation" or "ownership." Rather, the experience "comes in" and is received by an open mind ("impressed itself upon my mind"). The experience cannot satisfactorily be described as "mine" (my perception, or my creativity) because this would not give enough weight to the observation that there is a mind participating in a wider field of awareness. In fact, there is a widening and opening of the self with highly permeable boundaries that are not strictly demarcated from the environment (pp. 163-164).

Spatial location becomes relative and the Self is not only internalizing and appropriating reality but is also *receptive*, that is, open and present in the hole (open space) it creates through this openness during distancing dynamic (Figure 4). The Self thus makes *itself present* –as I indicated, distance does not equate *absence*— and not only the object of its own mental "*representation*," while representing an object implies to making it present. This opens the door for praxis and communication. The central aspect here is the suspension of space clarity (Boulanger, 2017*b*), which is to say, the environment's vagueness and open nature (6). An open space is a vague space lying "in-between" (the yellow circle in Figure 4). The Self is not only situated *at* the boundary, it also *moves within an open space*. Think about parents meeting teachers in the community (between school and home), more particularly in the parking lot of the kindergarten where they planned to meet or by accident at the grocery store. The latter is an unexpected zone that contains a surprise effect (Boulanger, 2018*a*). It is here that distanciation, as well as the vague and open nature of space (as created by the Self), makes sense as a condition for the irreversibility of time.

At the beginning of this section, I used the metaphor of children bringing a picture of their parents to summer camp to highlight distance and autonomy of the Self and the environment. A better metaphor could be the following: at the summer camp, children, being between two states (asleep and not yet asleep, thus in a zone of suspension) endow their parents with unexpected characteristics that entail a new ordering (synthesis) of their "elements" and adding new ones in their imagination. This is a kind of "*propresentation*" (I propose this concept) where the Self presents reality to itself by looking at the horizon—through depositioning and derepresenting—beyond its immediate reality like a person in the desert seeing a mirage when looking at the horizon. Here fantasy –sustained in a virtual and possible world in a space of

suspension—meets reality! It opens door to theoretical applications. For instance, endowing people not with fixed traits (classification through fixed and stationary images) but with CHARACTERistics –CHARACTERizing them by giving voices and through concrete gesture like with performing CHARACTERS in the virtual world of theater (Boulanger & Christensen, 2018)— could be part of this process. In this form of presentation (like with theatrical presentation), experience is a central aspect. In this way, the Self’s experience flows in irreversible time.

***Process in irreversible time: The door is still open and the horizon still far.***

Participants in this Special Issue propose many interesting avenues to explore regarding an irreversible conception of time. I summarize with the following elements:

- The analysis of the Self’s positional and representational dynamics in a context of social change (Raudsepp, 2017).
- The continuity and discontinuity of using analogies to create and recreate reality because of its contradictory nature (Moreau, 2017).
- The delay of an anticipated response to music (Lanaridis, 2017).
- The guidance of present-future path (Rosa & Tavares, 2017) through mediation (Rosa & Tavares, 2017; Raudsepp, 2017; Lanaridis, 2017; Moreau, 2017)
- The hidden possibilities (Rosa & Tavares, 2017; Raudsepp, 2017; Boulanger, 2017b).
- The tendency to go beyond the immediate reality through concepts (Moreau, 2017) and directionality (Raudsepp, 2017) in a depositional logic (identified in this conclusion).
- The synthesis of the old and the new (Raudsepp, 2017; Rosa & Tavares, 2017).

And yet, the participant’s efforts are often undermined by emphasizing a reversible conception of time, particularly the entification of reality and the spatialization of time. It is the case, for example, when Boulanger (2017b) refers to possibilities that are hidden *in space*; they are invisible but there, right under the surface, ready to be used instead of being in the process of emerging.

Figure 5 (next page) shows how Bergson (1888) presents the way lay people and scientists generally construct time, in particular a path or trajectory. Imagine a Self *moving from* “M **position**” to “O position,” and then choosing between X *or* Y directions (which became positions when crossed) in a supposedly free manner. Bergson’s point is that such representation or symbolization of a path is static because it involves the spatialization of time, the removal of duration and movement, as well as the depersonalization<sup>15</sup> of the Self in relation to external reality (spatial). The Self

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<sup>15</sup> The author does not use this specific concept in his explanation.



constructs such a spatial path when it moves *outside* of itself. So, the researcher blends position and movement. Saying that the Self has a choice between X and Y entails a false conception of freedom because it objectifies that emerging act of choice creation by fixing choices in X or Y. The hesitation—a dynamic that is overlooked by over-



**Figure 5.** Path Construction

emphasizing points or positions X and Y—of the moving Self creates many emerging options (of which X and Y are only two). Moreover, this means that we cannot say that X and Y lie there as possibilities, waiting to be chosen, because this would suppose that the path is constructed (illustrated in Figure 5 by a well-demarcated line) either before or after the real trajectory, which is in the process of emerging.

Let's designate these tendencies with X and Y: Will our new notation offer a more accurate idea of “concrete” reality? Note that, as mentioned above, the “I” grows, expands and changes when it moves through the two contrary states; otherwise, how would it ever decide? Therefore there must not be two states as such, but rather a multitude of successive and different states within which I untangle two opposite directions through an imaginative effort (Bergson, 1888, p. 92; loose translation).

The Self constructs X instead of choosing it like a person would choose a chair (position) that is already there (in a precise spatial location). In addition, X does not remain there but flies away like a shooting star that *disappears* and only lives in the Self's active memory. After having constructed X, there is no Y and no possible return to the initial O-X intersection.

The arguments I provide above undermine the very notions of position (as static points abstracted from the flow of irreversible time) and direction. The Self exists and, above all, evolves and endures (*duration*) in irreversible time if it leaves deep down in itself, out of space, in pure duration.

If conscious point A does not yet possess the idea of space [...] the succession of states it goes through could not take on the shape of a line; but these sensations will accumulate dynamically and organize themselves, like the stringed notes of a melody that lulls us. In short, the duration itself could be only a succession of qualitative changes that merge and intertwine, without any specific outline or any inclination toward exteriorizing themselves in relation to one another [...] Duration and movement are mental syntheses rather than things; if the mobile occupies the points along a line, one after the other, movement has nothing in common with this line, then we have removed from this feeling its vibrancy and colour (Bergson, 1888, p. 58; loose translation).

This excerpt shows that sensations overlap in the Self like a rainbow whose colours are not clearly outlined. Here I note the overlapping and vagueness dimensions found in the third model (Figure 4). However, I have presented the overlap as one of the qualitative states of the dynamic movement between the Self and the (social) environment<sup>16</sup>, whereas Bergson only insists upon the former (for a critic of Bergson, see Boulanger, 2017c and Boulanger, 2018b). In Bergson's theory, overlap means that there is no interval that we depict as a hole (Figure 4). As far as present is concerned, intervals are part of the static spatialization of time conceived through a homogeneous *external* reality. For Bergson, people generally abstract time by means of countable moments (moment 1 and moment 2) separated by *empty* intervals. Instead, the author promotes overlapping *internal* duration when tackling the present moment (he recognizes interval elsewhere when delving into distance and future). The third model can therefore complete Bergson's idea.<sup>17</sup> I could find in the hole a rainbow with different colours spreading and possibly overlapping *amidst the internal and the external*.<sup>18</sup>

Bergson (1888) refers to the graceful movement of the dancer to illustrate time's irreversibility. This example allows him to insist on the different qualitative states of the dancer who is living and embodying the idea of duration.

The perception that it is easy to move fuses itself with the pleasure of stopping time, so to speak, and keeping the future in the present. A third element intervenes when graceful movements are accompanied by music and follow a rhythm. Rhythm and tempo improve our ability to anticipate an artist's movements and enable us to imagine ourselves in the artist's shoes (p. 15; loose translation).

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<sup>16</sup> There is a constant movement between overlapping and breaking the systems' overlapping through distance and Self's and Others' resisting one another).

<sup>17</sup> For him, the external environment (space) is certain and static. However, Boulanger (2017b) shows that it is characterized by holes as signs of uncertainty, which is a secondary but still important dimension in Bergson's theory. I would thus have to reconsider his conception of space.

<sup>18</sup> I would have to refer to open texture and boundary case (Boulanger, 2017b).

Here, the very tendency to stop time—and to fix it in X and Y positions or directions—is depicted in a dynamic way as it is part of the emerging feeling comprising overlapping sensations. This overlap means precisely that the present flows into the future through emotional and physical sensations. The reference to rhythm is part of Bergson's general tendency to rely on time organization. Here, this spatial concept is used in the logic of time. This is certainly a key element for translating the third model (Figure 4) into irreversible time.

In reference to dance, Bergson also refers to the observer's attraction and sympathy.

Even though it may stop for an instant, our impatient hand cannot keep itself from moving; as if pushing itself, returning itself to the centre of this movement in which the rhythm has taken over our thoughts and willpower. A physical sympathy of sorts enters the feelings of the graceful dancer. Analyzing the appeal of this sympathy, you will see that its similarity to the idea of moral sympathy (which is inconspicuously suggested) pleases you. Moral sympathy, which induces other elements into a sense of comfort, explains the existence of an irresistible attraction to gracefulness. If we could reduce it to an economy of effort, the delight that it kindles would not make sense, as suggested by Spencer. But the truth is that we think we understand gracefulness, including nimbleness (an indication of one's freedom of movement), a sign that a movement toward us is possible, and a virtual or burgeoning sympathy. This physical sympathy, which is always on the verge of being given, is the very essence of superior grace (p. 16; loose translation).

Here, as far as I expand Bergson's ideas, in a way to socialize the Self and consider its embodied nature, I have some very interesting key elements for a theory of intersubjective movement (Figure 4). This would imply putting the third model in dialogue with Bergson.

However, for Bergson (1911), sign, representation, concept and symbols require leaving the Self and imposing on the Self abstract and impersonal categories pertaining to the external *social* world. This implies constantly running around the Self and never catching it, which is analogous to the hide-and-seek game that I suggested earlier (Figure 4). Instead, Bergson (1911) promotes going directly to the original Self, which undermines the very sense of representing reality that entails constructing a version of an object out of the original. For this reason (and because the tendency of the DST to be largely based on a spatialized conception of time), using Bergson's ideas would provide an interesting mediation of the dialogue between the DST and the SRT. Nevertheless, it could also lead us to transcend Bergson (see Boulanger, 2017c, 2018a, b), for example by integrating the symbolic dimension (Valsiner, 2017) or by revisiting some of his concepts (e.g., space). For my purposes, using open texture (Boulanger, 2017b)—which

supposes hesitation—, would make sense of the Bergson-Hermans-Moscovici articulation and bring forth a developmental logic. A good complement would be the concept of depositioning (and derepresentation), which implies a suspension of space referents (central to attaining duration). In these conditions, I could conceive of a “me that lives and evolves along with its hesitations, until the freedom of expression emerges like an over-ripe fruit falls to the ground” (Bergson, 1888, p. 92; loose translation). With respect to these endeavours, some phenomena, like dancing and music (Lanaridis, 2017), seem promising for such an enquiry. So, we could add the time dimension to the spatial model in this paper.

The attentive reader may have noticed that the first and the second models are included in the third.<sup>19</sup> In this respect, the latter is a meta-model entailing the separated Self (inclusive separation, first model) moving into the environment (first model) and the environment moving into the Self (second model) through separation/inclusion. The avenues that should be explored (presented above) could help me to apply this model to irreversible time. But, since any abstraction, use of language and reference to society lead to the depersonalization of the Self (Bergson, 1888, 1907), would I run after the Self in vain or would I reach it? For Bergson, any scientific or common sense act of separation entails a static conception of Self and time. This means removing the Self’s original features (its colours). As far as I conceive inclusive separation in two “steps” for the purpose of my reflection, I can ask what researchers remove when they create an (inclusive) separation and what they add to the individual-environment relationship when they include the individual and the environment. How do researchers *reinsert* an uncertain liminal zone to mediate this relationship? Do they deplete or enhance the Self? Note that saying, like Bergson, that science and common sense implies removing the Self’s colours supposes a spatial conception of Self and time. In effect, it assumes that colours (personal traits) are included in the Self in the form of matter. So, researchers cannot remove the colours, but they can shed *light*—colours being constructed through light—on the Self or leave it in the dark. I hope that this special issue contributes to the former. Considering Bergson’s critique of abstraction and how he prioritizes experience and intuition, maybe the key to getting beyond the participants’ reflection rests on the personal and intuitive experience that is gained from research relative to the object! From a scientific point of view, by letting the authors’ texts resonate in me alongside the dialogical exchange with them and the second editor of this special issue, that I intuitively identified in this conclusion *possible* models that overlap (to the extent that I view the third model as being a meta-model in which the three models overlap). Are these models reflected in the general literature or are they only local cases? Do my own experience and choice make me deviate from sustaining a dialogue between the SRT and the DST? Effectively, by choosing an ecological approach as an asset and a guide for this enquiry, I miss the dialogical dimension that

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<sup>19</sup> Below, some quick explanations for the non-*attentive* reader to read *attentively*!

the participants themselves should have put a bit further (see for instance Salgado's comment) despite their evident efforts and great contributions.

In all cases, experience and intuition is part of the collective (theoretical) dialogue. I invite readers to see this Special Issue as a contextual and dialogical exercise and to ask themselves where their reality lies between SR and dialogue. Is the Self a dialogue or a representer? Is the Self sustaining dialogue and/or representing reality? Are both reconcilable? Are both suitable to an irreversible conception of time?

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