

Abstract of

Anthropic construction of social systems

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Social systems (relations between individuals) may be constructed objectively as systems of energy under the metaphors of organism or of machine. They may also be constructed subjectively as systems of meaning under the metaphors of mind or of template.

Most sociologists and system theorists, including myself, have sought to formulate social systems under the metaphor of mind, *i.e.*, with constructs such as intention, experience, action, interaction and conversation. Such attempts have been far from successful.

The possibility to formulate social systems under the metaphor of template with constructs such as convention, conscience, conduct, encounter, institutions and communication (semiotic and semantic) or culture (incl. kinship and law) has not been recently systematically explored. It may be that in order to construct social systems from a subjective anthropic perspective as systems of meaning under the metaphor template, conceptual and methodological reductionism would have to be replaced by conceptual and methodological holism. Such holistic approaches have precedents in physics, chemistry, physiology, psychoanalysis, ethology, linguistics, law, anthropology and history. Sporadically they were tried in economics and in sociology.

Conscience, conduct and encounter could be the conceptual pillars of new anthropic formulations of social systems.