The informed performer : towards a bio-culturally informed performers' practice

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PART III: The practice of being informed – three bottlenecks

Our investigation is directed at exploring the potential impact of an epistemic and operational framework wherein musical performers' decisions, problem-solving, imaginative, and creative processes are informed not only by traditional and intra-practical information sources such as musical scores, teachers and guiding examples but also by an extended, extra-disciplinary information-base. In Part One, we arrived at delineating the basic contours of such a Generally Informed Performership [GIP], and in Part Two, we identified and discussed three contexts that seem to be conducive to effectuate such an informational turn at the beginning of the 21st century. In this third PART, our attention is on three *difficilitating* elements that regularly and persistently surface in the context of operationalising informed practices. Addressing these bottlenecks directly relates to the 'how?'-question of a Generally Informed Performership.

The relation between theory and practice is a first obstacle (Chapter 9). It resembles the information-imagination dyad that we discussed in PART I but holds a more focused orientation towards the craft-side of performership rather than the artistic/creative side to which 'imagination' is more closely allied. Following a basic presentation of the backgrounds that feed this particular polarity, a pragmatic, processual and triangular model will be introduced and proposed as a way out of this positional conflict. The formulation of a 'Generally Informed Performers' Practice' [GIPP] is the spin-off that concludes Chapter 9. The second bottle-neck (Chapter 10) potentially hindering an effectual information flow between musical practice and extra-disciplinary fields, is the particular organization of the academic field into 'humanities' and the 'sciences' ('two cultures') versus the epistemic organisation and status of musical practice. In the context of the modern system of the arts, music, as an autonomous practice, has tended to isolate itself from the worldly debate by claiming meta-physical and *noumenal* qualities and taking recourse to concepts such as genius and individual taste; if musicians wish to be open for a dialogue with extra-disciplinary expertise, a common epistemic ground is mandatory. It will be argued that from a pragmatic perspective, a bio-cultural understanding of the musical phenomenon is a promising point of departure for establishing such a constructive interaction. Finally, and as already indicated in PART I, a Generally Informed Performership is also in need of a practice-based information system in order to be operational in a practical way, one that structures a chaotic flood of information based on performers' shared concerns (Dunsby, 1995). A discipline-specific attractor model will be proposed as a first step in the direction of systematically developing such an information system for score-based performers.

Chapter 9: Regarding theory and practice

"There is nothing as practical as a good theory" (Lewin, 1964, p. 169).

Connecting the realm of musical practice to a broader field of epistemic enquiry inevitably leads, next to a perceived dualism between information and imagination – as amply discussed in PART I – to another long-standing issue of debate, that of the relation between theory and practice, or between thought and action.

> Integrating thought with action effectively has plagued philosophers, frustrated social scientists, and eluded professional practitioners for years. It is one of the most prevalent and least understood problems of our age. Universities have shunned it on the ground that effective action was too practical or – the best kiss of death – vocational. (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. vii)

In Chapter 7 it was already indicated how the institutional history of music education bears witness to this tenacious tension, and how, in our times, the framework of a European Higher Education Area is committed to transgress the boundaries between theory ('knowledge') and practice ('skills' & 'competences') via the European Qualification Framework. However, the performative act of creating an institutional and educational framework seems to be only one of many elements necessary to bridge an ideological 'gap' that has been pertinent in western culture for centuries. Indeed, and akin to the 'information' and 'imagination' duality, 'theory' and 'practice' are in common parlance strongly linked to distinctive and opposing realms of human activity: 'theory' as tied to man's capacity to abstract, to think and to reflect, and 'practice' as concerned with human action in particular situations.[290] Connecting the two realms, as is implicitly the case in the concept of 'informed practice', therefore poses persistent epistemic challenges that have been copiously explored throughout history, and are a central issue of debate in our time. Within this chapter, theory and practice will be first considered from a definitional and historical perspective (as in Chapters 1 & 3, but in abbreviated form) before turning to scholarship related to professional knowledge and adult learning that offers a pragmatic alternative for a *status quo*.

[290] See 'On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice' (Kant, 1793/1996).

9.1 Territorial understandings

A look at the definitions of 'practice' and 'theory' in the *Oxford English Dictionary* gives us first, general indications about the issue at hand. As far as 'practice' is concerned, at least four meanings are relevant:

- The carrying out or exercise of a profession [def. 1].
- The actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, as opposed to the theory or principles of it; performance, execution, achievement; working, operation; (Philos.) activity or action considered as being the realization of or in contrast to theory [def. 2a]; The action of doing something [def. 2c].
- The habitual doing or carrying on of something [def. 3a].
- Repeated exercise in or performance of an activity so as to acquire, improve, or maintain proficiency in it [def. 4].

In the definitional cluster, links between practice and profession, application, action, and habit are noticeable, as well as a clear opposition between 'practice' and 'theory'.

If, in turn, we look at the definitional perspectives on 'theory' also four significant perspectives can be selected:

- The conceptual basis of a subject or area of study. Contrasted with practice [def. 1a].
- Abstract knowledge or principles, as opposed to practical experience or activity [def. 2].
- A conception of something to be done, or of the method of doing it; a systematic statement of rules or principles to be followed. [def. 3]
- An explanation of a phenomenon arrived at through examination and contemplation of the relevant facts; [def.6a]; More generally: a hypothesis or set of ideas about something [def. 6b].

A paradox can be observed here: although 'theory' is generally contrasted with notions such as 'practice', 'experience', and 'activity', the third definitional perspective [def. 3] suggests that theory is nevertheless closely connected with 'something to be done', a practice in other words; the fourth definition [def.6b] implies that theory follows up on an action (examining, contemplating) or experience. The appearance of the two concepts in each other's definitional spectrum is indicative for an intrinsic relationship that seems to be *prima facie* of a two-way sequential nature: theory is derived from practice or in other cases precedes it. As with information and imagination, these initial and apparent incongruities between opposition and alliance need to be submitted to a closer examination to see if they hold the potential for a (re-)engineering of an integrated conceptual space.

9.2 A short history regarding the standard-view

The identification of two modes of coping, one which is concerned with material change and the other with understanding and explaining invariable environmental forces, thus changing the self as far as ideas is concerned[291] is a basic division that runs through the history of Western thought (Dewey, 1929, p. 3). To meaningfully arrive at a reconfiguration of this traditional doctrine, we must go back to the rough grounds of our Western civilization to find the seminal insights that led to the perception of a gap between these two modes of survival. Indeed, the relation between practice and theory has been debated in philosophy since its beginnings in the Socratic tradition. In pre-Socratic usage, 'theory' is a visual term entailing the action of seeing or observing. A *theoros* [θεωρός] is, next to an envoy sent to consult an oracle, also someone who travels to see men and things.[292]

> Theoria took the form of pilgrimages to oracles and religious festivals. In many cases, the theoros was sent by his city as an official ambassador: this "civic" theoros journeyed to an oracular centre or festival, viewed the events and spectacles there, and returned home with an official eyewitness report. An individual could also make a theoric journey in a private capacity: the "private" theoros, however, was answerable only to himself and did not need to publicize his findings when he returned to the city. (Nightingale, 2004, p. 3)[293]

It is Plato who first draws a parallel between the observer at a theatre and the philosopher, and calls the philosopher a special kind of *theoros*. In Plato's view, theoretical activity is not restricted to the moment the rational contemplation of the Forms; rather, it encompasses the entire journey, from departure to contemplation to return and reportage.

> The philosophic theorist will, when he returns, 'give an account' of his vision which is open to inspection and to questioning. In addition, he will translate his contemplative wisdom into practical and sometimes political activities: theoretical wisdom provides the basis for action. In the good city, moreover, the theoretical philosophers will rule the polis. (Nightingale, 2004, p. 5)

Plato's philosopher is altered and transformed by the journey of *theoria*. He returns as a stranger to his fellow-citizens and brings an alterity into the city by possessing a divine perspective. Notwithstanding the functional relation between theory and practice in Plato, the connotation of 'alterity' to everyday life sets the scene for an epistemic differentiation later in history. It is Aristotle,

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[291] Changing the self 'in idea' is not limited to rational and scientific analysis, but also includes mysticism, metaphysical beliefs and superstition, which all serve the practical purpose of secure well-being within a referential framework or Image of the world.

[292] http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/morph?l=qewros&la=greek#lexicon.

[293] This dual function of theory can serve as a seminal case regarding the distinction between personal theory and formal theory. Personal theory is for personal use and is not in need of reporting back, whereas formal theory is specifically linked to this requirement. From this an analogy can be inferred with regard to the distinction between a Generally Informed Performer, who seeks information for personal use, and an Artistic Information Researcher, who operates in a more systematic manner.

the master of distinctions, who severs the boundaries of practice and theory and more in particular the influence of theory on practice. Aristotle discusses *theoria* in two contexts, as a way of living and as an epistemological category. In both contexts theorizing is presented as an exclusively contemplative activity which may or may not lead to *praxis* (doing, in an ethical sense). *Theoria* is a distinct occupational activity, an end in itself, completely cut off from the social and political realm. For Aristotle, the theoretical way of living [*theoretikos bios*] fulfils the human potential at its best; the ethical/practical life puts the human being also into an independent position but comes second since it does not transcend the contingencies of reality; lowest in hierarchy is *poiesis* (making), an activity that is bound to the pattern of means and ends and therefore evaluated as dependent and coerced by the contingencies of nature and fate. In fact, it can be said that *theory* and *praxis* are both forms of praxis: the praxis and life-style of the theoretician and the praxis and life-style of the practitioner. For this reason "the problem never arises for the Greeks in the sense of a contrast of theory as inactivity to praxis as activity; both are activities that presuppose a high degree of leisure in the sense of being independent of those activities that serve only to sustain life" (Lobkowicz, 1977, p. 16).

The theory-practice relation, however, is not only a distinction between differential different ways of living. As well-known, and already discussed in previous chapters, Aristotle establishes a critical epistemic distinction between *theory* (thinking, the inquiry into the fundamental reason and causes), *praxis* (doing, human action in the realm of ethical-political practices), and *poiesis* (making, the production of things)[294] in the *Nicomachean Ethics* where it is asserted that the end of doing and making is to cause change, whereas the end of *theoria* is knowledge of the object itself; all three classes pertain to the domain of reasoning and are differential forms of rationality. This is different in the opening of the *Metaphysics* [Aristot. Met. 1.980b-1.981b] where Aristotle makes crucial distinctions between knowledge and craft (*technē*) on the one hand, and experience (*empeiría)* on the other, a differentiation that is in our view more fundamental to the theory-practice debate than the one presented in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle's perspective on the relation between theory and experience in the *Metaphysic*s is rendered below, in abbreviated form with punctual reference to the key-words and -concepts in Greek.

[294] Book VI of the Nicomachean Ethics is often referred to as the *locus classicus* where Aristotle sets epistêmê apart from other knowledge forms, *phronēsis* and *technē*. In the Metaphysics and in the Topica too, however, Aristotle makes slightly different distinction by distinguishing between different species of the genus epistêmê. One specified form of epistêmê is theôrêtikê or theoretical, another form is praktikê or practical and a third form is poiêtikê or craft knowledge (Eikeland, 2008, p. 81). So, from a technical perspective and more specifically in relation the term 'theory' reference to the Metaphysics is more accurate with regard to the practice-theory debate.

> The other animals live by impressions [φαντασίαις] and memories [μνήμαις], and have but a small share of experience [ἐμπειρίας]; but the human race lives also by art and reasoning [τέχνῃ καὶ λογισμοῖς]. It is from memory that men acquire experience [ἐμπειρίας], because the numerous memories of the same thing eventually produce the effect of a single experience.[…] Experience seems very similar to science and art [ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ τέχνῃ], but actually it is through experience that men acquire science and art [ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ τέχνῃ] […] Art arises when from many notions gained by experience one universal judgement about a class of objects is produced.
>
> With a view to action experience seems in no respect inferior to art, and men of experience succeed even better than those who have theory without experience. […] But yet we think that knowledge and understanding [εἰδέναι] belong to art rather than to experience, and we suppose artists to be wiser [σοφωτέρους] than men of experience (which implies that Wisdom depends in all cases rather on knowledge); and this because the former know the cause, but the latter do not. […] Hence we think also that the master-workers in each craft are more honourable and know in a truer sense and are wiser than the manual workers, because they know the causes of the things that are done (we think the manual workers are like certain lifeless things which act indeed, but act without knowing what they do, as fire burns, - but while the lifeless things perform each of their functions by a natural tendency [φύσει], the labourers perform them through habit [ἔθος]); […] in general it is a sign of the man who knows and of the man who does not know, that the former can teach […]
>
> It is generally assumed that what is called Wisdom is concerned with the primary causes and principles, so that, as has been already stated, the man of experience [ἔμπειρος] is held to be wiser than the mere possessors of any power of sensation [αἴσθησιν], the artist [τεχνίτης] wiser than the man of experience [τῶν ἐμπείρων], the master craftsman wiser than the artisan; and the speculative sciences [θεωρητικαὶ] to be more learned than the productive [ποιητικῶν].

From the elements that Aristotle presents, we can infer that a continuum rather than a split between theory and practice (as experience) is asserted. The basic building block on which all seems to depend is sensation, then comes memory as a facilitator of experience, which is in turn considered to be a *conditio sine qua non* for knowledge and wisdom (see Fig. 9.1 for an overview and the Greek concepts that are connected to each of the steps)[295]. It is essential however that Aristotle does not include any way back from theory to practice in this model: theory is not considered to generate a beneficial impact on matters that are concerned with the production of particulars via experience.

[295] A special thanks to Dr. R.M. van den Berg (Leiden University, classical languages and cultures) for generously answering questions in relation to the interpretation of Aristotle's Metaphysics.

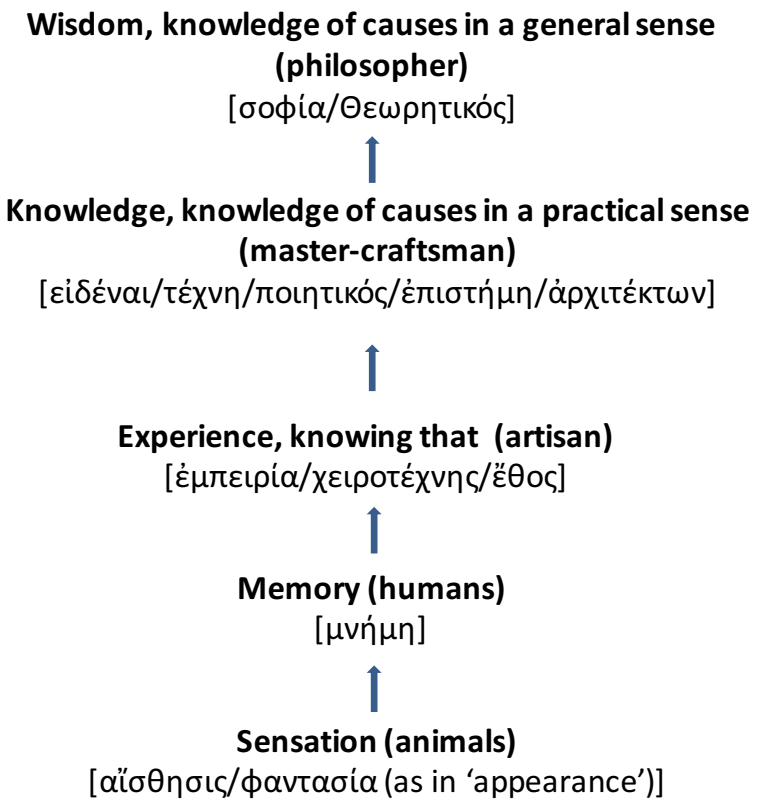

Figure 9.1. The road from sensation to wisdom according to Aristotle.

In the Western history of ideas, the hierarchy between theory and practice as presented by Aristotle changes profoundly with the rise of Christianity. For a Christian, one does not need to be brilliant, a philosopher, in order to achieve wisdom. Acceptance and belief require no sophisticated mental operations; even the illiterate and the enslaved can achieve the Christian equivalent of wisdom: salvation. Theory becomes identified with belief, with faith, as something immutable, a revelation, a truth of human life located outside this earthly existence. Also the unambiguous superiority of contemplative over active life is challenged; for Christians, deeds of charity serve a world which is not the Christian's homestead, and yet they have to be carried out almost as if they were the only thing which really matter: "the Christian emphasis upon charity and love as opposed to mere knowledge has resulted, and from now on evermore radically will result, in an emphasis upon practice as opposed to theory until eventually practice will become the sole source of meaning and salvation" (Lobkowicz, 1967, p. 74).

Theory as a guide to practice, then, is a modern understanding of the theory-practice relationship. It follows from the fact that modern philosophers and scientists, starting from around 1600 CE, claim that their new type of theory is the sole legitimate form, not only of science, but of sound knowledge in general. It is from this perspective that the view takes root that a *scientizing* of human action is

possible and that this impact can be extended and transferred, in a second phase, to the area of production.

> Not only for Descartes and Hobbes but even for Malebranche, Leibniz, and Wolff it goes without saying that the Aristotelian thesis of the impossibility of scientizing praxis or of the ultimately unscientific nature of practical knowledge is based simply on the inadequacy of ancient and medieval theory. (Lobkowicz, 1977, p. 23)

In the scientific era of positivism, the foundational character of theory vis-à-vis practice becomes a powerful idea which is still pertinent in our time (see Chapter 6 on 'scientification'). However, the relation between theory and practice never settles. In 1793 Kant addresses the matter from a pragmatic point of view in 'On the common saying: That may be correct in theory, but it is of no use in practice'[296] (Kant, 1793/1996) and forges a link between theory and practice via the concept of judgement. Kant first defines the terms:

> A sum of rules, even of practical rules, is called theory if those rules are thought as principles having a certain generality, a so that abstraction is made from a multitude of conditions that yet have a necessary influence on their application. Conversely, not every doing is called practice, but only that effecting of an end which is thought as the observance of certain principles of procedure represented in their generality. It is obvious that between theory and practice there is required, besides, a middle term connecting them and providing a transition from one to the other, no matter how complete a theory may be; for, to a concept of the understanding, which contains a rule, must be added an act of judgment by which a practitioner distinguishes whether or not something is a case of the rule. (Kant, 1793/1996, p. 279)

Akin to Aristotle, Kant remarks that certain theoreticians can be at loss in practical situations where an expert opinion is required because of three possible reasons: either because there is no rule available; by lacking an appropriate sense of judgement; or because the theory is still incomplete and needs to be supplemented by engaging in further experiments and experiences, from which to abstract new rules. Kant claims that in the latter case, it is not the fault of theory if it is of little use in practice, but rather of there having been "not enough theory, which the man in question should have learned from experience and which is true theory even if he is not in a position to state it himself and, as a teacher, set it forth systematically in general propositions" (Kant, 1793/1996, p. 279). Kant concludes that theory is a *condition sine qua non* to reach a level of practical proficiency in a science; experimenting and experiencing without putting together certain theoretical principles or considering a systematic framework will not take anyone further than theory could take him.

The connection between theory and practice is not settled with Kant. In his monumental *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences* from 1840, polymath William Whewell dedicates a chapter on the relation

[296] [*Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis*].

between theory and practice, entitled 'of Art and Science' [vol.2, part II, book XI, chapter 8]. Whewell challenges the common opinion that Art[297] is the application of Science to the purposes of practical life. He maintains that the Arts of life already appear when, as yet, nothing of science exists and infers from this observation that it is impossible to imagine that *every* art has been preceded by the science which renders a reason for its processes. According to Whewell, the object of Science is *Knowledge*; the object of Art are *Works*; Art is satisfied with producing its material results whereas in science the operations of matter are interesting only so far as they can be embraced by intelligible principles. There are many acts that can be performed by the guidance of nature and under the impulse of an unknown principle which Whewell calls *Instinct*, without seeing or seeking the reason why he does so. However, when man's speculative nature seeks and finds the reasons why he should act in a particular way, then they are performed by the aid of a different faculty, called *Insight.* Art, according to Whewell is separate from Instinct because of its progressive character but also not essentially combined with Insight. Whewell concludes that Art, in its earlier stages at least, is widely different from Science, independent of it, and anterior to it. At a later period, Art may borrow aid from Science (Whewell, 1840, pp. 271–277).

Further in the 19th century we find influential views that challenge the hierarchy between theory and practice, notably in Karl Marx's *Historical Materialism*, and in the 20th century, where phenomenologists such as Merleau-Ponty aim at uncovering of a pre-theoretical and pre-objective layer of experience as a basis for knowledge. We will not present a full report on these evolutions in modern and post-modern times here[298], rather, our focus will be on a particular perspective that holds the promise of functionally and pragmatically integrating theory and practice. Retrospectively, Bacon is among the first to articulate that ambition; he claims that theoretical knowledge has to prove itself by 'fruits and works' (Lobkowicz, 1967, p. 89) and should be judged in terms of, and pursued for the sake of, its practical usefulness: "truth is shown and proved by the evidence of works rather than by argument, or even sense" (quoted in Lobkowicz, 1967, p. 90). Bacon's seminal insight is of little influence on his contemporaries but the idea then resurfaces at the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century within the context of pragmatism.

9.3 A processual and pragmatic approach: inquiry, experience, habit, belief

In 1878 philosopher and mathematician Charles Saunders Peirce formulates the optimal way of 'attaining clearness of apprehension', also known as the pragmatic maxim: "Consider what effects,

[297] Art is still used in its meaning of craft in this text.
[298] See Lobkowicz (1967) for an extensive historical analysis from Aristotle to Marx.

that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object"[299] (Peirce, 1878). The background for a pragmatic conceptualization of the relation between theory and practice is the dissolution of the contemplative ideal of the relation between subject and object, and the advancement of a new way of knowledge development. Whereas rationalists form knowledge by the exercise of reason, and empiricists rely on sensory experiences, pragmatists emphasize the experimental nature of certain forms of experience: one tries something out and finds that it either works or fails, whatever the case may be (*fallibilism*). In the view of Dewey, traditional epistemologies, whether rationalist or empiricist, make too sharp a distinction between thought, the domain of knowledge, and the world of fact to which thought is directed. In these knowledge systems thought is believed to exist in a separate realm, as the object of awareness and as a unique aspect of the self. The commitment of modern rationalism to a doctrine of innate ideas, as well as the empiricist commitment to an introspective methodology and a representational theory of ideas, has, according to Dewey, effected this dichotomy. This epistemic state of affairs holds evident problems with regard to the relevance of thought (theory) to the world of practice: if thought constitutes a domain that stands apart from the world, how can it ever be accurate about that world? It is as an answer to this question that pragmatists develop a new model of understanding.

The pragmatist answer is strongly informed by an evolutionary perspective[300] which considers human life as being continuous with — and not in opposition to — the natural and physical world; pragmatists emphasize action, interaction, integration, and adaptation between organism and environment as a basic procedure in life. A change of situation might necessitate a change of performance in order for it to be successful, thereby perhaps changing also the associated knowledge and beliefs. This practical view on knowledge implies that there is nothing other than the practice itself – there may even not be an generalizable truth or an empirical reality underlying it (Jarvis, 1999, pp. 41–42). Instead of purely contemplating the object of knowing, the knower is considered from an action and production point of view, which is prior to the theoretical relation of the knower and the known. Dewey summarizes the pragmatist analysis and a new project for philosophy in *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (Dewey, 1920):

> The division of the world into two kinds of Being, one superior, accessible only to reason and ideal in nature, the other inferior, material, changeable, empirical, accessible to sense-observation, turns inevitably into the idea that knowledge is contemplative in nature. It assumes a contrast between theory and practice which was all to the disadvantage of the latter. But in the actual course of the development of science, a tremendous change has come

[299] http://www.peirce.org/writings/p119.html.

[300] The pragmatists were all strongly influenced by Charles Darwin, whose *Origin of Species* was published in 1859.

> about. When the practice of knowledge ceased to be dialectical and became experimental, knowing became preoccupied with changes and the test of knowledge became the ability to bring about certain changes. Knowing, for the of experimental sciences, means a certain kind of intelligently conducted doing; it ceases to be contemplative and becomes in a true sense practical. Now this implies that philosophy, unless it is to undergo a complete break with the authorized spirit of science, must also alter its nature. It must assume a practical nature ; it must become operative and experimental. (Dewey, 1920, p. 121)

The focus on experience as the *locus* of meaning and inquiry is an extension of this insight which eventually leads to an anti-dualist stance, rejecting any separation between body and mind, emotion and reason, thinking and doing, and practice and theory. Pragmatism advances a processual world-view, where the individual is constantly reacting to and reflecting on the consequences of its interactions with the environment. Within such a context, experience is the ongoing transaction of organism and environment aiming at a subsequent state of affairs thought to be more desirable. "Since the reality of objects cannot be known prior to experience, truth claims can be justified only as the fulfilment of conditions that are experimentally determined, i.e., the outcome of inquiry" (Audi, 1999, p. 730). In pragmatic philosophy, pure theorizing — the Platonic-Aristotelian '*theoria*' — is not completely banned or absorbed by practice, but by radically functionalizing theory, it is made less powerful and deprived of its foundational purpose (Gimmler, 2004); (scientific) knowledge is instrumental and inherently fallible, a tool for organizing experience satisfactorily. It is in the process of 'inquiry' that these ideas are most clearly formulated.

'Inquiry' is the method for arriving at beliefs about the world (not absolute truths) in a disciplined and self-controlled way. A canonical statement is found in Peirce's classic paper 'The Fixation of Belief' (Peirce, 1877). According to Peirce, inquiry is a 'struggle' to replace doubt with 'settled belief' which in turn leads to the settlement of a habit, a rule of action, a tendency to act in certain ways in certain situations of a similar nature. The goal of thought is thus to create, via beliefs, habits of action (Gavin, 2008, p. 354). The relation between experience, habit[301], inquiry and belief can be summarized as follows: when experience conflicts with an inquirer's settled belief, (s)he is immediately thrown into doubt and doubt essentially involves a struggle to escape. Inquiry is that struggle to regain belief and to install new habits of action (Misak, 2008, p. 75). See Fig. 9.2.

[301] Philosopher and pioneering psychologist William James zooms in on 'habits' in chapter 4 of *The Principles of Psychology* (1890, pp. 104–127). To James, creatures are 'bundles of habits' that are malleable via plasticity: "Plasticity […] means the possession of a structure weak enough to yield to an influence, but strong enough not to yield all at once. Each relatively stable phase of equilibrium in such a structure is marked by what we may call a new set of habits" (James, 1890, p. 105). Habit economizes the discharge of nervous and muscular energy. While we are inattentive to actions carried out through habit, we become immediately aware of them if something goes wrong (James, 1890, p. 121).

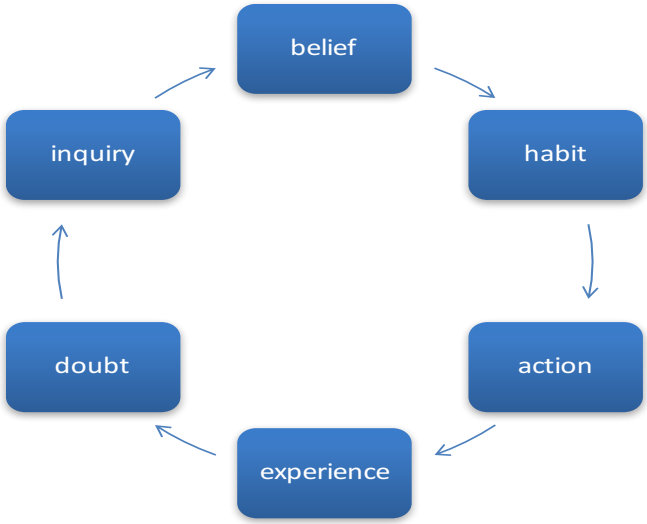

Figure 9.2. Peirce's pragmatist circle.

Peirce argues moreover that the only method of inquiry that can make sense of our struggles with inconsistent beliefs is the scientific approach. Science reveals how hypotheses can be subject to experimental tests: a knower is an agent, who makes experimental interventions in the world in order to obtain empirical support for held beliefs and learns from the experiences that actions and interventions elicit (Hookway, 2016).

Dewey's conception of reflection and inquiry, found in *How We Think* (Dewey, 1910) and *Logic: the Theory of Inquiry* (Dewey, 1938) builds on the same principles: inquiry begins with a problem that arises from 'an indeterminate situation'; inquiry then aims for "the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole" (Dewey, 1938, pp. 104–105). Whereas Peirce aims at 'fixing' belief, Dewey considers the situation as being indeterminate and in need for transformation via inquiry. By this, Dewey challenges the common assumptions that all that changes are our beliefs about the situation. In his view, also the situation itself is transformed: we begin in a situation where we do not know our way around based on our habits, and inquiry comes to an end when we do. The 'pattern of inquiry' that Dewey describes is common to practical problem solving: it transforms and evaluates the features of the situations in which we find ourselves; it is a *modus operandi* grounded in adaptive responses of pre-human organisms to their environments in circumstances that check efficient activity in the fulfilment of basic needs. What is distinctive about intelligent inquiry however is that "it is facilitated by the use of language, which allows, by its symbolic meanings and implication relationships, the hypothetical rehearsal of adaptive behaviours before their employment under actual, prevailing conditions for the

purpose of resolving problematic situations" (Field, n.d.). Dewey captures concept of inquiry in logically distinct steps (Dewey, 1910, p. 72):[302]

1. A felt difficulty
2. Its location and definition
3. Suggestion of possible solution
4. Development by reasoning of the consequences and bearings of the suggestion
5. Further observation and experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection; that is, the conclusion of belief or disbelief.

Inquiry begins thus with a problematic situation, a situation where instinctive or habitual responses of the human organism to the environment are inadequate for the continuation of ongoing activity in pursuit of the fulfilment of needs and desires. The second phase of the process involves the isolation of the data or subject matter which defines the parameters within which the reconstruction of the initiating situation must be addressed. In the third, reflective phase of the process, the cognitive elements of inquiry (ideas, suppositions, theories, etc.) are entertained as hypothetical solutions to the originating impediment of the problematic situation, the implications of which are pursued by reasoning in the abstract. The final test of the adequacy of these solutions comes with their employment and observation in action and experiment. If by a reconstruction of the antecedent situation fluid activity is achieved, then the solution no longer retains the character of the hypothetical that marks cognitive thought; rather, it becomes a part of the new circumstances of life.

The error of modern epistemologists, as Dewey sees it, is that the reflective stages of this process have been isolated into pre-existing constituents and as guides for an incorrigible foundation of knowledge. For Dewey, however, any proposition accepted as an item of knowledge has this status only provisionally, contingent upon its adequacy in providing a coherent understanding of the world as the basis for human action. Both Dewey and James argue that the traditional correspondence theory of truth, according to which the true idea is one that corresponds to reality, only begs the question of what exactly the correspondence of idea with reality is. They maintain that an idea agrees with reality, and is therefore true, if and only if it is successfully employed in human action in pursuit of human goals and interests, that is, if it leads to the resolution of a problematic situation. Dewey introduces 'warranted assertiblity' to describe the distinctive property of ideas that results from successful inquiry (Dewey, 1938).

In the pragmatist framework theory becomes an instrument in reconstructing an indeterminate and unsatisfactory practical situation, the adjoining beliefs and habits, and experience. Instead of being

[302] For a full exposition of 'the pattern of inquiry' see *Logic: the Theory of Inquiry* (Dewey, 1938, pp. 101–119).

separated fields of expertise, theory and practice are allies in a process of surviving, coping and imagining new conditions for experience.

In the following section, it will be examined how contemporary scholarship further operationalizes a pragmatic integration between theory and practice by the inclusion of 'personal theory'.

9.4 Personal theory in a triangular model.

In scholarship related to professional knowledge and adult learning (Polanyi, 1958; Carr, 1980; Usher & Bryant, 1989; Schön, 1983; Jarvis, 1999) 'personal theory' (Jarvis, 1999), or 'informal theory' (Usher & Bryant, 1989; Usher, Bryant, & Johnston, 1997), is presented as a specific way out of the theory-practice dualism. Since this area of scholarship has barely reached the discourse of artistic practice in an explicit manner[303], we briefly outline the backgrounding framework.

Professional education scholars that work within a pragmatist tradition – and are usually abundantly referring to the work of Schön, Polanyi and Ryle – use the notion of 'personal theory', or an equivalent of it, to challenge the modernist view that theory is privileged as 'real' knowledge, whilst practice, seen as consisting merely of skills, is taken to be the application of that knowledge for the solving of problems (Usher & Bryant, 1989, p. 71). They thereby primarily target curricula that are hierarchically organized into: 1/ theoretical studies based on 'foundational disciplines'[304]; 2/ professional studies; and 3/ supervised practice. The overall aim is to situate and define a spectrum of differential knowledges (tacit, practical, propositional, formal, informal), to make their boundaries permeable, and to forge a fruitful cooperation between them without regressing into a dualist trap.

An important element that is called in support of such a pragmatist-inspired view is the underdetermination of practice by theory. Practical judgements are always made in conditions and concrete situations of 'bounded rationality' where theoretical knowledge is often incomplete and inadequate to fully understand practice situations. To pragmatists, this is a logical consequence of the fact that theoretical knowledge aims at being impersonal and universal, and is focused on explaining the world, not on acting on it and in it (Usher & Bryant, 1989, p. 75). However, while theory seems to be unable to account for practical decisions, that does not imply a total banishment from the practical realm, at least not in the view of professional education theorists. It is in the justification of practical judgements that theoretical knowledge is granted a pivotal role. The limitation however is that, since the justification itself requires a judgement as to which 'bits' of theoretical knowledge are relevant to the particular practice situation, the answers to these questions cannot be found in theoretical

[303] The work by art theorist Grete Refsum, who refers to 'personal theory' in the field of design, is a notable exception (Refsum, 2009).

[304] Foundational disciplines are the academic disciplines that serve as a basis for professional activity; anatomy, for example, is foundational for medical professions, mathematics for engineering.

knowledge itself. They require a process of deliberation and interpretation which is an essential aspect of judgement and action in practice situations. It is an element that must be found within practice itself.

9.4.1 Practical knowledge

From this limitation on theoretical knowledge follows the need for a category of practical knowledge. By practical knowledge is meant the practitioner's own knowledge that has been pragmatically legitimated in and through practice. In this process, the practitioner develops her/his own personal and qualitative ways of doing things in accordance with her/his own values, beliefs, and feelings. Jarvis (1999, pp. 45–49) sketches the contours of practical knowledge by asserting that it is a combination of:

- Process knowledge ('knowing-how')
- Content knowledge (provided by the academic/foundational disciplines that underly practice)
- 'Tacit knowledge' ("one knows more than one can tell")
- Beliefs and values

Practical knowledge is the basis for assessing the relevance of theory and gains performative impact if the implicit assumptions and routines are made explicit via a process of reflection. Although practical knowledge is primarily driven by the demands of practice, it combines learning from doing and thinking about practice with learning from other information sources, such as content knowledge learned from foundational disciplines or extra-disciplinary knowledge.

9.4.2 Personal theory

It is from the interaction with these forms of theory that the notion of 'personal theory' surfaces as a more specific concept[305]. The *ratio legis* for advancing this type of 'theory' in practice situations is related to the fact that action always involves intentionality.

> Intentions are embedded in conceptual frameworks which are referred to as 'informal theory'. The argument is that practice presupposes that the practitioner has an informal theory. If 'theory' is interpreted in this sense, then the relationship between theory and practice is not contingent but conceptual, i.e. necessary. Informal theory becomes a condition of practice. (Usher et al., 1997, p. 133)

Here, an intrinsic alliance between practice and theory is forged as it was already suggested from the first territorial analysis (see 9.1). With this notion of personal theory, it is the inseparability rather than the duality of theory and practice which is emphasised. Personal (or informal) theory is considered to

[305] There is a variety of concepts that come close to the meaning of 'personal theory' (tacit or personal knowledge) but it is the presence of the term 'theory' that is of particular interest to us here.

be an intrinsic part of the experiential world of practitioners (and humans at large), it is a kind of knowledge that we all have and use in particular situations; it is not abstract and decontextualized, yet equally is not merely intuitive and unsystematic. It is situated theory both entering into and emerging from practice.

9.4.2.1 The functions of personal theory

From a functional perspective personal theories are primarily concerned with enabling practitioners to work within the concrete, segmental situations in which they find themselves, by relating their activities to both what is desirable and what is possible within those circumstances, and to assess the outcomes of their activities in the light of these considerations. Since without such a 'theory', practice would be random and purposeless, it can be said that personal theory 'forms' practice. It enables practitioners to make sense of what they are doing (Usher & Bryant, 1989, p. 80).

A second function attributed to personal theory is its contribution to the identification of problems. In practice situations, finding the problem requires 'problem-setting' as a prerequisite of any kind of problem-solving, and problem-setting requires a framework to 'understanding' the practice situation; an 'understanding' which is not derived from abstract theory or general principles but is situational and action-oriented (Usher & Bryant, 1989, p. 81).

Thirdly, personal theory allows for the development of a situational repertoire which helps the practitioner to cope with different kinds of problematic situations; this repertoire enables the new and unfamiliar to be related to similar but different situations successfully handled in the past. Every practice situation, therefore, potentially enables an extension and reconstruction of the repertoire.

9.4.2.2 The weaknesses of personal theory

There are also some inherent weaknesses attached to relying on personal theories in this form.

Firstly, because these theoretical preconceptions are largely the product of habit, precedent and tradition they are rarely formulated in any explicit way or informed by any clearly articulated process of thought (Usher & Bryant, 1989, pp. 84–85). The essentially and, to a large extent idiosyncratic and implicit nature of personal theories, inhibits in some cases collegial dialogue about efficacy and leads to discussions that get bogged down in endlessly repetitious arguing.

Secondly, the most common function of personal theory is to eliminate practice problems rather than improve practice; the concern is with 'fire-fighting' rather than 'fire-prevention'.

Thirdly, as business theorist Chris Argyris and Schön claim (Argyris & Schön, 1974), people seem to act according to two theories of action; one theory of action is the theory-in-use and is the tacit companion to our actual behavior while the second theory of action, espoused theory, is the account that is

publically communicated and formulates a 'practically correct' version of one's doings[306]. With the presence and interference of these two personal theories of action, confusion and misinterpretation becomes very likely.

Fourthly, informal theory tends to tap only the most immediate and obvious causes, and explanations may be of a simple, linear kind rather than multiclausal or interactive. It follows that personal theory can be limited in the scope and depth of the reflection which it is able to incorporate.

And finally, inseparably as it is in practice, personal theory as it is ingrained into everyday routines may impede reflection and critical scrutiny, and stimulate an unquestioned traditionalism.

9.4.2.3 The role of theory in a process of reflection

The answer of professional education researchers to these weaknesses is quasi-invariably the inclusion of some kind of reflection in practice, allowing the practitioner to objectify personal theory and to stay open to change and not merely trying to cope in routine and habitual ways. Reflection-in-action involves looking to our experiences, connecting with our feelings, and attending to our theories in use. It entails building new understandings to inform our actions in the situation that is unfolding.

> The practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique. He reflects on the phenomenon before him, and on the prior understandings which have been implicit in his behaviour. He carries out an experiment which serves to generate both a new understanding of the phenomenon and a change in the situation. (Schön, 1983, p. 68)

Within this context of reflection-in-action, contemporary scholars have repositioned the role of formal, disciplinary theory (Usher & Bryant, 1989, p. 92) and of information that originates from a variety of sources, which in this context is called formal theory or metatheory.

> [Metatheory] is information stemming from the academic disciplines and driven by the internal logic of the discipline rather than by the exigencies of practice. There are two elements to metatheory. The first is the content knowledge for practice, learned by studying the academic disciplines that underlie practice […] Then there is the knowledge about the profession or occupation, based in academic disciplines such as sociology, philosophy, and economics; The latter makes no pretence of being applicable to practice but it tends to contextualize it. The learning is cognitive, but it may be useful information when the practice as a whole is in the spotlight. (Jarvis, 1999, p. 146)

The notions of 'metatheory' and 'formal theory' come close to our understanding of extra-disciplinary information (or extra-practical information in this case) and are valued because they provide a critical

[306] When someone is asked how he would behave under certain circumstances, the answer he usually gives is his espoused theory of action for that situation. This is the theory of action to which he gives allegiance, and which, upon request, he communicates to others. However, the theory that actually governs his actions is this theory-in-use (Argyris & Schön, 1974, pp. 6–7).

perspective which allows a process of continual reassessment and review of personal theory in a socio-practical field.

> One way of formulating a possible relationship between formal and personal theory is by using the notion of 'review'. This involves accepting that the purpose of formal theory is representation and explanation, and that of informal theory Is judgement, interpretation, and understanding; the relationship between theory and practice is then not one where the former is 'applied' to the latter, but where representations and explanation can assist judgement, interpretation, and understanding. (Usher & Bryant, 1989, p. 93)

Formal theory can be a useful tool or resource by providing a means to view practice in a different way and hence to reformulated the problem. Here, theory is not applied to practice; rather, the process can be conceptualized as one where practice is reviewed through theory.

> The place of formal theory can be seen as a component in a process of dialogical engagement; the existence of practice problems indicates a failure of informal theory, and resolution requires an engagement of informal theory with something outside itself […] the dialogical engagement is therefore constituted by the mutual interaction of formal and informal theory, the resolution being an emergent synthesis. A resolution where formal theory overwhelms informal theory would only be apparent, since it could not suggest situated action appropriate to practice. Equally, the overwhelming of formal theory would again only lead to an apparent resolution, since the latter would be but a reformulation of the other. (Usher & Bryant, 1989, p. 94-95)

Educational philosopher Wilfred Carr also formulates this dialogical relation:

> The relationship of theory and practice is not one of applying theory to practice; nor is it a matter of deriving theory from practice. Rather by recovering self-reflection as a valid category of knowledge, the critical approach interprets theory and practice as mutually constitutive and dialectically related. The transition is not from theory to practice or practice to theory, but from irrationality to rationality, from ignorance and habit to knowledge and reflection. (Carr, 1986, p. 183)

Finally, we are also reminded of McLuhan's saying that "we do not know who discovered water [but] it was almost certainly not a fish. Anybody's total surround, or environment, create a condition of non-perception" (quoted in Lukasiewicz, 1994, p. xxi). The added-value of theory in practice is that it places habits, automatisms, routines in another perspective and opens them for new elements and change.

9.4.2.4 Defining the role of personal theory in the practitioner-researcher's action cycle

We can now come to integrating the various aspects that are involved. Fig. 9.3 (apart from the dotted lines) is based on the framework that Jarvis develops in *The Practitioner-Researcher* (Jarvis, 1999, p. 133); it represents an action-cycle[307] where the dual implication of theory (theory as

[307] Learning theorist David Kolb (Kolb, 1984) argues along similar lines constructing a cycle that involves: 1.

information/personal theory) is incorporated: 1/ a practitioner enters a work situation [practice situation 1]; 2/ learns and reflect on the practice; 3/ incorporates into the reflection any formal or meta-theory in the context of review; and 4/ learn and develop her/his own personal theory which is then tested. We added two dotted lines as an answer to the following questions:

1. Is it always necessary for personal theory to be impacted by meta-theoretical information via reflection on practice or can there be an immediate line between personal theory and meta-theory? Or in other words, is the sole function of meta-theory to justify and to review reflections in and on practice? We understand that from a pragmatic point of view, and in order to make that point, any reference to technical rationality is banned. From the investigation in PART I however, we can deduce that information is not limited to justification, problem-setting and reviewing and does not always originate from a cognitive gap or an information need in a practical situation. One of the impacts of information can be that the practitioner is a novice in a particular area and has never thought of a certain solution or has never heard about it. In such cases, meta-theoretical information is directly related to personal theory.
2. Do the reflections of practitioners become part of the field of meta-theory, once they are verbally articulated? In a context of dialogue, as it is envisaged by pragmatically oriented education theorists, it seems only logical that the fruits of reflections become integrated in a meta-theoretical galaxy.

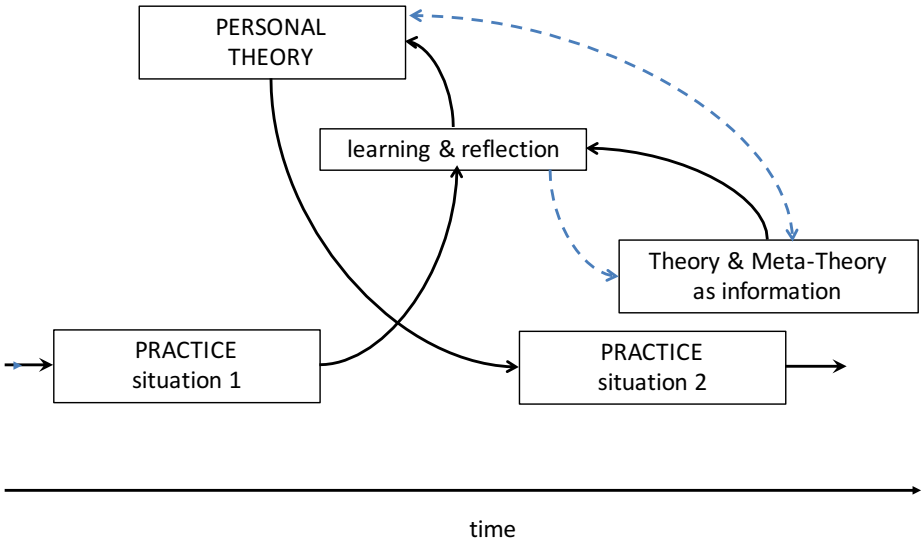

Figure 9.3. An action cycle involving personal theory and meta-theory (Jarvis, 1999, p. 133).

Next to adding two extra, dotted lines, there is another element that can be taken into consideration in extending the primary relation as represented in Fig. 9.4. In the assessment of evidence-based

concrete experience; 2 reflective observation; 3. abstract conceptualization; and 4. active experimentation.

health care public health researchers John Gabbay and Andrée le May (Gabbay & le May, A., 2004; Gabbay & le May, 2011) observed that health professionals do not go through the steps that are traditionally associated with the linear-rational model of evidence based practices. Rather than directly accessing new knowledge in the literature or from the internet and other written sources, the practitioners nearly always took shortcuts to acquiring what they think would be the best evidence base by consulting nearby and trustworthy sources (magazines, professional networks, colleagues). Gabbay and le May call the knowledge thus acquired 'mindlines'; collectively reinforced, internalized tacit guidelines, which are informed by brief reading and mainly by interactions with colleagues, opinion leaders, patients, and pharmaceutical representatives and with other sources of largely tacit knowledge. Based on the indications that we collected in PART I with regard to the information behaviour of practitioners, we may then come to the model in Fig. 9.4 where the element 'peers, colleagues, opinion leaders' is added to the informational realm and gives rise to the personal theory and mindlines.

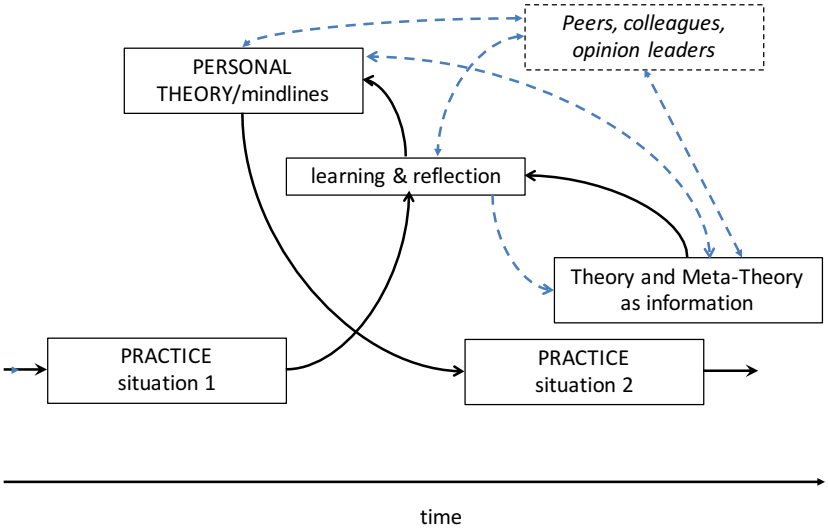

Figure 9.4. An extended action cycle including intra-practical references.

It might be clear by now that the 'solution' that is presented here with regard to the theory-practice divide is strongly reminiscent of the one that we configured in relation to the information-imagination duality, and also allows for topologically situating the differentiations that we proposed in Chapter 8 with regard to three archetypes of practitioners (the creative artist, the reflective practitioner and the informed practitioner). If we 1/ substitute 'personal theory' by 'Image'; 2/ add to 'learning and reflection' the notion of 'experience'; 3/ explicitly mention extra-disciplinary information as part of 'meta-theory'; 4/ consider experiment as a part of practical doing; and 5/ include all the parallel languages that we have mentioned so far, then we come to an overview such as in Fig. 9.5.

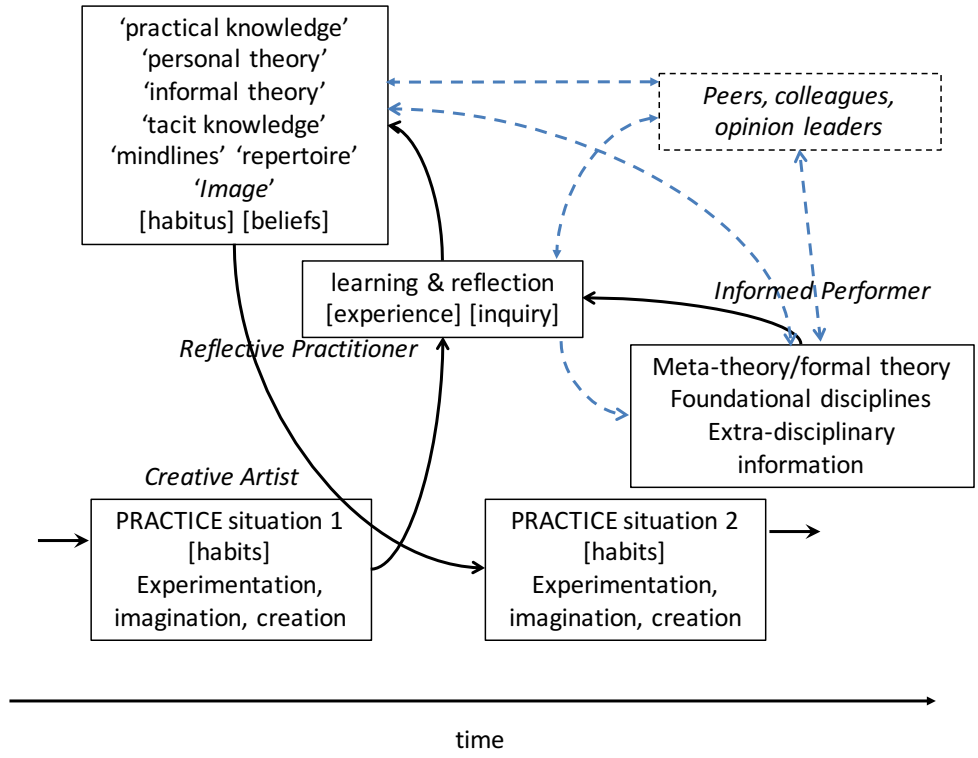

Figure 9.5. An integrated action cycle.

If we finally bring the considerations, sketched above, back to the concreteness of musical performance, we have to be aware of the crucial fact that the idea of 'personal theories' is tailored to practices that can be easily linked to foundational disciplines and thus to fields of expertise where the 'danger' of technical rationality is prominently present. As already remarked in Chapter 8, the practice of musical performance does not fit that particular profile since it does not include such foundational disciplines – at least not in the sense that for instance biology is foundational for medicine. There are professional schools of music or conservatories where performers learn their craft/art mainly via instruction by a master, or even succeed at reaching a high level of performance solely via the mechanism of individual score-based 'deep learning'. However, in our view, these particularities do not compromise the existence and prominence of personal theories in music performance. Personal theories are for instance indirectly referred to by Borgdorff who includes an 'immanent perspective' as one of the possible relations between theory and practice:

> There is […] no such thing as 'innocent' practice. Practices are 'sedimented spirit' (Adorno). Action theory, phenomenology, and philosophy of science have taught us that every practice, every human action, is infused with theory. Naive practice does not exist in this respect. All practices embody concepts, theories, and understandings. (Borgdorff, 2012, pp. 20–21)

More concretely, anyone who has ever been involved in collectively judging performances (be it at an exam or competition) will have experienced discussions that do not have the accomplishments of the

candidate as their intentional object but rather the 'personal theories' of members of the judging committee. In fact, we could say that musical practice is pervaded by personal theories.

The main difference between the general framework that we presented above and the field of score-based performance is, in our opinion, the quasi-non-existence of foundational disciplines in the music performance curriculum. This does not need to imply an abolishment of a category of 'meta-theory' but rather an unusual focus on extra-disciplinary information instead of foundational disciplines. within the context of a Generally Informed Performership, as discussed in PART I and taking into account the foregoing considerations, we can proceed to formulating a discipline-specific understanding of 'personal theory'.

In score-based performance, personal theory refers to a systematic and transmissible understanding gained from reflection on practical experience. It consists of beliefs, opinions, understandings and rules of thumb that have been pragmatically abstracted from particular practical contexts or that have been retained from existing practice traditions and models. Personal theory is the epistemic backbone by which practitioners judge new practice situations and is amenable to revision if new situations necessitate it. If personal theories are unable to provide efficacious answers to practice-based questions, or in cases where reviewing or assessing these personal repertoires is called for, the practitioner will dialogue with extra-disciplinary modes of information, including academic theory.

Definition 4: Personal theory.

9.5 On (social) practices

Until now, we have considered the role of practice and theory in the context of individual coping. Basil Bernstein brings the notion of personal theory to a supra-personal level by introducing the term 'reservoir' to refer to the total of sets of 'repertoires', or personal theories, possessed by any one individual (Bernstein, 1999a, p. 159). In a more general sense, contemporary sociological theory (Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina, & Savigny, 2001) has engaged itself with the upscaling of personal theory to the echelon of social practices. The main element that practice theorists share is that practices are considered to be at the middle between methodological individualism – reducing social phenomena to individual agency and action – and methodological holism and structuralism – the explanation of phenomena in terms of their relationship to a larger, overarching system or structure. Under the umbrella of 'practice theory' – what's in a name? – two waves or generations of practice theorists can be distinguished: the first generation (Bourdieu, 1972/1977; Foucault, 1975/1979; Giddens, 1979) has layed the foundations for a practice-centred understanding of society, while the second one (Schatzki,

1996; Schatzki et al., 2001; Reckwitz, 2002) has tested these foundations and has refined the framework by adding punctual extensions (Postill, 2010, p. 6).

Bourdieu develops a logic of social practices emphasizing the importance of embodied understandings within the social world. He argues that people do not continuously calculate according to explicit rational and economic criteria but rather operate in a particular domain according to an implicit practical logic and bodily dispositions ('habitus'). With the central concept of 'habitus'[308], Bourdieu aims at capturing the ways in which the social order is being internalized and embedded in the agent's body in the form of mental schemes of perceptions, thoughts, and actions.

> The habitus […] is a product of the incorporation of objective necessity, it produces strategies which, even if they are not produced by consciously aiming at explicitly formulated goals on the basis of an adequate knowledge of objective conditions, nor by the mechanical determination exercised by causes, turn out to be objectively adjusted to the situation. Action guided by a 'feel for the game' has all the appearances of the rational action that an impartial observer, endowed with all the necessary information and capable of mastering it rationally, would deduce. And yet it is not based on reason. You need only think of the impulsive decision made by the tennis player who runs up to the net, to understand that it has nothing in common with the learned construction that the coach, after analysis, draws up in order to explain it and deduce communicable lessons from it. The conditions of rational calculation are practically never given in practice: time is limited, information is restricted, etc. And yet agents *do* do, much more often than if they were behaving randomly, 'the only thing to do'. This is because, following the intuitions of a 'logic of practice' which is the product of a lasting exposure to conditions similar to those in which they are placed, they anticipate the necessity immanent in the way of the world. (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 11)

As a generative principle, the habitus allows for situated improvisations which then lead to practice formation in specialist domains of practice; Bourdieu calls these domains (such as art, photography, sociology) 'fields' [*des champs*] which operate according to their own 'logic'. They are the 'game' that Bourdieu mentions in the citation above. Only the players with sufficient 'know-how' and belief in the game ('*illusio*') will be willing to invest time and effort playing it, and to arrive eventually at skilful playing, a good fit between the 'habitus' and the 'field' is mandatory. Other theorists have proposed variations on Bourdieu's 'habitus'-motive. Foucault's concept of 'discipline' (Foucault 1979) is a prominent example. Like habitus, discipline is a structure and power that impresses itself on the body forming permanent dispositions. Sociologist Stephen Turner opts in *The Social Theory of Practices* (Turner, 1994) for a group of concepts that seem to account for what Wittgenstein phrases in relation

[308] [The habitus is] the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations [which] produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle [the habitus], while adjusting to the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus (Bourdieu, 1972/1977, p. 78).

to 'one's picture of the world' [309]as "the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false?" (Wittgenstein, 1951/1969, §94):

> I saw that there was a large family of terms that were used more or less interchangeably with 'practices'. Among them were some of the most widely used terms in philosophy and the humanities, such as tradition, tacit knowledge, *Weltanschauung*, paradigm, ideology, framework and presupposition. (Turner, 1994, p. 2)

Turner observes that habits die with individuals and that "if something persists in history, it cannot be habits alone. Traditions do persist. So traditions cannot consist of habits" (Turner, 1994, p. 78). In conceptualizing the terrain of social practices, Turner turns to the notions of 'tradition', 'culture', '*mores*', and 'paradigm' to capture the factor of continuation and stability that practices bring to personal theories and practical decisions.

A second generation of practice theorists holds on to the focus on the human body as the centre of practices and conceives them as "embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding" (Schatzki et al., 2001, p. 11). Both practice theorists Andreas Reckwitz and Theodore R. Schatzki make a useful distinction between 'practice' and 'practices' (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249; Schatzki, 1996, pp. 90–91)[310]. 'Practice' in the singular is an emphatic term to describe the whole of human action. It denotes the doing, the actual activity or energization, the continuous happening at the core of human life qua stream of activity and reminds us that existence is a happening taking the form of ceaseless performing and carrying out. It is the type of 'practice' that the Western philosophical tradition tends to oppose to theory. 'Practices', in plural, however are something different. Schatzki considers 'practices' very general as "a temporally unfolding and spatially dispersed nexus of doings and sayings" (Schatzki, 1996, p. 89) and by the inclusion of 'sayings' stresses an inclusive approach, one which allows for the coordination of elements such as personal theories, explicit understandings, formal theories, rules, and skills. Reckwitz is more concrete (with a characteristic emphasis on 'routines'):

> [practices are] a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, 'things' and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 249)

Examples of such practices are: a way of cooking, of consuming, of working of investigating, of taking care of oneself or of others. Practices are thus a routinized way in which bodies are moved, objects are

[309] Wittgenstein's understanding of 'world-picture' or 'picture of the world' comes closes to the concept of 'Image' that we developed in PART I.

[310] This distinction is not explicitly present in the OED and also difficult to trace in specialised sociological dictionaries which often lack an entry on 'practice' (Bruce & Yearley, 2006; Turner, 2006; Scott, 2014).

handled, subjects are treated, things are described and the world is understood, it implicitly includes the notions of 'personal theory' and 'Image'. But whereas the Images that surfaced in PART I, were personal, practices are always social, as it is a 'type' of behaving and understanding that appears at different locales and at different points of time and is carried out by different body/minds. 'Practice' (in its first meaning) actualizes and sustains 'practices' (second meaning) and personal theory in a multitude of single and often unique actions that reproduce and fill out the patterns that practices allow for. The single individual then acts as the performer of a practice (in the second meaning), or of a number of coordinated practices, and participates in the conventionalized activities of understanding. The prominent keywords and interconnected concepts in practice theory are 'body' (embodiment), 'mind', 'agents', 'things', and 'knowledge(s)'.

- The body occupies a central place in practice theory. Trained in a certain way[311], it acts as a repository for understandings and as a (re-)producer of practice-related acts. The body is thus not a mere 'instrument' but the routinized actions are themselves bodily performances of practices. Moreover, the role of the body is not confined to modes of handling certain objects but holds also for mental activities such as talking, reading or writing.
- Social practices are at the same time sets of mental activities (activities with no direct relation to a material or bodily component). They necessarily imply certain routinized ways of understanding the world and one's role therein.[312] In practice theory, this is not a contradiction: a practice such as musical performance consists of a routinized set of bodily actions, but these are necessarily connected with certain know-how, particular limits to interpretation, and embracing ends, projects, tasks, purposes, beliefs, emotions, and moods – the teleoaffective element as Schatzki calls it (Schatzki, 1996, p. 89). If somebody 'carries' (and 'carries out') a practice, he or she must take over both the bodily and the mental patterns that constitute the practice. These mental patterns are not the 'possession' of an individual 'deep inside', but part of the social practice.
- In practice theory, agents are body/minds who 'carry' and 'carry out' social practices. Thus, the social world is first and foremost populated by diverse social practices which are carried by agents. As carriers of a practice, they are neither autonomous nor fully conformist: "They understand the world and themselves, and use know-how and motivational knowledge, according to the particular practice". There is a very precise place for the 'individual' – as distinguished from the agent: "As there are diverse social practices, and as every agent carries out a multitude of different social practices, the individual is the unique crossing point of practices, of bodily-mental routines" (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 256).
- Next to bodies, minds, and agents, 'things' and 'objects' are also necessary components of many practices – just as indispensable as bodily and mental activities. Carrying out a practice very often means using particular things in a certain way. They 'mould' social practices, or, better, they enable, extend or limit certain bodily and mental actitivities (see for instances the role of musical instruments), certain knowledge and understanding as elements of practices.

[311] See also *les techniques du corps* (Mauss, 1934).
[312] See Boulding's notion of 'Image' in PART I.

- A specific social practice contains specific forms of knowledge. For practice theory, this knowledge is more complex than 'knowing that'. It embraces ways of understanding, knowing how, ways of wanting and of feeling that are linked to each other within a practice. In a very elementary sense, in a practice the knowledge is a particular way of 'understanding the world', which includes an understanding of objects (including abstract ones), of humans, of oneself. This way of understanding is largely implicit and largely historically-culturally specific; it is this form of interpretation that holds together already for the agent herself (the carrier of the practice) the single acts of her/his own behaviour, so that they form parts of a practice. This way of understanding is a collective, shared knowledge.

The notion of '(social) practices' allows personal theory and its relation to extra-disciplinary information to be situated in a broader practical context. It forms the the background against which we can now reformulate and extrapolate the target domain of information in a context of score-based musical performances.

9.6 Performers' Practice

In the field of score-based performance next to the verb 'to practice', 'a practice' is best known in the notion of 'performance practice'. In the OED the following description is attached to the concept:

> **performance practice** *n.* [after German *Aufführungspraxis* (1924 or earlier)] *Music* the way in which music is or has been performed, esp. as concerns issues of authenticity or appropriateness of style in the performance of music from a particular repertoire or date; the study of this as an academic discipline.

In the *Oxford Companion to Music* a similar understanding is advanced:

> A term borrowed from the German 19th-century Aufführungspraxis to describe the mechanics of a performance that define its style.(Parrott & Da Costa, n.d.)

In *die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (MGG), *Aufführungpraxis* is defined as:

> The area of music-research and -praxis, which is concerned with all aspects by which notated music is turned into sound.[313]

Finally, In *the Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, finally, the term 'performing practice' is chosen over 'performance practice':

> As applied to Western music, the subject involves all aspects of the way in which music is and has been performed, and its study is of particular importance to the modern performer concerned with historically informed performance. Topics that may be considered aspects of performing practice include notational ones (i.e. the relationship between written notes and

[313] [*Mit Aufführungspraxis bezeichnet man den Bereich von Musikforschung und –praxis, der alle Aspekte der Umsetzung notierter Musik in Klang umfasst*].

> the sounds they symbolize, especially such matters as rhythm, tempo and articulation); improvisation and ornaments; instruments, their history and physical structure and the ways in which they are played; voice production; matters of tuning, pitch and temperament; and ensembles, their size, disposition, and the modes in which they are directed. Performing practice is generally approached through the study of treatises and instruction books, critical writings and iconographical material, as well as actual instruments and music. (Brown et al., n.d.)

Although definitions are available that would allow for a generous interpretation such as: "the area of music research and praxis that entails all [own emphasis] aspects of transforming scored music into sound" (Gutknecht, n.d.) or "the conventions and knowledge that enable a performer to create a performance" (Randel, 2003, p. 648), we can infer from the brief definitional exploration above that the understanding of 'performance/performing practice' is restricted to punctual elements which have a close link to the very act of performing (instruments, scores, tuning, ornaments, tempi). From a historical perspective and in sociological terms: performance practice seems to be primarily about the doings and sayings that are being recovered from earlier times which relate to knowledge and understandings that were once embodied by agents (musicians) who used things (instruments, scores) with a view to stage a performance. By linking the term 'performance practice' to Historically Informed Performance we have tacitly agreed to limit 'practice' in musical performance semantically to a very restricted aggregation of elements and have closed the option of understanding 'practice' more broadly as an array of activities that a performer deploys in function of a performance; these activities would include studying, practicing, experimenting, reflecting, reading, rehearsing, listening, taking lessons, and especially in the case of GIP, also informing oneself. In a more systematic way this broader approach to musical practice as a social practice could be defined as follows:

> Musical practice as a social practice indicates an interconnected array of activities (such as analysing, listening, creating, sound-making, reflecting and rehearsing) directed towards the production of music, underpinned by shared implicit (embodied) and explicit (theoretical) understandings, and embedded within a larger cultural and social context.

Definition 5: Musical practice as a social practice.

In such a definition, the personal negotiation between theory and practice is nested in a social practice where the dualism evaporates since explicit, theoretical understandings are a form of knowledge that is intrinsically included in the practice. If we take our semantic exploration a bit further and relate it to a Generally Informed Performership it could be said that GIP is a subdomain of musical practice where a performer has a specific interest including extra-disciplinary information in her/his knowledge-base. We have seen in PART I that delineating the target of information is not a trivial consideration but an essential one; if the 'performance' is to be informed, one expects to hear an audible difference qua instruments, ornamentations, tuning; but if, on the other hand, the performer – and more in particular

her/his Image is to be informed – then a whole array of informational avenues opens itself that are not directly linked with the punctual recovery of certain ways of doing. We have until now opted to use to terms 'performer' and 'performership' as the target-domain of information. However, taking into account the possibilities that are now on the table with regard to the term practice and at the same time respecting the existing understanding with regard to 'performance practice', we suggest to introduce the new concept of a 'performers' practice' to specify the broad array of activities that a performer is involved in. A 'Generally Informed Performers' Practice' [GIPP] would then refer to a (social) practice that promotes the integration of extra-disciplinary information in its values, attitudes, beliefs, and actions. Agents within a GIPP would act as Plato's private *theoroi*, they would leave their homesteads and visit extra-disciplinary and -practical domains, and use the information that they assembled to reflect on, or to expand their personal knowledge base [GIP] or the knowledge base of the practice [GIPP]. Within GIPP Artistic Information Researchers [AIRs] (see Chapter 8) would function as civic *theoroi*, musicians that have taken upon themselves the mission of systematically scrutinizing extra-disciplinary terrains and to report on their findings upon repatriation and by this contribute to the mindlines and reservoir of personal theories that is available within GIPP.

A Generally Informed Performers' Practice [GIPP] is an interconnected array of activities and understandings within the broader category of score-based performership that is underpinned by a shared and active interest in extra-disciplinary information as a factor in developing personal theories, and as a complement to intra-disciplinary paths of artistic training, learning, and development.

Definition 6: A Generally Informed Performers' Practice [GIPP].