A Bridge Between Disciplines

Steinert, S.

Important note
To cite this publication, please use the final published version (if applicable).
Please check the document version above.

6

A Bridge Between Disciplines

Abstract Previous chapters considered value theories of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and philosophy. These disciplines can benefit and learn from one another, and closer interaction between disciplines will lead to better value theory. To facilitate an interdisciplinary understanding of value, this chapter will highlight the overlap between the different disciplines and what they can learn from one another. Each section of this chapter compares two disciplines and highlights overlaps, similarities, and differences. The hope is that this constructive comparison will build a bridge between disciplines, which helps to advance the theory development within the disciplines and brings theoretical blind spots into focus. Bringing disciplines together is the first step towards crossing disciplinary boundaries, resolving conceptual differences, and increasing interdisciplinary communication.

The previous chapters focused on value theories of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and philosophy. These chapters only briefly considered some historical overlaps and similarities between the theories. This chapter will consider in more detail how the theories relate to one another and

what the disciplines can learn from each other to make headway in theory development.

As we have seen, every discipline has its focus, which leads to different accounts of value. However, the disciplines may seem divided, but they converge on several issues. This chapter includes tentative proposals concerning overlap and common themes, like the relationship between value, personality, and society or the link between values and social structures. Each section of this chapter compares two disciplines and will bring out their overlap, similarities, and differences. The hope is that this constructive comparison will build a bridge between disciplines, which helps to advance theory development within the disciplines and brings theoretical blind spots into focus.

6.1   Psychology and Sociology

Psychologists are primarily interested in individuals and their mental processes, whereas sociologists focus on macro-level phenomena and society. Given this difference in focus, psychology and sociology approach value differently. Although must recognize these differences, we should also stress the similarities. Because both sociology and psychology are interested in human social behavior, they want to understand how cultural or societal values become personal, that is, how they are internalized and how they motivate the actions of the members of the collective. There is a substantive overlap between the two disciplines, and they would benefit from a dialogue with one another. For instance, social psychology and sociology have an overlapping interest in how the individual relates to the social and how the social and the individual shape one another.[1] In what follows, we will consider the commonalities of sociology and psychology concerning their theoretical approaches to value.

Authors in both disciplines distinguish between different kinds of values. For instance, social psychologist Milton Rokeach (1973) distinguished terminal and instrumental values. Similarly, preceding Rokeach's

---

[1] Sometimes, the disciplines seem to merge into one, particularly social psychology combining elements from psychology and sociology.

work, the sociologist Talcott Parsons (1935) distinguished ultimate values, transcendental ends, and immediate ends. However, it seems that determining values along these lines has since fallen out of favor in psychology, and the distinction between terminal and instrumental value is not psychologically fundamental nor useful for psychological research (Maio, 2016, p. 18),

Let us now turn to a current conceptual overlap. The value theories in sociology and psychology converge on the proposal that we should consider values as abstract goals that are not specific to situations. For instance, recall that several authors, like Parsons, Rokeach, and Schwartz, embrace the idea that values are abstract trans-situational goals. Also, psychologists and sociologists acknowledge that values need to be considered concerning motivations and that values guide actions. As Hitlin and Piliavin put it, values are "commonly conceived of as ideal ends within an action situation" (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004, p. 364). Psychologist Norman Feather (1995) has argued that values are motivational and not merely abstract concepts of the desirable. Andrew Miles (2015) claims that sociologists should re-introduce values into their agency models and culture. For Miles, values are specific cultural constructs that shape actions across various contexts because values are tied to the social self and because values play a role in fast cognitive processes (as opposed to slow, more deliberate processes).

Furthermore, psychologists and sociologists share an interest in how value, personality, and the (social) self are linked. Recall that since Vernon and Allport (1931) connected values to personality types, psychological theorizing about value has stressed the importance of the connection between value and self-concept. Likewise, In sociology, Pat Hutcheon (1972) has emphasized that value and self are related to one another.

There is another parallel between (social) psychology and sociology because both emphasize that social and cultural values are shaped in response to challenges that a society or group needs to tackle (This is also where psychology shares common ground with anthropology, but more on that in the next section). Scholars in both disciplines have suggested that value change should be understood in terms of adaptation to social and economic changes. For instance, in psychology, Schwartz and Bardi

(1997) argue that the development and change of value are based on adaptive processes that adjust values to social and political circumstances. In sociology, modernity theory (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005) proposes something similar: that people adapt their values to economic circumstances, particularly when security and survival are threatened.

Psychologists and sociologists are interested in how the social (e.g., social structures and institutions) influences the individual. (As a side note, psychologists and sociologists would also benefit from what anthropologists say about the connection between the individual and the social. More on this in the next section). At least since Rokeach (1968) proposed that values are related to what is individually or socially preferable, psychologists have paid attention to the social dimension of value. For example, consider the functional theory of value (Gouveia et al., 2014), which differentiates values based on personal and social goals. Psychologists could profit from the theoretical resources of sociology and social theory to advance their accounts of how society, in the shape of social structure and social institutions, shapes individual behavior. For instance, a rich body of literature on social structure (Fleetwood, 2008) focuses on how social structure, institutions, and agents relate.

Sociology can also benefit from psychology. Sociologists are interested in how social order is maintained. Part of the explanation includes the role of personal values and how individuals reproduce the values prevalent in their social group. For a fine-grained picture of how individuals internalize and maintain their group's values, it is crucial to consider the psychological mechanisms that mediate between the social and the individual. For sociologists, it is vital to consider the "empirical links found between social structure and individual values" (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004, p. 383). Psychological research can provide these empirical links, and sociologists can learn from psychology about which social situations, and factors, facilitate or hinder value activation and when exactly values play a crucial motivational role. Empirical insights from psychology are relevant for sociologists who want to develop empirically grounded explanations of how social structures and social value systems are reproduced.

6.2   Psychology and Anthropology

Psychologists and anthropologists take complementary perspectives on value, and insights from one discipline can help to advance value theories in the other. For instance, psychologists are interested in how values are internalized, and a complete account of value internalization should pay attention to cultural influences. Moreover, a focus on culture helps to understand how individuals acquire values as members of social groups. Conversely, an anthropological approach to culture and how people behave as group members requires psychological insights into how values constrain social behavior and how values are linked to personality and personal identity.

A crucial overlap between psychology and anthropology is that both seek to illuminate the influence of culture on the individual. For instance, psychologist Meg Rohan (2000) suggests thinking of cultural values as an ideological value system that influences the value formation of the individual. This idea is close to Dumont's proposal to think of values as ideologies. (When we look at the overlap between sociology and anthropology, we will find a similar convergence.)

A significant overlap in the psychological and anthropological approaches to value is that both disciplines strongly emphasize value as a response to (universal) social challenges. Recall that Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodtbeck (1961) argued that value orientations are responses to universal problems that all cultures need to solve. In psychology, Schwartz's theory of value (Schwartz, 2015) and the functional theory of value (Gouveia et al., 2014) include similar claims, namely that values arise as a solution to social coordination problems and that values facilitate the pursuit of social goals.

Psychologists and anthropologists have expressed similar ideas about how values are organized, and there seems to be broad agreement that values are arranged in a hierarchy. For example, in anthropology, Dumont (1980) and Rokeach (1973) proposed that values, or ideas and categories representing values, are hierarchically ordered. In psychology, the Schwartz theory of value (Schwartz, 1992) emphasizes the idea that values are organized in a (personal) hierarchy, and the cultural psychologist

Geert Hofstede (2001) proposed that cultural values form a system and that values are hierarchically ordered.

Psychology and anthropology also embrace corresponding views about how values contribute to individuals' interpretation of social situations. In psychology, Kurt Lewin (1951) was one of the first to claim that values, as abstract ideals, influence how an individual understands a situation and what meaning the situation has for the individual. In anthropology, structuralists, like Dumont, have suggested that cultures are meaning systems comprising categories people use to make sense of the world. Similar points have been made by anthropologists, like Graeber (2005), who link value to social and cultural systems of meaning.

Awareness of the disciplinary overlaps and similarities is essential to work toward an interdisciplinary understanding of value. However, besides similarities, there are also crucial differences, which, if unaddressed, may ensure that disciplines talk past each other. For example, consider the idea that values are organized in a hierarchy. Psychologists think about values primarily in relation to personality, where the value hierarchy is a personal hierarchy. For Rokeach, value hierarchy means the weights individuals give to preferable modes of conduct and end states. Conversely, when Dumont speaks of hierarchy, he means an ordering in terms of 'encompassment' of contrary categories. The differences in the notion of hierarchy illustrate the importance of clarity and that teasing out the differences and similarities is a practical step toward interdisciplinary theorizing.

Most psychologists would acknowledge that people incorporate different social roles and are often confronted with different social domains with varying value implications. So, one idea from anthropology that psychologists could include in their value theories is that there are spheres of value and that within society, there are domains structured by different value hierarchies. Recall Dumont's structuralist theory of value and his claim that social domains have different value hierarchies. Considering this social stratification of the value system could open new avenues for psychological theorizing about the link between personal and social value systems.

Psychological work on value could also benefit from considering anthropological ideas about how values are culturally enacted and

created, for instance through practices and activities that synchronize individual and cultural value systems, like rituals. It could be worthwhile for psychologists to take a closer look at action-oriented approaches in anthropology because they focus on the activities by which values are created, enacted, and circulated in society. Furthermore, to develop their accounts about how individual values are shaped by culture and how the individual internalizes social values, psychologists could draw on anthropological investigations of exemplars, which are "people or institutionalized cultural forms that realize specific values to the fullest extent possible in a given cultural setting" (Robbins, 2018, p. 175).

Most psychologists tend to think about values as abstract entities. However, psychologist Gregory Maio (2016) has pointed out that although values are abstract ideas, an exclusive focus on the abstract would miss important aspects that we need to understand value fully. A complete understanding of values, so claims Maio, must recognize how values are concretely expressed, how they are instantiated and interpreted in concrete situations. Anthropology could help psychology to shed light on these concrete value instantiations and manifestations. For instance, anthropologies' focus on concrete value practices, like rituals and exemplars (Robbins, 2015), could help to broaden the psychological perspective and open psychological theories for the idea that values are not merely 'in the heads' of people but also out in the world.

Anthropology can also benefit from a closer consideration of psychology. Anthropologists could focus more on what psychologists say about the link between self-concept and value because this link could bridge culture and the individual. Ever since Allport and Vernon took inspiration from Adler's suggestion that values are part of the personality (Adler, 1956; Vernon & Allport, 1931), psychology has stressed the link between value, personality, and self-concept. Psychological insights could help anthropologists to develop an account of how cultural values become part of people's personality and self-concept; that is, anthropology could benefit from what psychology has to say about the mechanisms of how people internalize values. Recall that structuralists in anthropology stress the close link between cultural values and structures, which means structures of the human mind or thought processes. Action-oriented approaches, in contrast, focus on human activity as the source of value. A

bridge between these two approaches seems necessary because anthropologists may want to close the gap between cultural values, which is a collective understanding of what is good grounded in mental structures, and personal values that motivate people to act according to these values. Psychology can provide the psychological mechanisms of value internalization that can help to bridge the divide between culture and the individual.

Anthropologists are interested in cultural transformation and value change. For instance, Robbins (2007, 2017) considers cultural change through the lens of values. Psychology could provide anthropologists with some insights into the dynamics of cultural change. In psychology, Bardi and Goodwin (2011), for instance, proposed that value change can happen via an automatic and effortful, more conscious route. Anthropologists could incorporate these insights about psychological mechanisms of value change in their accounts of cultural change, resulting in more fine-grained accounts of the link between culture and value change.

Finally, anthropologists could draw on distinctions from psychology to enhance their conceptual toolbox. For instance, in anthropological accounts of value, it sometimes needs to be clarified whether there is a difference between values, and if there is a difference, what this difference consists of. We have seen that in psychology, a popular idea is to distinguish values by their motivational goals (Schwartz, 1992). In addition, the functional theory of value distinguishes between values based on needs and goals (Gouveia et al., 2014). Anthropologists could take inspiration from these proposals and refine their concept of value.

6.3   Psychology and Philosophy

As far as theorizing about value is concerned, philosophy and psychology only intersect a little. Part of the explanation for this lack of interaction is that the two disciplines are interested in different issues regarding value. Philosophy, for instance, is mainly concerned with metaphysical questions about the nature of value and goodness. Psychologists, in contrast, are more interested in what could be called *valuing*. They focus on what

people find valuable, the attitudes that express values, and the factors influencing what people find valuable.

Despite this difference in outlook, there is overlap between psychology and philosophy. For instance, consider the topic of emotion and value. Influential psychologists like Rokeach and Schwartz have stressed that values are tightly linked to emotions. Many other psychologists also acknowledge that emotions and values are associated (Nelissen et al., 2007) and that emotions are crucial to our moral judgment (Haidt, 2001). To advance theory development about the value-emotion link, psychology could benefit from the re-discovery of neglected thinkers like Max Scheler. To remind you, in the early twentieth century, the philosopher Scheler proposed that we grasp objective value via value-feelings and that different kinds of values are linked to different feelings. Other philosophers, like Hermann Lotze and Wilhelm Windelband, also wrote about the connection between feeling and value. Many philosophers are busy thinking about the link between emotion and value (Christine Tappolet, 2015). A closer exchange between philosophers and psychologists on the connection between emotion and value could help both to advance their theories.

For another point of overlap, consider that most psychologists stress the relation between values and motivation. For instance, many psychologists follow Schwartz's suggestion that values are broad motivational goals (Schwartz, 1992). It is an ongoing debate in philosophy how motivation and value are related. For instance, so-called motivational internalists claim that there is an intrinsic and necessary connection between motivation and moral judgment (Björnsson, 2015). So, when people value justice and judge that an action is just, they are necessarily motivated to act accordingly. Given their overlapping interest in motivation and value (including evaluative judgments), it seems worthwhile that psychologists and philosophers work together to develop an account of how these things hang together.

We considered some overlap in the interests of philosophy and psychology concerning value. We will now look in more detail at some of the blind spots of each discipline and how the other could help to address these.

Philosophy can support psychology in some conceptual housekeeping because the distinctions that philosophers draw could be helpful for

psychology. For instance, it is crucial to distinguish between norms and values. Of course, psychologists are aware of this distinction and have focused on the interplay of norms and values (Maio, 2016, p. 235 ff.). However, a more fine-grained account of what distinguishes norms from values and how they relate to one another could be beneficial. For instance, drawing on the work of philosophers like Bicchieri and Brennan and colleagues (Bicchieri, 2005; Brennan et al., 2013), psychologists could refine their conceptual toolbox and include in their accounts a distinction between moral norms and social norms.

Furthermore, psychologists should introduce more fine-grained categories and distinguish between moral and non-moral values, because they speak about values indiscriminately. Psychologists often talk about values in general terms, and besides some exceptions, like the list of universal moral values that Richard Kinnier and colleagues constructed (Kinnier et al., 2000), psychologists barely references moral values. This seems like an oversight because moral values seem to have a special place regarding people's motivation. So, given that psychologists want to know what motivates people to act and how values influence decision-making, it could be interesting for them to explore the distinction between moral and non-moral values. More generally, philosophy could provide psychology with ideas about distinguishing between moral and non-moral. For instance, one way to distinguish moral and non-moral is to suggest that a distinctive feature of morality is that it is „impartial, but equally concerned with all those potentially affected" (Railton, 1986, p. 189).

It must be stressed that psychologists are very interested in morality and morally relevant phenomena, which brings us to the question of how philosophy can benefit from psychology. Psychology may help philosophy to develop an empirically guided account of morality and what distinguishes moral from non-moral. Take moral psychology, a huge sub-discipline that focuses, amongst other things, on the difference between moral and non-moral construals of a situation (Van Bavel et al., 2012). More generally, philosophy can benefit from empirical psychology because philosophical accounts, especially when they make

assumptions about human psychology, should have empirical adequacy.[2] For instance, Scheler (Scheler, 2014) claimed that some values provide greater satisfaction and that specific feelings correspond to levels of value. Also, recall that philosophers make claims about the link between feelings, emotions, and value. These claims may or may not track what humans feel. Psychology can empirically inform philosophers' intuitions (Hopster & Klenk, 2020) and enrich their armchair perspective.

To remind you, psychological accounts of value draw a close link between the self and values. Looking into these psychological accounts would be interesting for philosophers that focus on personal values and the role of values in people's lives. An example is the recent value-fulfillment account of well-being by Valerie Tiberius. According to Tiberius, for every person, "[…] values form systems of mutual reinforcement and integration that help or hinder their fulfillment" (Tiberius, 2020, p. 40). Psychology could be a valuable resource for philosophers who stress the relationship between values because there are many psychological studies on how values are systematically related.

Lastly, philosophers can learn from psychology and other disciplines to make headway on value change because psychology, sociology, and anthropology have accounts of value change. For instance, as modernization theory and psychological studies of voluntary and involuntary value change attest, the idea that people's values adapt to changing circumstances has traction in sociology and psychology. However, in contrast to scholars in other disciplines, philosophers, with the notable exception of pragmatist philosopher Dewey, have not seriously pursued the idea that values are malleable or adaptive.

---

[2] Psychological investigations may not be relevant for philosophes that want to develop a priori accounts of value that do not include assumption about the human mind.

6.4   **Sociology and Anthropology**

Sociology and anthropology share many similar perspectives on value.[3] For instance, thinkers in both disciplines linked values to challenges and problems that a group or society needs to solve. For instance, in sociology, Pat Hutcheon (1972) thought of values as paradigms to solve social problems. In anthropology, Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodtbeck (1961) proposed that value orientations reflect a group's solution to universal social and cultural problems.

Another crucial overlap between sociology and anthropology is that in both disciplines, the notion of value is supposed to do the heavy lifting in explaining social order and motivation. Parsons (1991), for instance, claimed that shared core values stabilize a society. This perspective chimes well with the ideas of some anthropologists, like Robbins (Robbins, 2018), who propose that culture, understood as shared values, facilitates social order.

Furthermore, sociologists and anthropologists have a common interest in how the group influences the individual, which is crucial in explaining how culture and value facilitate social order. For instance, the sociologist Pat Hutcheon (1972) claimed that group members share a value system, which Hutcheon called the ideological system, which is coupled with the personal value system of the individuals. The anthropologist Dumont (2013) has proposed that individuals are exposed to ideologies, which are systems of 'ideas-and-values', and that these ideologies influence how individuals make sense of the world. Kluckhohn (1951) also made some tentative remarks about how the value system needs to be taken up by the individual. To theorize about the interaction of group and individual, sociology and anthropology could enlist the help of psychology. Recall

---

[3] Anthropologists and sociologists share a similar methodological problem: How can we access value? In sociology, Adler (1956) has claimed that values are only accessible through people's actions and social institutions. Similarly, the anthropologist Kluckhohn (1951) has cautioned that values are often implicit and that people may not be able to lucidly talk about their values, which makes it hard for anthropologists to access them. As a consequence, the values of a society cannot be directly observed but have to be inferred from the observable behavior of people, which begs the question about the causal relation between value and behavior. The problem is aptly expressed by James Spates, who says about values that "we have no logical way of ‚getting back to' them from the data; we cannot say that x causes y when the only indicator we have of x is y" (Spates, 1983, p. 35).

that many psychologists working on value stress that values and personal identity go hand in hand. It could be promising for sociology and anthropology to consider the psychological processes of how individuals internalize collective value systems.

Another similarity between sociology and anthropology is that both disciplines stress value pluralism. Anthropologists are the first to acknowledge that differences in social groups or societies can be cashed out in terms of values.[4] Similarly, sociological authors like Weber and Parsons have stressed the plurality of value spheres and value systems. You may recall that Weber proposed that modern society comprises different spheres or domains that we can identify these by their ultimate values. For instance, the value spheres of politics and economy are characterized by different ultimate values, namely power, and financial gain. The idea that there are different value spheres is echoed in anthropology by Dumont's proposal that there are domains, like the religious or political domain, that are internally structured by different value hierarchies. Combining elements of Weber's account with Dumont's thoughts on value hierarchy could be worthwhile to advance theory building. For instance, Weber stressed that the value spheres have their own internal logic. Here, Dumont's ideas about hierarchization could be used to develop ideas about how the different value spheres are organized and structured.

Sociology and anthropology also have overlapping interests concerning value emergence and how groups maintain their values. Sociologist Emile Durkheim, for instance, claimed that collective experiences, particularly the emotional processes involved, contribute to people's commitment to values. A process that Durkheim called collective effervescence (Durkheim, 2008). Rituals are a collective experience in this sense. Durkheim emphasizes the role of human activity for value, and this echoes ideas of authors within the anthropological action-theory of value, like Turner, Munn, and Graeber, who stress the role of human activity in the maintenance of value.

---

[4] It should be noted here that this focus on values means taking seriously the idea that what groups and societies define as good can differ. For instance, one group may value honor more than another group.

Anthropologists could utilize insights from sociology to advance their accounts of value change. Modernization theory, for instance, claims that people adapt their values to changes in socio-economic circumstances (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Specifically, economic development contributes to an increase in the importance of individualistic values and a decrease in the importance of values related to power and hierarchy. Of course, anthropologists do not ignore external factors of cultural change (Robbins, 2017). Still, it may be worthwhile for anthropologists to consider how value change relates to socio-economic change in more detail. Specifically, anthropologists who are interested in values related to hierarchy and equality (Rio, 2014) could draw on modernization theory and other sociological accounts of how socio-economic change alters power and hierarchy values.

To create a comprehensive picture of how human action is related to the group and culture, anthropologists must pay attention to the factors influencing human decisions. Individual decisions are shaped by cultural factors, but individuals also have particular interests and desires. Social sciences' ideas could benefit anthropological thinking about the macro and micro-level relationship. For instance, recall Chong's (2000) model of individual choice that includes individual factors and cultural and social influences. Personal choice is grounded in interests, social and material incentives, individual dispositions, and values. Bringing incentives and other notions of rational choice into the theoretical mix could enhance the power of anthropological explanations of an individual's action in culture.

Although values have an essential place in the theoretical repertoire of sociology, it is hard to find satisfying proposals of value creation and value commitment. For instance, Parsons proposes that society provides the individual with a set of ultimate values, but he does not address how values are created. The exception is sociologist Hans Joas, who, in his book *Genesis of value* (Joas, 2000), reconstructs and integrates the complementary ideas of crucial social thinkers like Nietzsche, William James, John Dewey, and Emile Durkheim. Going beyond these thinkers, Joas provides his account of value commitment. Values, so Joas, arise from experiences of self-transcendence and self-formation. Self-transcendence refers to situations where individuals have non-routine experiences that force them to expand

their tried-and-true repertoire of actions. Self-formation occurs when individuals reflectively 'renew' themselves based on these non-routine experiences. Sociological proposals, like Joas's, about the emergence of and commitment to value could be enriched by including anthropological insights into value creation and value commitment. What comes to mind here are action-oriented accounts, like Graeber's (2001), that address about how value is continually produced by human social activity, like rituals.

6.5   Sociology and Philosophy

Sociology and philosophy have a rich history of thinking about value, but the overlap between the two disciplines vis-à-vis value is not apparent. However, this does not mean that sociologists are not interested in philosophical issues or that philosophers ignore sociology. On the contrary, as an example, consider questions of social ontology, which are methodologically relevant to social sciences (Epstein, 2015).

It is possible to identify junctures where close interaction between sociology and philosophy would benefit the advancement of value theory in both disciplines. For instance, sociological authors like Hutcheon and Kluckhohn, and pragmatist philosophers, like Dewey, have adopted a perspective that considers values as solutions to (societal) problems. Conceptual work done by philosophers could be interesting for sociologists, whereas sociological accounts about the relation of values and societal problems could inform philosophical theories.

As previously mentioned, there has yet to be a satisfactory account of value change in philosophy. To develop such an account, exploring the sociological idea that values are adaptive and responsive to environmental changes could be worthwhile. Pragmatist philosopher Dewey proposed that values are dynamic and adaptive but account like that could be further refined with the help of sociological ideas. For instance, what could be helpful here is modernization theory (Inglehart, 1997), which proposes that people's values adapt to system-level changes, like economic progress. Notably, individual values seem to respond to how secure survival is.

Furthermore, the link between economic security and value could be interesting for philosophers like Valerie Tiberius (2020), that work on the connection between well-being and value. Similarly, philosophers interested in transformative experiences (Paul, 2015), which are personal experiences that influence how things are valued, could draw inspiration from sociological and psychological accounts of transformative changes. Lastly, it could be worthwhile for philosophers interested in moral change to take seriously the idea that values are adaptive and flexible. For instance, Anthony Kwame Appiah's account of moral change regarding honor (Appiah, 2011) and Robert Baker's theory of moral change (Baker, 2019) could be combined with sociological ideas about the adaptive nature of values.

What can philosophy contribute to sociology? A helpful contribution would be to help with conceptual housekeeping. For instance, Nathalie Heinich (2020) has noted that there needs to be more clarity about value and norms in sociology. To ameliorate this, sociologists could draw on accounts of norms from philosophers, like the proposals developed by Bicchieri or Brennan and collaborators (Bicchieri, 2005; Brennan et al., 2013). Looking into philosophical literature on norms could have two positive effects. First, it can help clear up confusion, and second, it can provide a deeper understanding of how norms relate to values.

A less obvious candidate for what philosophy can offer sociological theorizing about value is that philosophy can help sociologists if they want to think about values in non-moral domains. A considerable part of philosophical value theory concerns morality and moral values. However, philosophers have also considerably focused on non-moral domains, like art and aesthetic values (Sauchelli, 2016). The suggestion is that sociologists who want to concentrate on non-moral values may want to venture into philosophy for inspiration.

6.6   Anthropology and Philosophy

Anthropologists and philosophers have some common interests concerning the issue of value. Both are interested in value monism and pluralism, and some scholars think the disciplines can learn from one another. For instance, In the hope of contributing to anthropology and philosophy, the anthropologist Joel Robbins (2013) applied insights from the philosophical debate regarding value monism and value pluralism to ethnographic research.

Besides value pluralism and monism, philosophers and anthropologists are interested in value (in)commensurability. Anthropologists sometimes stress the distinction between economic value and ethical value. For example, the anthropologist Michael Lambek (2008) argues that ethical and economic values are incommensurable in a capitalist society. Lambek proposes that values are commensurable to one another when we consider them from the perspective of a particular meta-value. Meta-values, however, are incommensurable. This idea of a meta-value could be productively linked to the philosophical discussion about monism and pluralism, particularly Chang's (2004) and Stocker's (1992) ideas about higher-level synthesizing categories and covering values.

Another issue where the interests of anthropology and philosophy overlap is the distinction between fact and value. Some anthropologists reject the separation of fact and value. For example, Dumont dismissed the idea that values and description can be separated. Instead, systems of value combine descriptive and evaluative elements, which Dumont called ideas-and-value (Dumont, 2013, p. 297). In philosophy, Dewey's pragmatist account of value also rejects fact and value dualism. Connecting anthropological ideas and pragmatist philosophy could be worthwhile for anthropologists and philosophers of value.

What inspiration can philosophy draw from anthropology? In many areas, paying attention to anthropology can pay off for philosophers. For instance, moral philosophy can benefit from input from cultural anthropology on topics like moral change and the definition of morality (Klenk, 2019). Moreover, anthropology can enrich philosophical accounts of morality because anthropology focuses on the socially and culturally mediated experience of morality (Robbins, 2007).

Anthropological work could also help philosophers illuminate the relationship between values. Robbins (2013), for instance, suggested that anthropologists could empirically explore value relations, which could then inform philosophical thinking.

Although there is no philosophical account of value change, philosophers are interested in many phenomena of change, like moral change and norm change. It may be helpful for philosophers to look at change through an anthropological lens to acquire a fresh perspective on conceptualizations of change and to increase the empirical adequacy of their accounts. Take the idea that there are different value spheres or domains of value, an idea prevalent in anthropology and sociology. Max Weber suggested that society comprises different domains of value distinguished by different ultimate values. Robbins (2007) combines Weber's ideas with Dumont's (1980) model of social spheres with different value rankings. Philosophers interested in value change could take these ideas as a starting point for exciting questions. For instance, asking whether different value spheres are subject to different kinds of value change could be worthwhile. One idea here is to further develop the accounts of philosophers Martin Walzer and Elizabeth Anderson (Walzer, 2010 (orig. 1985); Anderson, 1995), who both argued that society consists of varying societal spheres with different standards, social meanings, and values.

Let us now turn to what philosophy can contribute to anthropology. Philosophy can supply some conceptual clarity. As an example, take the distinction between fact and value. Like Dumont's concept of 'idea-and-value', the notion of value orientation proposed by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) combines normative and descriptive elements. To refine the conceptual tools for thinking about the relationship between descriptive and normative, anthropologists could turn to philosophy. One idea is to utilize the philosophical distinction between thick and thin concepts. A thin concept is one with only evaluative content, whereas a thick concept combines evaluative and descriptive content (Roberts, 2013). Examples of thin concepts are good and bad; examples of thick concepts are brave and cowardly. The thin-thick distinction could be brought to bear on the anthropological discussions about the distinctions between fact-value and normative-descriptive.

Philosophy also serves anthropology regarding the distinction between value and virtue. Value terms, like beautiful or unjust, are usually used to judge state-of-affairs and objects. Virtue terms, like brave or loyal, are typically used to judge people, particularly their character traits and actions. Values and virtues are sometimes conflated. For instance, the social psychologist Milton Rokeach (1973) distinguishes between terminal values, which are preferred end-states, and instrumental values. Being ambitious or courageous are examples of instrumental values. However, they also describe virtues. The distinction and the relationship between value and virtue are relevant in anthropology, and at least some anthropologists stress that values and virtues should not be conflated (e.g., Lambek, 2008). To develop a clear distinction between value and virtue, anthropology could benefit from philosophical input, and anthropologists could tap into the vast philosophical literature on virtues (Chappell, 2006).

Philosophy can help anthropology to uncover and illuminate theoretical blind spots. For example, norms play a crucial role in anthropological considerations of value because they stabilize social practices of value creation, like rituals. The role of norms, however, is only sometimes explicitly recognized in anthropological accounts of value. For instance, Graeber's (Graeber, 2001) action-oriented approach to value, which focuses on activity and interaction between humans, includes no treatment of norms. Anthropologists who want to focus on norms can draw inspiration from philosophy. For example, in their treatment of norms, Brennan and colleagues (Brennan et al., 2013) proposed an account of the function of norms in social groups, and they also argued for a distinction between social norms and moral norms. Anthropologists could use these philosophical accounts to develop their ideas about the role of norms in value practices.[5]

---

[5] Anthologists may also want to look at the philosophical discussion of moral trendsetters, especially discussions about the role of trendsetters in norm change. The topic of norm- or moral trendsetters seems connected to the anthropological interest in exemplars. Both disciplines may benefit from paying attention to what the other discipline has to say.

6.7   Conclusion: Toward an Interdisciplinary Theory of Value

The book's chapters focused on value theories in psychology, sociology, anthropology, and philosophy. All these disciplines have their unique perspective on value, but this chapter has shown that they have much in common. There is much overlap and the disciplines can also benefit and learn from one another. For instance, a closer interaction can help to address conceptual difficulties and loosen fixed perspectives on value. The hope is that interdisciplinary collaboration between disciplines will improve value theory in all disciplines.

Why do we need an interdisciplinary approach to value? Interdisciplinary research is necessary when a topic or an issue is complex and we have to consider multiple aspects to get the full picture. Issues are multi-faceted when they appear different depending on the perspective you take. Viewers from one perspective see facets and relationships that a viewer from another perspective does not see. Especially phenomena relating to the social world of human interaction transcends disciplinary boundaries, and the topic of value falls squarely in this category.

Interdisciplinarity requires the integration of disciplines that focus on a common, often complex, issue (Holbrook 2013, p. 1897). A comprehensive and interdisciplinary understanding of value, then, requires the integration of different theoretical perspectives and conceptions of value. The various theoretical perspectives on value must be integrated to make headway toward an interdisciplinary theory of value. To make sense of value, we must consider it from a psychological perspective, but value also has a social and cultural dimension, which requires sociological and anthropological theorizing.

How disciplines can be integrated is a contested issue (Holbrook 2013), but a crucial step toward integration is to advance the communication and interaction between the disciplines. Scholars are often not aware of other disciplines' discussions and theories. Because of this lack of awareness, they may miss out on novel concepts, theories, and fresh perspectives. To advance theory building and realize the full potential of all disciplines, the disciplines need to cooperate constructively. Efforts, like joint research projects, workshops, or special issues in journals, are

required to bring together the different fields and make them talk to one another.

Continued communication and contact between scholars of different disciplines will also bridge terminological differences, which helps avoid talking past one another. As the scholar of interdisciplinarity, Julie Thompson Klein, puts it, working towards interdisciplinarity "requires analyzing terminology to improve understanding of phenomena and to construct an integrated framework with a common vocabulary" (Klein, 2005, pp. 43 f.). Hence, developing an interdisciplinary perspective on value requires familiarity with each discipline's relevant concepts and theories but also identifying differences and similarities in terminology. Two disciplines may use the same term, but this does not mean they discuss the same thing. For example, terms like 'hierarchies' or 'structures' of value can have entirely different meanings for anthropologists and psychologists. Awareness of these terminological differences is the first step toward a common vocabulary, which will help establish an integrated framework.

To achieve a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach to value, we also need to pay attention to the hidden assumptions of each discipline. One way to illuminate these hidden assumptions is to critically assess concepts and ideas through the lens of another discipline (Newell, 2001). For instance, anthropological accounts of value make metaphysical assumptions, and philosophy can help to clarify them. Structuralist accounts, for example, "treat values as objective phenomena embedded in cultural structures" (Sommerschuh & Robbins, 2016, p. 1). It is unclear, however, what kind of objectivity structuralists have in mind, and an intimate conversation between anthropologists and philosophers could ameliorate this lack of clarity.[6]

Likewise, an interdisciplinary collaboration with anthropologists could help psychologists to critically assess their 'internalist' assumption, which ties values to individuals but neglects external cultural aspects. When psychologists' accounts of value are examined through an anthropology

---

[6] Although philosophers like Wilhelm Windelband, Heinrich Rickert, and Max Scheler are on the radar of anthropologists (e.g., Sommerschuh & Robbins, 2016), more recent philosophical treatments about the objective existence of value is absent from anthropological discussions.

lens, it becomes clear that psychology does not pay enough attention to the role of culture. For example, consider values as abstract goals, which is an idea that many psychologists subscribe to. When this idea is assessed from the perspective of anthropology, it becomes clear that these abstract goals do not emerge out of thin air but are shaped and maintained by culture. Values have external aspects, and they are related to practices, rituals, and even artifacts.

So, there is much to be done, but it is the hope that this book is a crucial step toward an interdisciplinary understanding of value.

References

Adler, F. (1956). The Value Concept in Sociology. *American Journal of Sociology, 62*(3), 272–279.

Anderson, E. (1995). *Value in Ethics and Economics* (2. print). Harvard University Press.

Appiah, K. A. (2011). *The Honor Code—How Moral Revolutions Happen.* W. W. Norton & Company.

Baker, R. (2019). *The Structure of Moral Revolutions: Studies of Changes in the Morality of Abortion, Death, and the Bioethics Revolution.* The MIT Press.

Bardi, A., & Goodwin, R. (2011). The Dual Route to Value Change: Individual Processes and Cultural Moderators. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 42*(2), 271–287. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022110396916

Bicchieri, C. (2005). *The Grammar of Society: The Nature and Dynamics of Social Norms.* Cambridge University Press.

Björnsson, G. (Ed.). (2015). *Motivational Internalism.* Oxford University Press.

Brennan, G., Eriksson, L., Goodin, R. E., & Southwood, N. (2013). *Explaining Norms* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press.

Chang, R. (2004). Putting Together Morality and Well-Being. In P. Baumann & M. Betzler (Eds.), *Practical Conflicts* (pp. 118–158). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511616402.006

Chappell, T. D. J. (Ed.). (2006). *Values and Virtues: Aristotelianism in Contemporary Ethics.* Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press.

Chong, D. (2000). *Rational Lives: Norms and Values in Politics and Society.* University of Chicago Press.

Dumont, L. (1980). *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications* (Complete rev. English ed). University of Chicago Press.

Dumont, L. (2013). On Value: The Radcliffe-Brown Lecture in Social Anthropology, 1980. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory, 3*(1), 287–315. https://doi.org/10.14318/hau3.1.028

Durkheim, É. (2008). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Oxford University Press.

Epstein, B. (2015). *The Ant Trap: Rebuilding the Foundations of the Social Sciences*. Oxford University Press.

Feather, N. T. (1995). Values, Valences, and Choice: The Influences of Values on the Perceived Attractiveness and Choice of Alternatives. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 68*(6), 1135–1151. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.68.6.1135

Fleetwood, S. (2008). Institutions and Social Structures. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour, 38*(3), 241–265. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5914.2008.00370.x

Florence, Kluckhohn, & Fred, Strodtbeck. (1961). *Variations in Value Orientations*. Row, Peterson and Company.

Gouveia, V. V., Milfont, T. L., & Guerra, V. M. (2014). Functional Theory of Human Values: Testing Its Content and Structure Hypotheses. *Personality and Individual Differences, 60*, 41–47. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2013.12.012

Graeber, D. (2001). *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value*. Palgrave Macmillan US. http://link.springer.com/10.1057/9780312299064

Graeber, D. (2005). Value: Anthropological Theories of Value. In J. G. Carrier (Ed.), *Handbook of Economic Anthropology* (pp. 439–455). Edward Elgar.

Haidt, J. (2001). The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment. *Psychological Review, 108*(4), 814–834. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.108.4.814

Heinich, N. (2020). A Pragmatic Redefinition of Value(s): Toward a General Model of Valuation. *Theory, Culture & Society, 37*(5), 026327642091599. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276420915993

Hitlin, S., & Piliavin, J. A. (2004). Values: Reviving a Dormant Concept. *Annual Review of Sociology, 30*(1), 359–393. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.30.012703.110640

Hofstede, G. H. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions, and Organizations Across Nations* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Holbrook, J. B. (2013). What Is Interdisciplinary Communication? Reflections on the Very Idea of Disciplinary Integration. *Synthese, 190*(11), 1865–1879. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-012-0179-7

Hopster, J., & Klenk, M. (2020). Why Metaethics Needs Empirical Moral Psychology. *Crítica (México D. F. En Línea), 52*(155). https://doi.org/10.22201/iifs.18704905e.2020.1193

Hutcheon, P. (1972). Value Theory: Towards Conceptual Clarification. *The British Journal of Sociology, 23*(2), 172–187.

Inglehart, R. (1997). *Modernization and Post-modernization: Cultural, Economic, and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton University Press.

Inglehart, R., & Welzel, C. (2005). *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*. Cambridge University Press.

Joas, H. (2000). *The Genesis of Values*. University of Chicago Press.

Kinnier, R. T., Kernes, J. L., & Dautheribes, T. M. (2000). A Short List of Universal Moral Values. *Counseling and Values, 45*(1), 4–16. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-007X.2000.tb00178.x

Klein, J. T. (2005). Interdisciplinary Teamwork: The Dynamics of Collaboration and Integration. In S. J. Derry, C. D. Schunn, & M. A. Gernsbacher (Eds.), *Interdisciplinary Collaboration: An Emerging Cognitive Science* (pp. 23–50). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Klenk, M. (2019). Moral Philosophy and the 'Ethical Turn' in Anthropology. *Zeitschrift für Ethik und Moralphilosophie, 2*(2), 331–353. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42048-019-00040-9

Kluckhohn, C. (1951). 2. Values and Value-orientations in the Theory of Action: An Exploration in Definition and Classification. In T. Parsons & E. A. Shils (Eds.), *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Harvard University Press.

Lambek, M. (2008). Value and Virtue. *Anthropological Theory, 8*(2), 133–157. https://doi.org/10.1177/1463499608090788

Lewin, K. (1951). *Field Theory in Social Science: Selected Theoretical Papers*. Harper & Brothers.

Maio, G. R. (2016). *The Psychology of Human Values* (0 ed.). . https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315622545

Miles, A. (2015). The (Re)genesis of Values: Examining the Importance of Values for Action. *American Sociological Review, 80*(4), 680–704. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122415591800

Nelissen, R. M. A., Dijker, A. J. M., & de Vries, N. K. (2007). Emotions and Goals: Assessing Relations Between Values and Emotions. *Cognition & Emotion, 21*(4), 902–911. https://doi.org/10.1080/02699930600861330

Newell, W. H. (2001). A Theory of Interdisciplinary Studies. *Issues in Integrative Studies, 19*(1), 1–25.

Parsons, T. (1935). The Place of Ultimate Values in Sociological Theory. *International Journal of Ethics, 45*(3), 282–316.

Parsons, T. (1991). *The Social System*. Free Press.

Paul, L. A. (2015). *Transformative Experience*. Oxford University Press.

Railton, P. (1986). Moral Realism. *The Philosophical Review, 95*(2), 163. https://doi.org/10.2307/2185589

Rio, K. (2014). Melanesian Egalitarianism: The Containment of Hierarchy. *Anthropological Theory, 14*(2), 169–190. https://doi.org/10.1177/1463499614534113

Robbins, J. (2007). Between Reproduction and Freedom: Morality, Value, and Radical Cultural Change. *Ethnos, 72*(3), 293–314. https://doi.org/10.1080/00141840701576919

Robbins, J. (2013). Monism, Pluralism, and the Structure of Value Relations: A Dumontian Contribution to the Contemporary Study of Value. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory, 3*(1), 99–115. https://doi.org/10.14318/hau3.1.008

Robbins, J. (2015). Ritual, Value, and Example: On the Perfection of Cultural Representations. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, 21*(S1), 18–29. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.12163

Robbins, J. (2017). Can There Be Conversion Without Cultural Change? *Mission Studies, 34*(1), 29–52. https://doi.org/10.1163/15733831-12341482

Robbins, J. (2018). Where in the World Are Values?: Exemplarity, Morality, and Social Process. In J. Laidlaw, B. Bodenhorn, & M. Holbraad (Eds.), *Recovering the Human Subject* (1st ed., pp. 174–192). Cambridge University Press. https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/9781108605007%23CN-bp-9/type/book_part

Roberts, D. (2013). Thick Concepts. *Philosophy. Compass, 8*(8), 677–688. https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12055

Rohan, M. J. (2000). A Rose by Any Name? The Values Construct. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 4*(3), 255–277. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327957PSPR0403_4

Rokeach, M. (1968). A Theory of Organization and Change Within Value-Attitude Systems. *Journal of Social Issues, 24*(1), 13–33. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1968.tb01466.x

Rokeach, M. (1973). *The Nature of Human Values*. Free Press.

Sauchelli, A. (2016). Aesthetic Value, Artistic Value, and Morality. In D. Coady, K. Brownlee, & K. Lipper-Rasmussen (Eds.), *Blackwell Companion to Applied Philosophy* (pp. 514–526). Blackwell.

Scheler, M. (2014). *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik: Neuer Versuch der Grundlegung eines ethischen Personalismus*. Felix Meiner Verlag.

Schwartz, S. H. (1992). Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theoretical Advances and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries. In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 25, pp. 1–65). Elsevier. https://linking-hub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0065260108602816

Schwartz, S. H. (2015). Basic Individual Values: Sources and Consequences. In T. Brosch & D. Sander (Eds.), *Handbook of Value* (pp. 63–84). Oxford University Press. http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198716600.001.0001/acprof-9780198716600-chapter-4

Schwartz, S. H., & Bardi, A. (1997). Influences of Adaptation to Communist Rule on Value Priorities in Eastern Europe. *Political Psychology, 18*(2), 385–410. https://doi.org/10.1111/0162-895X.00062

Sommerschuh, J., & Robbins, J. (2016). Values. *Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. https://doi.org/10.29164/16values

Spates, J. L. (1983). The Sociology of Values. *Annual Review of Sociology, 9*(1), 27–49. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.so.09.080183.000331

Stocker, M. (1992). *Plural and Conflicting Values. Oxford University Press.*. http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/0198240554.001.0001/acprof-9780198240556

Tappolet, C. (2015). Value and Emotions. In I. Hirose & J. Olson (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Value Theory*. Oxford University Press.

Tiberius, V. (2020). *Well-being as Value Fulfillment: How We Can Help Each Other to Live Well*. Oxford University Press.

Van Bavel, J. J., Packer, D. J., Haas, I. J., & Cunningham, W. A. (2012). The Importance of Moral Construal: Moral versus Non-Moral Construal Elicits Faster, More Extreme, Universal Evaluations of the Same Actions. *PLoS ONE, 7*(11), e48693. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0048693

Vernon, P. E., & Allport, G. W. (1931). A Test for Personal Values. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 26*(3), 231–248. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0073233

Walzer, M. (2010). *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality* (Nachdr.). Basic Books.