Contexts: forms of agency and action

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Chapter 2

Contexts, forms of agency and action

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Introduction: thinking contextually

Why should there be a turn to contexts in the social sciences? Perhaps it marks a deliberate turn away from the view of scientific knowledge that must be both abstract and universal - decontextualised, in fact. There are two rather different views of this turn away from ‘Science’. The first views the turn to contexts as an admission of failure – that the social sciences are still immature or underdeveloped and fall short of the authoritative power of True Science, settling instead for descriptive accounts of the particular or the local. The alternative view sees the turn to context in more positive terms, identifying two major gains from such an approach. The first is the possibility of producing useful knowledge (rather the empty abstractions and generalizations of the science model). The second involves a more direct epistemological challenge to the abstracted universalism of a scientific social science, pointing to the ways in which its generalizations and universalising claims conceal the social conditions of their own production. Too often they turn out to be very particular ‘truths’ that present themselves as if they were universal. In what follows, I do not intend to explore these arguments further, but my starting point is that the turn to contexts should not be viewed as a failure to live up to Science, but as a distinctive and productive practice of the social
I begin from an assumption that thinking contextually is not a simple process. It certainly demands more than a conventional approach to naming or even describing contexts before the real business of analysis takes place. Contexts are not the background against which the action takes place, so I want to avoid descriptive ‘scene setting’ in the theatrical sense (where the action happens in front of a painted backdrop). Such a view treats contexts as essentially passive, rather than constitutive of the action and I want to work towards developing the second view here. However, I also want to suggest that thinking contextually requires more than identifying the place of the action. This is perhaps the dominant social science version of identifying contexts – the sense that an action takes place here, rather then there – and the place that it takes is significant. There are many variants of this version of contextualisation – ranging from comparative analysis that contrasts different places to the anthropological or ethnographic investigation of a profoundly particular ‘local’ site. Let me be clear: I think that place matters and this approach to contextualisation is certainly preferable to de-contextualised social science that pretends/imagine that context does not matter. Abstracting things, people and actions from their social contexts tends to induce strange generalities that conceal their particularity behind empty abstractions. I am recurrently struck by the tendency of US scholars to think that the USA is both the exemplar and the vanguard version of a ‘modern society’ (such that even if the rest of us are not like them, we soon will be). In the process the peculiarities and particularities of the USA as a society are dissolved (for one such discussion see Clarke and Newman, 2012, on projections of racial and ethnic divisions based on US studies).
I do not doubt the value of distinguishing between different places: geography matters in that basic sense. But I do not think it is the same as thinking contextually for several reasons. The core problem is the tendency to think of place as a singularity: a territorialized understanding of space that treats each particular place as a bounded ‘container’, separated from those other places around it (even if nested in a series of larger spaces: neighbourhood, city, region, nation, etc). This containerised model of space has been the foundation for most comparative work; especially cross-national studies of social structures, cultures and policies (Clarke, 2005). There are many reasons for avoiding this model (despite its undoubted convenience): the permeability of borders and boundaries to flows of people, objects, money and – especially in policy terms – ideas; the mutability of different types of borders and boundaries; and the impossibility of the combination of scale and space that has dogged concepts of multi-levelled or multi-scalar objects (such as multi-level governance). Geographers and others have carefully dismantled this version of space and scale in favour of what Massey (2005) calls a ‘relational view of place’ – in which places are produced by their location in fields of relationships (economic, social, political, cultural and more). Places are a point of condensation of relationships and the connections (flows, mobilities) that they contain – and enable. So, if places are singularities, they are singular because of the particular combinations of multiple relationships and connections that have produced them.iii

Even if we establish a relational view of place, I would still want to argue that what is at stake in thinking contextually involves more than place. Contexts are not singular but plural: any particular action has multiple contexts – spatial, social, political, cultural, economic, organizational, etc. At this point, I am just going to note two points:
the first is that, as is often the case, pluralizing the object of attention (contexts not context) is a vital first step – it disrupts convenient or too easily taken for granted sets of connections. The second is that such pluralization begs a number of questions, including those of how do we understand plurality (multiplicity, heterogeneity, contradictory combination?); and how do we understand relationships of precedence, domination and determination. I will return to these later in the paper, but for the moment want to concentrate on why contexts matter.

Contexts as animating

In place of treating contexts as descriptive, or even as devices for locating actions, I want to explore the idea that contexts *animate* action. To put this another way, contexts:

- make things thinkable (in Foucault’s sense),
- make things possible,
- make things relevant,
- make things desirable, and even
- make things appear necessary.

By implication, of course, contexts also produce the obverse effects (making some things unthinkable, impossible, irrelevant, undesirable and unnecessary). Some years ago, when writing about the arrival of processes of competitive evaluation in UK public services, I suggested that they were made possible (enabled) by the conjunction of several different contexts:

1. *Corporate globalization and market populism.* The economic, political, and cultural realignments of the world are dominated, though not exhausted, by the
structures and flows of a US-centred corporate capitalism, whose public face is what Thomas Frank has called ‘market populism’: that in addition to being mediums of exchange, markets were mediums of consent. Markets expressed the popular will more articulately and more meaningfully than did mere elections. Markets conferred democratic legitimacy; markets were a friend of the little guy; markets brought down the pompous and the snooty; markets gave us what we wanted; markets looked out for our interests. (2001: xiv)

2. Neo-liberalism and public choice as the economics of mistrust. Corporate globalization is intimately connected to the rise of neoliberalism as an ideological and political project. It has had particularly deep impacts in the United States and the United Kingdom, shaping a strong anti-statist, anti-bureaucracy, and anti-welfarist politics (Clarke 2004a). One central strand has been the role of public choice theory in challenging conceptions of public interest, public goods, and public services. Public choice theory ‘demonstrated’ that public institutions were driven by venal, self-interested and self-seeking motivations (just like markets), rather than altruism, public service goals, or professional ethics. It was, as a result, a defining force in the construction of a moral economy of mistrust.

3. The fiscal crisis of the state and the fiscalization of policy discourses. The break-up of the post-war welfare settlements involved a sustained attack on the economic basis and relationships of the state in advanced capitalist economies, inducing what O’Connor (1973) described as the ‘fiscal crisis’ of the state. But it is important to note how the ‘crisis of the state’ was also defined and constructed as a economic/fiscal problem which has enabled specific forms of political-cultural alliances and a framing of policy discourses: fiscal responsibility; what the economy
needs, making work pay, etc. (Prince 2001). Economy and efficiency have been twinned in the resulting challenges to public services. Stein, for example, has argued that public services have been subjected to a drive towards efficiency in an ‘attack on the sclerotic, unresponsive, and anachronistic state’ that is ‘branded as wasteful’ (2000: 7).

4. The problem of control in the disintegrated/dispersed state. Processes of state reform in this period have emphasized disintegration through various means: privatization, internal markets; outsourcing, delegation, decentralization and devolution, competition between multiple providers, principal–agent contractualization, etc. All of these have produced a ‘dispersed state’ (Clarke and Newman 1997) or a system of ‘control at a distance’ (Hoggett 1996). ‘Performance’ is one way of naming the problems of control at a distance and the proposed solutions to them. Scrutiny, inspection, evaluation, and audit emerge as potential solutions to the problems of ‘arm’s length control’ (Clarke et al. 2000).

5. Inequalities, differences and the public realm. Other forces have also challenged the forms and limitations of welfare states—especially around the subordinations, marginalizations, and exclusions of the nominal universalism of welfare citizenship. Struggles over welfare citizenship—around axes of age, gender, race and ethnicity, sexuality, and dis/ability—have been diverse, but have been increasingly ‘spoken for’ in the language and imagery of consumerism and consumer choice—a particular variant of how diversity might be construed and mobilized… (2005b: 199-200)

At a later point, that argument explored some of the specificities of British politics – and the contested place of public services in them. But here I just want to use
this as a way illustrating the view of contexts as animating particular actions. These are not ‘causes’ in a direct or linear sense: rather they create the conditions of possibility in which a particular course of action (here the ungainly combination of testing, benchmarking, comparative data collection, audit and inspection) becomes imaginable as a solution to a set of perceived problems. These contexts combine to constitute the possibility of imagining the problem in these ways, provide languages for naming the problem, and frame the sorts of remedial action or solution that might be seen as reasonable to pursue.

My point of entry to this view of contexts is through the world of Cultural Studies. An American colleague, Larry Grossberg, has argued that the project of Cultural Studies can best be understood as a commitment to a form of analysis that he calls ‘radical contextualism’. In this approach, actions need to be understood through the contexts that animate them – that bring them to life. Actions – and the actors that enact them – are always situated and social analysis needs to be attentive to what sorts of contexts combine to make particular actions possible. My claim here is that contexts animate action. To strip contexts from actions is not just a matter of losing a sense of their meaning, or their location. Decontextualization renders actions incomprehensible in a more profound way, making them merely the effect of some larger force – whether human nature or the logic of capital. It also makes actors – the subjects who enact actions – merely the transmitters of forces beyond them. Instead, I want to think about contexts as producing particular types of agent and particular forms of agency. To locate these general arguments in a current research project, I am interested in how we come to have inspectors that oversee schools (in some places); in how these inspectors are given capacities and powers; in how they turn the role of inspector into (widely
differing) practices of inspecting; and in how other agents – governments, managers, teachers, pupils, parents and more – relate to inspection and inspectors.

Contexts and forms of agency

In one sense, this is an attempt to sidestep the long running debate about Structure and Agency that preoccupies sociologists. Instead, I think it is preferable to treat agency as something that always takes particular forms: there is no Agency in general. Instead, I think it worth considering what it might mean to think about agents and form of agency contextually. Contexts make possible particular types of agent (e.g., the School Inspector) and particular types of agency (school inspection as one form of governing at a distance). Inspections are actions and forms of agency that are animated by the combination of multiple contexts: political, governmental, educational, organizational – in different national settings.

So we might trace the trajectory of inspection through national political regime changes and examine to what role it is recruited in the process of governing education as a field of public policy. We might examine how school inspection is positioned in the ‘architecture of governance’ of public services, education and schooling specifically: how inspection is expected to contribute to the running of a system of schooling. Again there are national variations in each of these fields – governance of public services, education and schooling. We might then consider how inspection and the profession of teaching are articulated: where do inspectors come from? What sorts of professional knowledge and authority do they mobilize as inspectors? Finally, we might ask about the organizational context(s) in which inspection is located: where in the system of
government is inspection housed? What is the shape and purpose of its organizational setting? How are inter-organizational relationships understood and executed (e.g., what is the relationship between inspection and individual schools; or what difference does it make that the inspection function is partly sub-contracted?). Each of these contexts provides a rich and significant field of inquiry. But it is only when they are brought together that we begin to see the particular forms of agent and types of agency that inspection involves (in its different places). Taking any one of them would illuminate only some aspects of the form of agent and types of agency that are in play in any one model of school inspection.

Let me try to illustrate using the case of England and the institutionalization of school inspection in Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education). There is a political trajectory to this location of school inspection: it emerged from the (Thatcherite) 1980s Conservative attack on the school system (against comprehensive schools, liberal curricula, and child-centred pedagogies). The Schools Inspectorate (Her Majesty’s Inspectors of Education, HMIs) was viewed as being at least complicit with these tendencies. Ofsted was imagined as a place where such liberal/professional leanings might be controlled, and it was identified as part of the revolution in public service governance (competitive-evaluative processes, performed in the name of a public of consumers). It has been retained – albeit with changes of role – by all subsequent governments: identified by them as a powerful ‘watch dog’, but experienced by many in the teaching profession as an ‘attack dog’ (on the different types of dogs see Hackett, 2001, and Clarke, 2005b).

Second, as already hinted, school inspection in England has been relocated (since the 1980s) as part of a new architecture of governance for public services, and for
schooling in particular. The processes of breaking up state ‘monopoly’ provision, introducing forms of sponsored competition, the double dynamic of centralization and decentralization, and the construction of various market-mimicking mechanisms created a new system architecture that was accompanied by new forms of governing at a distance (see Clarke, 2011). Inspection was one of the mechanisms of governing in this fashion – alongside and integrated with processes of comparative data collection (see Ozga et al., 2011). The survival of a nineteenth century practice – the embodied inspection – into this world of performance data is itself an interesting point of discussion: what is it that an inspector adds to the process of governing? But within an increasingly radically dispersed or decentralized schooling system, inspection provides one of the means of exercising central control, institutionalising forms of accountability, and embodying authority. vii

Third, school inspection (at least in the three settings in the current project) has a history of professionalism: inspectors have been teachers and are expected to bring professional experience to bear in making inspectorial judgements. The transition from practitioner to inspector is a complex one, supported by diverse forms of training and development (and is not always a permanent or one-way transition). At stake in English inspection is a sort of compound professionalism: teaching experience, combined with the expectation of the professional conduct of inspection, mediated by sub-contracted relationships (between Ofsted and inspection providers, and between the providers and contracted inspectors). But the professional context remains significant for the perceived legitimacy and authority of inspection.

Finally, the organizational and inter-organizational context also shapes a particular form of inspection. In England, Ofsted has acquired (or perhaps cultivated) a
certain sort of distance from the schools and staff being inspected. Under its most famous Chief Inspector (Chris Woodhead) it announced itself as involved in a struggle against failing schools and poor teachers. This antagonistic view of the relationship between inspection and the inspected has been revived by the recently appointed Chief Inspector (Sir Michael Wilshaw) who is committed to changing the categories of inspection reporting (‘Satisfactory’ will be abolished) and to preventing ‘coasting’ among both schools and teachers.\textsuperscript{viii} There are important features of the English organizational – and inter-organizational – context that mark significant differences from the Scottish and Swedish practices of inspection in our study.

There are certainly other contexts, too, that constitute the possibility and practice of inspection, not least those in the encounters between the inspectors and the inspected.\textsuperscript{ix} But even from the four I have sketched so far, it should be clear that their combination makes possible particular forms of agency: the embodied professional inspection in which forms of authoritative judgement are produced, distributed and consumed. The political, governmental, professional and organizational contexts come together to create the figure of the Inspector and the act of inspection. The type of agency is specific: the power to enter a school; to observe; to interact with staff, governors, pupils; to scrutinise, data and other documents; and – above all – to form a professional judgement about the quality of education. The form of agent is also particular, embodying a combination of qualities: professional expertise, inspection training, experience of forming judgements in combination with others, ability to deploy the appropriate techniques of data management, observation, and capacity to use the lexicon of inspection reporting. The combination of contexts empowers a particular sort of agent to carry out particular sorts of acts. The contexts grant limited types of
powers, authorize particular sorts of knowledge, and enable particular sorts of actions. To repeat: agency – and its agents – is summoned and animated in particular, not in general.

Contexts and unreliable agents

So far, I have talked about these constitutive contexts as if they are simply plural and come together to form a coherently productive mesh that animates agents and agency. In this section I want to turn to a rather different view and a different problem about agency and agents. There is a long standing tradition in the sociology of work and echoed in some aspects of policy studies that is interested in ‘unreliable’ agents: workers who do not work as they should; who exhibit unexpected or unpredictable forms of agency; or who perform acts of resistance, recalcitrance or subversion. I am interested in whether this ‘unreliability’ can also be understood contextually, by treating the agent as a point of condensation of multiple, heterogeneous and possibly contradictory contexts. Particular locations combine different contexts and can be seen as being traversed by different ‘logics’ of action whose combination produces particular forms of indeterminacy that require agents to resolve the tensions, paradoxes and contradictions or to do the work of translation from one form to another. In such settings, there are expectations that some logic, code or personal quality will enable the agent to ‘do the right thing’ (see, inter alia, Clarke et al, 2010). Nevertheless, as the Pirates of the Caribbean knew perfectly well, such logics or codes are ‘more like guidelines, really’, enabling a degree of flexible interpretation.
I think it may be worth teasing out different contextual conditions of such flexibility of interpretation, not least because it underpins so much of the work on groups of actors such as ‘street level bureaucrats’, for example. The first and simplest form is that strategies, policies, guidance are often (and necessarily?) underspecified in relation to the situation they attempt to govern, such that front line workers have to produce the fit between rules and cases, rather than such fit being a given. A second form may be where competing and contradictory logics attempt to rule a site of practice, such that front line actors have to work out the balance between different logics, rules or injunctions (e.g., satisfy the customer versus control costs). This may also be the form taken by tensions between organizational and occupational logics, where organization specific demands conflict with professional judgement, for instance. Front line workers – and those at other organizational tiers – are rarely ‘just’ workers. Here is the problem of what Terence Johnson (1973) named as the ‘mediating professions’ typical of public services whose work is always framed by the potentially conflicting demands of their organization (and the state policies it enacts) and those of the public/users/clients of the service.

I also want to suggest that other contexts may animate the forms and practices of agency that actors engage in. The multi-contexuality of individuals and groups may enable them to perceive connections, disjunctures, possibilities and problems in ways that could not be imagined if they occupied only a singular location. So we might ask: what informs the choices of ‘street level bureaucrats’ when they are exercising ‘discretion’ and making policy in practice? Social and political, rather than only organizational or occupational, contexts may animate choices and action. As a result, we might think of the substance of discretion being shaped by ethical judgements (e.g.,
about solidarity or obligation), by cultural judgements (e.g., about gender or racial
differences), or by political judgements (e.g., about current policy or the ruling bloc)
that may be assembled in unstable combinations of
occupational/professional/political/cultural elements (see Foding et al, 2007, for
example). Imagine, for instance, the judgments that might be formed by a religion-
inflected professional case worker directed to intervene in child care practices of same
sex households, in a hybrid public-private organization in times of fiscal austerity. My
point is that as social actors, agents necessarily bring other contexts with them into the
contexts of policy and practice.

To summarise: thinking contextually provides one way of thinking about the
forms of agency and types of agent that are produced. It is a way of thinking that
emphasizes particularity, while also making visible potential problems or instabilities
with the particular forms of agency and agent that are summoned. Multiple contexts
may produce unstable or incoherent forms of agency as they bring into play incoherent
or even contradictory logics of action. Agents – being embodied social actors – may
bring other contexts with them into the context of action or practice, providing more or
less explicit cultural/political/social orientations to decision-making, judgement and
action. Finally, thinking contextually allows us to understand the heterogeneous
resources that may be available to people that enable them to refuse, resist, contradict,
answer back or even ignore what appears to be the dominant logic of action.
Heterogeneous contexts have the effect of producing ‘wriggle room’ for agents. Agents
rarely turn up in the precise form and with the desired disposition that the ‘official’
context (and its associated logic of action) intends.
Thinking contextually: Over-determination and Under-determination

In this final section, I want to reflect briefly on what thinking contextually does to conceptions of causality and determination. Here, some of the discussion that has been lodged in the footnotes surfaces in the main text in the course of a brief theoretical consideration of determination. It should, I hope, be obvious by now that thinking contextually refuses mono-causal and linear accounts of agency and action. Examining the productive effect of combinations of multiple, plural or heterogeneous contexts offers a different way of approaching social explanation. Paradoxically, thinking about action in this way requires us to think about how any specific action is always both over-determined and under-determined. It is over-determined in the sense that the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser developed in his famous essay on \textit{Contradiction and Overdetermination} in which he argued that social phenomena – in his case, contradictions – are the product of multiple and combined forces and cannot be understood outside of their heterogeneous conditions of existence.\textsuperscript{xiii} In thinking of forms of social action involving the constitution of specific sites, spaces and forms of agency, we need also to be attentive to their over-determination – the coming together of many contexts whose combinations generates the conditions of possibility for particular agents to perform specific actions. But agency is simultaneously under-determined in the sense that how it is enacted/performe cannot be predicted in advance. Even when we accumulate knowledge of many contexts we will now know, be able to fully explain or predict why Agent X behaves in a particular way that is different from Agent Y. The \textit{combination} of multiple contexts (and their potentially incoherent or contradictory logics of action) mean that particular forms of agency
always contain the possibility of acting up or acting out, as well as just acting.

In short, I am arguing for a view of agency as contextually unstable. Attention to the diverse contexts that animate forms of action might enable a more unsettled view of the forms, tensions and unpredictability of agency in action. As a last flourish, I want to argue for a view of agency as the effect of intercontextuality. Intercontextuality (with a deliberate echo of the concept of intertextuality) is a way of drawing attention to the multiple, heterogeneous and potentially antagonistic contexts that constitute the conditions of possibility for particular forms of social action. It usefully suggests that contexts are not insulated from one another, either as conditions of possibility or as sources of material, relational and symbolic resources on which people may draw in acting as agents. Intercontextuality provides a means of pointing to the unpredictably productive intersections of different contexts that enable specific forms of agent, types of agency and action.

References


Hall, Stuart, Jefferson, Tony, Critcher, Chas, Clarke, John and Roberts, Brian (1978) *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law ’n’ Order*. Basingstoke, Macmillan.

My interest in thinking contextually derives from a formation in cultural studies rather than policy studies, where it seems that contexts have a different significance. This background and the sets of theoretical assumptions on which the arguments I advance here draw are largely carried in the footnotes. I hope this allows the line of argument to be established without detours through cultural and social theory.

Anglophone scholarship has tended to normalize (and even universalize) Anglo-American experience, such that scholars writing about ‘elsewheres’ are usually required to perform two ritual acts: to ‘contextualise’ their elsewhere (that is, explain its particularity for Anglophone audiences); and to justify their elsewhere (that is, tell Anglophone audiences why it might be of interest).

Critiques of the containerised model of space and the hierarchical conception of scale include: Allen and Cochrane (2010); Ferguson and Gupta (2002); Gupta and Ferguson (1992); Isin (2007); and Massey (2005).

In this paper I am not intending to address the arguments around this Cultural Studies’ version of contextualism. Those interested in pursuing them can find them discussed at length in Grossberg 2008 and 2011, albeit given a distinctive Grossbergian turn through the work of Deleuze and Guattari. I have discussed these issues more briefly in the relation to what both Larry Grossberg and I see as the exemplary text of this contextualizing approach: Hall et al’s *Policing the Crisis* (Hall et al., 1978), see Clarke, 2008 and 2010. *Policing the Crisis* did not set out a formal model of contextual analysis, nor was it obviously a methodological text. It was, however, inspired by a comment of Marx’s that the ‘concrete is always the product of many determinations’. So rather than perceiving either a unique event, or a singular line of causation, this ‘radical contextualism’ provided a way of examining the ‘many determinations’ and their inter-relationship in a particular moment, or conjuncture.

This argument assumes that, following Michel Foucault’s work, we can no longer operate with a notion of agency in general. To the contrary, Foucault was devoted to revealing the particular forms in which subjects, subjectivity and agency were constituted (to which I
would add, were constituted contextually). In his work we always encounter the ways in which specific forms, relationships and practices of power are being produced: agents are always empowered to do something in particular. This represents a radical – and I think irrecoverable – break with sociological notions of agency as a property of human beings. This argument might be developed further in relation to Actor Network Theory approaches, particularly around the concept of assemblage or agencement (see the discussion of the translation of agencement as assemblage in Phillips, 2006). However I will not try to take up this line of development here.

vi The discussion of school inspection draws on a current research project: Governing by Inspection: School Inspection and Education Governance in Scotland, England and Sweden, part of an ESRC Bilateral programme (Grant number: RES-062-23-2241-A).

vii Indeed, one of the recurring discussion points in our project in whether the current further dispersion/fragmentation/disintegration of schooling in England can be appropriately described using the concept of system.

viii It is perhaps worth recalling Paul du Gay's sceptical comments about the dangers of personal passions in public services (in his book In Praise of Bureaucracy, 2000). Both Woodhead and Wilshaw seem to have approached the process of inspection with a sense of messianic commitment to 'making a difference' in which distinctions between the person and the office have all but disappeared. This is echoed in contemporary enthusiasms for 'passionate leadership' and 'can do' types of people.

ix The act of inspecting appears closed to outside scrutiny (at least in England and Scotland) and is only visible in its outputs (reports) and effects (on schools, teachers, governors, parents, pupils etc).

x It is an interest that I share, in part because it is an important reminder that people do not always behave as they are supposed to. I find that empirically interesting, theoretically challenging, and politically significant.

xi This section draws on arguments advanced in Clarke at al., 2007; and a recent chapter for an anthropology collection on governing work (Clarke, forthcoming). Anthropology – and anthropologists – have been particularly helpful to my efforts to think contextually.

xii A radically contextual view might make such relations more visible as part of the ways in which agency is solicited, enabled, constrained and – sometimes – repressed. It might also make agents look like specifically embodied actors rather than de-socialised effects of particular subjectivations. More troublingly, I think the Foucauldian model has perversely produced an interest in singularities (governmentalities, discourses, strategies, sites, etc) rather than attending to the dynamics of multiplicity and heterogeneity.

xiii “The ‘contradiction’ is inseparable from the total structure of the social body in which it is found, inseparable from its formal conditions of existence, and even from the instances it governs; it is radically affected by them, determining but also determined in one and the same movement, and determined by the various levels and instances of the social formation it animates; it might be called overdetermined in its principle.” (2005: 101; emphasis in original)