The struggle between the choice of corona strategies reinforces a latent anger towards the establishment.

by Bengt-Åke Wennberg

Ann Linde – the Swedish foreign minister lost some time ago the grasp of an interview and snapped a reporter in Deutsche Welle off. She asked if the reporter saw the fight against covig–19 as some sort of world championship.

The same question has swirled in my head when I in press conference after press conference heard spiteful and almost contemptuous questions and statements about the Swedish corona strategy in which the Swedish numbers of death were compared with those in other countries.

Anders Tegnell – the representant for the Swedish health authorities – also told in a program in the Swedish radio about the many hate and intimidation letters he had got*. From where comes this hate and anger*? I'll reflect on that in this blog.

I have found that the Western world's language use and analysis tools are impregnated by a Durkheim approach. The Durkheim approach is

based on the fact that "the organization's construction guarantees its success". In this perspective Ann Linde's question about "world championships" is relevant.

In one of my blogs, I have contrasted Emile Durkheims approach with Gabriel Tarde's. Durkheim assumes that the behaviour of people is determined by the social structure they live in. Gabriel Tarde postulates that the structures emerge through the interactions of the persons involved.

Thus, in the view of the individual's participation in the events, the individual is given a greater importance in Tarde's approach than in Durkheim's. ([Wennberg 2020a]). Durkheim's approach hides the actual problems which emerges through the social interactions and the characteristics of human systems.

In this case, I use Durkheim and Tarde symbolically. How the two thought and reasoned fundamentally, Of course, I do not know. But the Swedish researcher Anton Törnberg showed in his thesis that the sociology that we normally use is based on Durkheim and is completely different from that which will emerge from Tarde (Törnberg 2017). Durkheim's sociology led to misunderstandings and anomalies. According to Törnberg, it is wicked.

Strategies for dealing with pandemics will also be "wicked" if one leans towards a Durkheim approach. If this approach is maintained, it is considered possible to compare death rates and spread between countries. However, it does not need much statistical knowledge to understand that such comparisons are "wicked" and meaningless.

The countries differ greatly. The infection started in different ways. Protection and testing equipment were available to a completely different extent in the different countries. The administrative systems are completely different. Staffing and competence of key actors are completely different. Health care preparedness differed. The population structures are completely different. Experiences from previous epidemics are quite different. Cultural differences are great, etc.

Ignoring all these variables and trying to draw gears on differences between the Swedish strategy and those of other countries means an unauthorized reduction in complexity aimed solely at giving a false sense

of trust in the establishment (Luhmann 2005). The criticism that sparked and aroused *anger* is therefore likely to be about something completely different and much more fundamental than which corona strategy is most appropriate.

According to Tegnell's summer talk, he and other infectious disease doctors in the North had already agreed before the corona crisis to deal with possible pandemics "gradually". They would take action as the infection developed and avoid hasty shutdowns – so-called "lock downs" as these could do more harm than good to society as a whole.

That was not the case. In all other countries, except Sweden, politicians took over. Probably to show action. What was odd about Sweden was that they did NOT make shutdowns, closed borders, etc. but tried to continue as usual but with strengthened medical resources and targeted measures. A Durkheim approach was still followed but more decentralized. This is the difference that is now being discussed both internally in Sweden and with international expertise and media. To understand the "quarrel", we need to get back to basics. The difference between Durkheim and Tarde.

Within the framework of Durkheim's approach, the "people" are minors. Without external governance, the people cannot be expected to deal with a crisis like this. What is needed to control the situation are strong leaders who can make drastic decisions in the name of the "people". Lay down regulations. Design regulations. Disseminate manuals and orders of conduct and, as a last resort, maintain adherence and loyalty with punishment and violence.

At the same time, the "people" now want to be given the opportunity to be heard, to be heard and to actively participate with their opinions in development. A Durkheim approach therefore violates the individual's sense of importance in the context in which she finds herself.

The feelings of frustration created by Durkheim's approach in the long run entail feelings of alienation and indifference that lead to inaction. These collective states are commonly referred to as the 'democratic deficit'. The more Durkheim's approach is applied, the more difficult it will be to be connected to the various programmed and measures

proposed by the powers. Turnout is declining. Confidence in the establishment is becoming less and less. Populism is gaining momentum.

This democratic deficit has become increasingly marked in recent years. Even riots, demonstrations, letters and voter storms don't usually help. There will be no influence. The dilemma between feeling active and involved and merely having to limit one's activities to obeying what is determined from above is becoming increasingly obvious.

In the abstract, it has been pointed out in the past that the dilemma could be solved through a good 'spirit', a positive attitude, a generally widespread desire for cooperation, good and established values, a healthy ideology and good leadership. Several such good examples have been reported. However, no one has been able to demonstrate how these conditions could *arise* and be made to work *as trust is increasingly eroded and put into question and an increasing complexity of interoperability needs to be addressed.*

According to Luhmann, the failures can be explained by the fact that the *complexity reductions* of the Durkheim approach are no longer perceived as valid in the situations we face today (Luhmann 2005).). When the Durkheim approach focused solely on the efforts of those in power, it has invisible and underestimated the need for a completely different *knowledge* that must be found among those actively *concerned* about how good cooperation arises.

This knowledge needs to be widely spread among the people in order for crises and cooperation to be well managed. As the world is constantly changing, knowledge must be constantly transformed and recycled. As new opportunities develop, ambitions – but also demands for – to try to take advantage of these opportunities ([Wennberg 2020b](#)) are increasing.

When the complexity reductions previously accepted as something "necessary evil and because they are in the nature of things" are no longer perceived as credible, a lack of trust arises. Today we know from experience that complexity *could be* handled much better, but that this management then requires other abilities and other organizational strategies in order to emerge and gain a foothold. However, we do not yet know how a new discourse that supports this can be generated and disseminated to enough people.

When the people of the Community discover that the actions taken by the establishment within the framework of the old figure of thought are incapable of overcoming the problems of synergy, people become frustrated, frightened and angry.

Anger and frustration thus have nothing to do with Anders Tegnell. It is, in my view, a consequence of all our fears about the negative consequences of this general lack of trust – that is, the lack of trust in the measures proposed and implemented by those in power of various kinds.

A similar concern, which can be turned into anger, can affect those "rulers" who have become accustomed to belonging to the establishment, "float on top" and "know best.". The need to deal with complexity disrupts their circles and risks losing their influence. The struggle between the debaters in this situation has come to be between two different options based on the same figure of thought and therefore basically equally powerless.

In this blog, I shall confine myself to pointing out some facts which are worth noting and which point to the shortcomings of *both* the strategies *used* and therefore also to the need to now start to try to apply the approach that Gabriel Tarde stood for on a broad front in the analyses.

David Snowden, through his model Cynefin, shows that it is possible to sort social contexts into four different categories with regard to the demands the different categories place on interaction between the actors involved (Snowden 2007). The four categories that Snowden proposes are "simple", "complicated", "complex" and "chaotic". See his model here.

By those who discuss their interactions do not understand the difference between these different contexts and use inappropriate thought figures, paradigms, doxes, etc. to analyze them, according to Snowden, confusion and contradictory reasoning arise.

Within the two contexts "simple" and "complicated" one can without much problem reduce the complexity that exists because the participants in such contexts have experience of the situations that can arise, understand the requirements of the situation, can deliberate on division of labor, have the necessary skills to perform their respective roles and

can agree on common goals. In the few cases of uncertainty that may occur, responsibility for priorities can be pushed up the hierarchy.

When the context changes to be more complex as a result of the possibilities that now according to Alvin Toffler is emerging, completely different conditions arise ([Wennberg 2020b](#)). Snowden is clear that his model Cynefin is not about a simple four-field model in which one can easily change the starting point from one context to another. According to him, the problem is much deeper than that.

The difficulty lies in the fact that to do what is relevant in the contexts Snowden calls "simple" and "complicated" are ingrained in our minds and follows established conversation patterns. Usually people are going to take the Durkheim approach. However, the strong dominance of its doxa makes it almost impossible to discern and notice reasoning that takes into account Snowden's categories "complex" and "chaotic". The reason is that their analyses and conversations have become accustomed to complexity that *conceals the real difficulties* in clarifying, describing, understanding and jointly dealing with the situations in which they participate.

So, what is the difference between one and the other? Snowden himself states that a complex context differs from the others in that the outcome cannot be calculated in advance. Thus, according to Snowden, in a complex context, there is no legal causal link through which, under given conditions, a specific outcome can be foreseen.

Our scientific practice – and therefore also our everyday reasoning – assumes that events and interaction patterns that occur, or have already occurred, can be empirically observed, measured and thus analyzed. Our common practice takes it for granted that certain fundamental connections that emerge from what has happened have a *permanence*, that is, they will be found in a future. If the causal relationship has been established, general and comprehensive measures can be taken by management – measures that guarantee the desired permits and counteract unwanted ones.

In complex *social* contexts, the outcome cannot be specified and determined in this way, because the people involved who generate the interaction, and thus determine the outcome, have the freedom to *act*

differently from one situation to the next. The interactions that may occur in a future are not bound by what has happened in the past. They could be different than they were last time, if people change their mind.

There is therefore no definite outcome on which anyone can prepare the persons in the business, by issuing general instructions, methodological descriptions, regulations, instructions, etc. How the situation arises therefore depends on each participant's own competence and judgment. There are therefore only alternative, possible and partly unforeseeable outcomes. These outcomes are increasingly determined by the experience of the participants in question with past outcomes.

In complex contexts, therefore, the events emerge through *emergens* – that is, through one of the actors' judicious action. For this reason, a complex context cannot be managed by following a doxa that is appropriate for simple and complex contexts. The persons involved must, when the complexity emerges, be prepared for, and understand, to deal with its specific nature in a relevant way.

Since complexity manifests itself in different ways in different crises, it can only be managed through "gradually" planning and then *only* by taking advantage of the experiences and observations of the participants themselves "on the ground" ([Wennberg 2020c](#)).

If you are jointly unable to deal with 'out-of-ones' planning, chaos ensues. This chaos can only be dealt with *radical and drastic measures* such as 'closures'. Here we find the two strategies discussed during the corona crisis – 'away-for-e-planning' and 'lock downs'.

However, when Anders Tegnell advocates away-for-escaping planning, his reasoning only applies to measures from "powers" and from "experts". As a collective, you're still stuck in a Durkheim doxa. In order to effectively implement 'out-of-one' planning, *people on the ground* must also be able to take into account how they can deal with the *individual cases* they face. This requires a completely different generation of knowledge than is being done today (Gibbons 1994).

The ingrained way of science to treat facts and observations means that *one cannot comment on individual cases of human interaction* other than in *probability terms.* Such knowledge is insufficient as a guideline for the interaction between the actors involved in a complex social context

when each context is unique. Participants always encounter "unique situations" that they must be able to handle as wisely as possible (Stengers 1997).

In technology, which seeks safe application, has therefore had to develop different methods to – and in principle against nature's own laws – force the outcome one wishes. The science involved in laying the theoretical foundation for this is called Complexity Science.

Anton Törnberg has in his thesis tested whether the conceptual and control systems that with the help of "complexity science" and cybernetics have emerged in the social field are also applicable to analyze and influence people's interactions in social systems. He concluded that complexity science and cybernetics cannot adequately describe the nature of social systems.

The crucial weakness of current scientific practice is thus that the empirical material observed, which is used to argue for the existence of certain desirable social causation, is not genuine and stable causation. They do not determine that similar social events occur in other *and completely identical situations.* When it comes down to it, people may choose to do something other than they usually do in such situations.

The social patterns that arise in complex social contexts are thus neither legal nor predetermined. The implications of this insight I will discuss in the next blog.

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