

CHAPTER 08

TARDE ON THE ROAD: MONADODOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY AND THE CONTEMPORARY ANALYSES OF MOBILITY

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ABSTRACT

The chapter discusses the commonalities of central arguments in Gabriel Tarde's work *Monadology and Sociology* with contemporary sociological analyses of Mobility. These theories mainly include the academic literature that has developed from the late 1980s onwards by sociologists such as John Urry and Scott Lash, as well as geographers such as Tim Cresswell and Nigel Thrift. Their analyses propose a view that uses Mobility flows as a central tool for the understanding of how geographical and social space is reconstructed in the contemporary world. They argue that these flows consist of mobility networks of people, capital, products, or information. Given that such approaches have developed during the last decades of the 20th century, it is interesting that they share similar views with a work of the late 19th century.

Keywords: Monadology and Sociology, mobility paradigm, social space, networks

INTRODUCTION

The chapter discusses the commonalities of central arguments in Gabriel Tarde's work *Monadology and Sociology* with contemporary sociological analyses of Mobility. These theories mainly include the academic literature that has developed from the late 1980s onwards by sociologists such as John Urry and Scott Lash, as well as geographers such as Tim Cresswell and Nigel Thrift.²⁷⁵ Their analyses propose a view that uses Mobility flows as a central tool for the understanding of how geographical and social space is reconstructed in the contemporary world. They argue that these flows consist of mobility networks of people, capital, products, or information. Given that such approaches have developed during the last decades of the 20th century, it is interesting that they share similar views with a work of the late 19th century.

Tarde's influence on the subsequent sociologists had been considered marginal for many years compared to Durkheim, who prevailed as the "founder" of modern Sociology, especially as far as Structuralism is concerned.²⁷⁶ Nevertheless, during the last decades, Tarde is considered to have many commonalities with recent theories and especially with poststructuralism views. Such similarities prove the insightful thinking of Tarde's work, in which latter theorists find a language familiar with their approaches. Therefore, Tarde has been characterized as the "father" of specific postmodernism analyses, such as Deleuze's and Foucault's thinking. At the same time, Bruno Latour explicitly recognizes Tarde as the "grandfather" of his Actor Network Theory.²⁷⁷

275 See Tarde, G. (2012), *Monadology and Sociology*. See also Cresswell, T. (1996), *In Place/Out of Place*. Cresswell T. (2006), *On the Move. Mobility in the Modern Western World*. Cresswell T. et al., 'Introduction: Geographies of Mobilities: Practices, Spaces, Subjects in Cresswell T. et al. (2011), *Geographies of Mobilities: Practices, Spaces, Subjects*, 1-18. Lash S. et al. (1994), *Economies of Signs and Space*. Thrift N., (2004) "Movement-space. The changing domain of thinking resulting from the development of new kinds of spatial awareness", in *Economy and Society*, 33, 582-604. Thrift N. "Driving in the City" in Featherstone M. et al. (2005), *Automobilities*, 41-60. Urry J. (1990), *The Tourist Gaze*. Urry J. (1995), *Consuming Places*. Urry, J. (2000) *Sociology Beyond Societies. Mobilities for the Twenty-first Century*. Urry, J. (2007), *Mobilities*.

276 Tonkonoff S. (2017), *From Tarde to Deleuze and Foucault*, 1-20. Candea M., "Revisiting Tarde's House" in Candea M. (2010), *The Social after Gabriel Tarde. Debates and Assessments*, 1-23.

277 Tonkonoff, *From Tarde to Deleuze*, 67-110. Latour B., "Gabriel Tarde and the End of the Social," in Joyce P. (2002) *The Social in Question. New Bearings in History and the Social Sciences*, 117-132.

Still, this essay does not attempt to construct a linear genealogy on intellectual history, arguing that contemporary thinkers have been directly influenced by Tarde, consciously or unconsciously. The immediate attribution of the Mobility paradigm to a 19th-century scholar and its description as the outcome of a former ancestral theory would be a precarious reductionism. Apart from the fact that such an approach would introduce an a priori teleological point of view, it would also be –by all means– in opposition with both Tarde’s theory and the Mobility paradigm. Contrary to this, the central argument of this essay is that the common ideas between Monadology and Sociology, and those of contemporary sociologists and geographers, can enhance our understanding of the concept of circulation per se, which is crucial in both cases examined. The concept of circulation or Mobility encompasses the circulation of ideas, which –at the same time– do not form a distinct realm from other versions of interaction, either material or societal, as we will further discuss below.

The first part of the chapter briefly depicts the central arguments of the mobility paradigm. The second part underlines some of Tarde’s most important ideas in his work *Monadology and Sociology*, which are relevant to the Mobility paradigm. Finally, the last part draws conclusions contributing to the general discussion about the commonalities between Tarde’s sociology and contemporary sociological analysis.

THE “MOBILIZATION” OF SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSES

As already mentioned, Bruno Latour is the most renowned contemporary scholar who illustrates how the work of Tarde is relevant to his Actor Network Theory, as well as to poststructuralism in general.²⁷⁸ Tarde’s ideas challenge many central concepts of Structuralism, which prevailed in the 20th-century social theories for decades. The Mobility paradigm discussed in this chapter can be viewed as a “branch” of poststructuralism. Within its context, many sociological notions are being renegotiated or even questioned. We will further describe the Mobility paradigm to show the similarity of its argumentation with the approach introduced in *Monadology and Sociology*. We will briefly present the ideas of some of the most representative scholars of the relevant literature: John Urry, Scott Lash, Tim Cresswell, and Nigel Thrift.²⁷⁹

The majority of the Mobility studies use as a starting point the empirical observation that the rapid development of transportation and communication technology in the contemporary world, especially in the postwar era, not only has it intensified the flows of people, capital, goods, and information, but it has also reconstructed space and time, both as physical and notional categories.²⁸⁰ Such a reconstruction causes critical changes on the foundation of the mainstream sociological theory, since space and time, as the main framework for social interaction, have also been fundamental for the construction of other intellectual categories, such as class, gender, ethnicity, or cultural group. Moreover, some of the most dominant tools of sociological theories, like, for example, the social structures, have been primarily based on the use of the abovementioned categories. Thus, according to the Mobility paradigm, the most commonly used sociological categories and tools are anachronistic, or even inadequate, for understanding contemporary societies. As argued, mobility networks are the most determining factor in shaping the contemporary globalized environment and social and political organizations. These networks influence various societal and cultural interactions, such as education, consumer standards, or sociocultural resistance. Regarding this, the Mobility paradigm proposes that contemporary societies should be examined not as static constructions

278 Latour, “Gabriel Tarde,” 117-132.

279 Cresswell, *In place*. Cresswell, *On the Move*. Cresswell, “Introduction”, 1-18. Lash, *Economies*. Thrift, “Movement-space”, 582-604. Thrift. “Driving in the City”, 41-60. Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*. Urry, *Consuming Places*. Urry, *Sociology. Urry, Mobilities*.

280 Urry, *Sociology*, 1-20. Cresswell, *On the Move*, 1-24.

of hierarchical structures but as a dynamic field of flow of people, information, and objects.²⁸¹ Thus, mobility networks are a central methodological tool for understanding postmodernity.

At this point, moving to a more thorough explanation of how the Mobility paradigm redefines notional categories of many modern sociological analyses is helpful. As far as space is concerned, this has been a fundamental geographical parameter used to understand historical and societal phenomena. Modern space has been reconstructed through infrastructure that accommodates the physical mobilities of people, objects, and capital.²⁸² This process contributes to its redefinition as political, social, and economic territory. The organization of space perceived as a measurable physical quantity has been critical for the foundation of modern hegemonies and the definition of national states. As Foucault notes, the political signification of space takes place through observation and discipline mechanisms, materialized through infrastructure, statistical measurements, and legislation.²⁸³ Within these territories, the movement of people is controlled and regulated through borders or passports. Hence, Mobility in modern national space has a political significance.

The above-described process has further developed in postmodernity due to the virtual and digital mobilities of capital and information or through virtual and imaginary travels that reconstruct national territories.²⁸⁴ Consequently, postmodern space organization no longer takes place according to exclusively objective criteria, such as physical distance or political power. It also occurs according to individual mobilities, which redefine certain places as tourist sites, urban, trade or financial centers, or refugee destinations.²⁸⁵ This process is exemplary in the tourism industry, in particular. Films, museums, photo and art exhibitions, tourist leaflets, and most importantly, the internet promote landscapes or sites as national landmarks. This process contributes to the iconoclastic perception of space and its definition as a symbolic consumption product. In any case, space organization relates to the subjective movement experience within specific places. John Urry has introduced the terms *sensescapes* and *sensuous geographies* to describe this process.²⁸⁶

Apart from space, the Mobility paradigm renegotiates the concept of linear time as a countable physical quantity. Different mobility networks create multiple time and space synapses. Hence, Mobility scholars argue that we should view time in its sociological sense, according to Einstein's description, as an internal characteristic of the systems we examine and, simultaneously, as a quantity that interacts with space. From that aspect, one could discriminate different simultaneous levels of time flows in different or even within the same geographical context.²⁸⁷ An eloquent example concerns the different speeds of societal and economic developments in rural and urban areas. These developments relate to the flows of people, goods, and information through which different regions are networked. The analytical tool of multiple scales questions using a homogeneous timeline for different phenomena and the hierarchical structure among different scales. Thus, macroscale phenomena, such as wars, are not necessarily more complex than microscale ones, neither are they conceived as broader systems consisting of smaller ones. At the same time, the linear causality among them is revisited. Within the globalized environment, we should examine the rapid changes as a dynamic field of flows that create a fluid relation among the consisting systems' elements.²⁸⁸ A third category renegotiated within the Mobility paradigm is taxonomies, such as class or ethnicity. Such taxonomies are usually the foundation of modern identities. Mobility theorists

281 Urry, *Mobilities*, 15-20. Cresswell, *On the Move*, 1-24.

282 Cresswell, *On the Move*. Cresswell, "Introduction", 1-18. Thrift, "Movement-space.", 582-604. Urry, *Consuming Places*, 1-30. Urry, *Mobilities*, 38, Urry, *Sociology*, 131-160.

283 Foucault M. (1995), *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*, 143-148.

284 Deleuze G. (1992), "Postscripts on the Society of Control", *The MIT Press* 59, 3-7. S. Lash, *Economies*, 1-30.

285 Urry, *Mobilities*, 261.

286 Urry, *Mobilities*, 17-43. Urry, *The Tourist Gaze*, 3-7. Urry, *Sociology*, 131-160

287 Urry, *Sociology Beyond*, 105-130. Urry, *Consuming Places*, 1-30.

288 Urry, *Mobilities*, 21-31. See also Gladwell M., *Tipping Points. How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, 2000.

argue that using such tools introduces a static perception of societies, presupposing they are structurally comprised exclusively by socioeconomic terms. At the same time, it focuses on the direct interaction of humans without considering the role of different modes of their networking, like, for example, virtual communications.²⁸⁹ What is more, space is considered of significant importance for the construction of identities. For example, ethnicities are co-constructed with national territories, whereas socioeconomic classes are seen as the outcome of organized national capitalism. However, as argued above, modern space categories tend to be constantly scattered and reorganized through the mobility networks developed within them. At the same time, national economies are reconstructed through mobility networks and detached from localities. Hence, postmodern identities are constructed regarding globalized and peripheral mobility orbits that transcend national borders. According to Bauman, Mobility is crucial for social stratification reconstruction.²⁹⁰ New identities are formed within postmodern collectivities, such as ecology and human rights activist networks, the 99% movement, the LGBTQ movement, or even terrorist networks. These collectivities work alternatively or competitively to national and traditional forms of belonging. At the same time, the existing identities are also redefined.

One of the most representative examples that illustrate the interaction of participation in networks with the social actors' identities and their position in the social spectrum concerns citizenship. The ability of citizens to be mobile through their access to transportation and communication infrastructure is considered one of the fundamental rights that postwar governments are supposed to provide them with. This right is critical for the accessibility to goods and services, such as health or education; thus, it serves as a means of social exclusions' abolishment.²⁹¹ Therefore, international organizations, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the European Commission or the United Nations, consider Mobility as a determining factor of the income per capita and the future development of states. Moreover, postmodern identities in the contemporary world are co-constructed with the mobility status of people within specific spaces (such as citizens, immigrants, refugees, or tourists). Another example concerns the economically privileged 1% of this planet. Their power originates from their ability to predict, lead, or provoke rapid capital flows.

What we can conclude from the above argumentation is that mobility networks are crucial for the construction of social, geopolitical, and economic relations and interactions and, consequently, for the construction of postmodern hierarchies related to the geographical and social distribution of welfare through the Mobility of economic and symbolic capital.²⁹²

TARDE RELOADED

After briefly describing the Mobility paradigm, we can examine some central theses of *Monadology and Sociology*. The similarities between the two theoretical approaches show how a work of the 19th century is up to date with contemporary analyses.

A first key idea that can be noted in Tarde's work, as Latour has also pointed out, is that he challenges one quite common belief of his contemporary mainstream sociology by showing that the division between nature and human society is an obstacle for the understanding of societal phenomena. There is no grounded evidence for the dichotomy between the natural, which is usually related to the matter, and the social, which is related to spirit or intellect.²⁹³ In Tarde's words, this dichotomy: "*creates an abyss which separates movement and con-*

289 Urry, *Mobilities*, 15-20. Urry, *Sociology*, 161-187.

290 Bauman Z. (1998), *Globalization. The Human Consequences*, 2.

291 Urry, *Sociology*, 161-187.

292 Urry, *Mobilities*, 1-9. Kauffmann V. (2004) et al. "Motility: Mobility as Capital", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 28, 745-756. Thrift, 'Movement-space', 582-604.

293 Latour, "Gabriel Tarde", 117-132.

sciousness, object and subject, the mechanical and the logical".²⁹⁴ According to his approach, there is a theoretical gap between matter and spirit. We should not forget at this point Tarde's argument, according to which even a cell or a solar system is a form of society.²⁹⁵ That is quite challenging if we consider the fact that most sociological analyses presuppose that human societies are distinct, if not superior realms from the natural and the material world. Consequently, such a dichotomy is a conception of the modern era; that is why Latour calls it the "modern constitution".²⁹⁶

The second important point of Tarde's work is that the actors are monads, and, at the same time, complex societies are not distinct subjects from the laws that rule their actions and outcomes. That means that the actors themselves are similar in quality to their environment. Such a claim challenges the very foundations of modern Sociology since the concept of social actors as agents of societal phenomena is central in most analyses. Even Marxist materialism, which examines actors as parts of production relations, introduces a dualism between matter and spirit, since it argues that the former determines the latter.²⁹⁷ Tarde, on the other hand, sustains an approach quite different from most Structuralism theories, drawing examples from positive sciences, and particularly the cellular theory. In parallel with Chemistry, where –according to many of his contemporary scientists– no principles rule the matter other than the matter characteristics themselves, Tarde argues that societal changes do not occur driven by external forces. According to Tarde's words: "[T]his convenient point of view, which consists in mistakenly seeing the creation of a new being in a phenomenon generated by the encounter of real beings (albeit a genuinely new and unforeseen phenomenon), can be upheld only provisionally".²⁹⁸

In opposition to this mistaken belief –as he characterizes it– Tarde sustains the idea that the causality of the phenomena is internal. Hence, movement is considered an innate element of the moving subjects. This idea explains societal changes, including the circulation of ideas. In his own words: "Let us imagine that all the citizens of a State, without exception, are fully in favor of a program of political reorganization springing from the brain of one among their number, and more particularly from one point within this brain; the complete overhaul of the State according to this plan, rather than being progressive and fragmentary, will then be abrupt and total, however radical the project. The slowness of social modifications is explained only by the fact that the other plans for reform or ideals of the State all other members of a nation knowingly or unknowingly entertain run contrary to this plan."²⁹⁹ Hence, movement and continuous displacement do not result from external causes; they are different phases of a living organism.

Such a view innovatively exegeses societal changes for several reasons. First, as noted above, it abolishes the binary perception of human and non-human factors. Moreover, it treats the movement as an internal and organic part of societies (even if we should avoid this term since Tarde's work questions societies as entities). Finally, it eliminates the distinction between macro-level and micro-level analytical objects.

Suppose we accept that the actors are not distinct subjects from the laws that rule their behavior. In that case, the individuals are not more superficial than the societal structures or phenomena resulting from their actions. According to his words:

If we look at the social world, the only one known to us from the inside, we see agents, men, much more differentiated and more sharply characterized as individ-

294 Tarde, *Monadology*, 5.

295 Tarde, *Monadology*, 28.

296 Latour (1993), *We Have Never Been Modern*, 13-15.

297 Latour, "Gabriel Tarde", 117-132.

298 Tarde, *Monadology*, 8.

299 Tarde, *Monadology*, 12

*uals, and richer in continual variations than are the mechanisms of government or the systems of laws or beliefs, or even dictionaries or grammars, and their competition maintains this differentiation. A historical fact is simpler and clearer than the states of mind of any of its actors. Moreover, as the population of social groups grows and the brains of their members are enriched with new ideas and new sentiments, the functioning of their administrations, their codes of law and conduct, their catechisms, and the very structure of their languages become simpler and more regular, rather as scientific theories become simpler as they are filled with more numerous and diverse facts.*³⁰⁰

Consequently, according to Tarde, there is no separate law in social theory that could differ from the monads themselves or a law that connects social macro-structures with their components. Hence, the perception of a hierarchical structuring of different scales of phenomena is false. Once more, according to Tarde's words: "*The prejudice according to which the result is always more complex than its conditions, and the action more differentiated than its agents, whence it follows that universal evolution is necessarily a movement from the homogenous to the heterogeneous, in a progressive and constant process of differentiation*".³⁰¹

That is why Tarde challenges society as we know it. He objects to the architecture of society upon which modern Sociology has been grounded. Instead of following deductive reasoning to examine the micro as a part of the macro, Tarde follows the opposite: inductive reasoning. He claims that the monad is the key to understanding the macroscale system that consists of them. Monads, of course, do create more extensive systems. However, the way that the monads do that does not have a teleological sense. That is why the notion of social structures is invalid: structures follow an orderly reason, a kind of goal, whereas monad formations do not. So, instead of describing monads' systems as structures, we should better conceive them as networks. Now, we may understand Latour's argument that Tarde is the first to invent the idea of networks as a tool that substitutes structures.³⁰²

There are numerous ideas in Tarde's work that can be described as groundbreaking compared to modern Sociology, even though these have been articulated quite early. However, we aim to underline some of Tarde's key ideas that lead to common conclusions about the mobility paradigm. First, Tarde introduces a post-human view of society that puts an end to the notion of society per se. From a point of view, such an approach is postmodernist. Tarde challenges the belief from the Enlightenment tradition, the human-centric premise. The idea that runs behind most modern theories, even the materialist ones, is that we humans are the centers of the world either as subjects of ideas or as subjects of causal laws. However, Tarde challenges even the very identity of the subjects when he argues that there is no dichotomy between the actors and the laws of their action, or there is no difference between human society and a society of planets. According to his words, a bio-organism can be a more perplexing society than China.³⁰³ The elimination of such a dichotomy is also fundamental in Mobility theories. Actors are involved in mobility networks, which consist of humans, physical factors like the natural landscape, technical infrastructure like highways or optical fiber systems, materials like commodities, technologies like cars or computers, and, of course, information.³⁰⁴ This scheme looks like as if one tries to explain how Tarde's monads start being mobilized and what would the interaction mechanism be among them. In any case, human and non-human factors interact equally, consisting of hybrid systems.

So, there is an interesting similarity between Tarde and Mobility Studies. The former describes

³⁰⁰ Tarde, *Monadology*, 37.

³⁰¹ Tarde, *Monadology*, 37.

³⁰² Latour, "Gabriel Tarde", 117-132.

³⁰³ Tarde, *Monadology*, 32. Latour, "Gabriel Tarde", 117-132.

³⁰⁴ See, for example, Cresswell, 'Introduction', 1-18. Urry, *Mobilities*, 15-20.

the diffusion of ideas as a mechanism of brain state propagation (hence both material and intellectual condition) that becomes autonomous by the actors as subjects. The latter treats the information flows as a material and intellectual factor of contemporary phenomena. Both treat this condition as an exegetic tool of the monads' implication to flowing systems and, hence, to networks. The only difference is that Mobility Studies further proposes that studying such networks can explain many societal phenomena, especially in late modernity. Both approaches promote a view that concludes with a paradigm shift from the sociological analyses that introduce a dualistic perception between human and non-human factors.

The second common idea between Tarde and Mobility Studies is the architecture of our world. The term *society* is not used here on purpose, since these needs are redefined, according to Tarde. As mentioned above, Tarde has challenged the deductive reasoning that connects macroscale and microscale phenomena. The macro and micro-level distinction presupposes a distinction between large institutions and humans. However, Tarde has denied the essence of the actors' identity as we know it by using monads as a critical element. So, he attempts to challenge any linear causality to explain the interaction between different phenomena or actors.

Mobility theorists also argue that it is unnecessary to distinguish between the local level of humans and the abstract level of infrastructure or organizations to examine contemporary societies. Within a mobility network system, local levels identified by small groups can bring large-scale changes. Since societies are not orchestrated as structures but as networks, one cannot argue that large-scale objects necessarily consist of smaller-scale parts as components that are structured according to logic. On the contrary, small-scale objects can be even more complex than large ones in a world of flows. These small-scale objects can be combined unpredictably to form more significant flows. That does not mean that no kind of rationality rules these combinations. However, again, this is rationality, which is not linear, and more importantly, it needs to be more human-centric.

This new kind of social order creates what could be called *metastability*, as Urry notes.³⁰⁵ According to Thrift, another mobility theorist, in a world of electronic signatures, it is at least anachronistic to think subjects or localities conventionally.³⁰⁶ There are many examples in the globalized environment nowadays that show unpredictable changes that smaller agents can bring to larger scales. A first example is the domino effect that a small group of hackers has repeatedly caused in world politics and the world economy (such as Wikileaks or Anonymous). Such hackers sometimes physically reside in peripheral areas, like Iceland or New Zealand; they do not live in economic centers, like London or New York. Another example is that many groups, either talking about music fans or terrorists without being in physical contact, might live in different areas of the planet.

Finally, the third idea of Tarde, which is also central to the Mobility paradigm, concerns the concept of movement and displacement. Unlike Durkheim, who sought to ground his Sociology on social reproduction, Tarde proposes a Sociology attuned to innovation and creation. Mobility theorists also use this concept to propose that Sociology should focus on the movement instead of established structures and institutions to have a more in-depth understanding of societies.³⁰⁷ As Tarde argues, in his analysis about being and having, the monads are proprietors and not entities. Still, it is through their action, the changing of their position, in other words, through their Mobility, that monads reveal the nature of their possession.³⁰⁸

305 Urry, *Mobilities*, 27.

306 Thrift, "Driving in the city", 54.

307 Urry, *Sociology*, 1-20, Cresswell, *On the Move*, 1-18, Thrift, "Movement-space", 582-604.

308 Tarde, *Monadology*, 52. See also Latour, "Gabriel Tarde", 117-132.

CONCLUSIONS

Even though *Monadology and Sociology* is a work of 1893, a significant part of its argumentation bears similarities with the fundamental concepts of contemporary sociological theories, such as the Mobility paradigm. However, as mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, arguing that Gabriel Tarde has directly influenced contemporary poststructuralist views would be reductionist. Of course, as it has been argued, “*up to a point, at least, we can choose our ancestors*”.³⁰⁹ Therefore, the fact that contemporary scholars, such as Latour, acknowledge the importance of Tarde's intellectual heritage for their work is critical. However, as far as the Mobility paradigm is concerned, apart from Nigel Thrift, who explicitly cites Tarde's work, the rest of the abovementioned scholars do not do so.³¹⁰ Still, despite the 100-year chronological gap that exists between them, there are impressively common conclusions drawn from the two theoretical approaches. Regarding this similarity, Tarde's description of what we call information flows nowadays can be elucidating. According to him, we should not view the circulation of ideas as a “spiritualist” process but as a brain reproduction that bears an impetus on its own and, therefore, follows routes not entirely determined by the subjects involved. This point of view better explains that Tarde constructs an argument that remains partly marginal for decades and then becomes gradually mainstream towards the end of the 20th century within the current poststructuralism. Nevertheless, what is noteworthy is that Tarde used a vocabulary that seemed unorthodox and erratic for his age because, unlike the representatives of the Mobility paradigm, he could not use empirical examples from his contemporary era to ground his argumentation.³¹¹ However, Tarde's sociology can explain contemporary phenomena in a way that Sociologists who had been considered to be much more influencing at his age have not done so.

The epistemology of monads is the ground on which many critical theories of the postwar era have been based. For example, within the Historiography of the late 20th century, nations as essentialist notional categories have been revisited.³¹² It is exciting that Tarde, over a century ago, noticed that: “*Like stars, like living things, like illnesses, like chemical radicals, nations are nothing more than entities which have long been taken for true beings in the ambitious and sterile theories of so-called philosophical historians*”.³¹³

In conclusion, one could stress Latour's claim that Sociology might have been different if Tarde's ideas were mainstream in the sense that Durkheimian ideas have been.³¹⁴ We could also add that other fields of Humanities, like History or Philosophy, might have been different if Tarde had found recognition in his time, given the fact that in his *Monadology and Sociology*, he seeks to establish a Pansocial Ontology, by examining the common elements of all sciences, and all disciplines, the furniture of the world.³¹⁵

309 Peel J. D. Y. (1971) *Herbert Spencer: The Evolution of a Sociologist*, ix. As mentioned in Candea, *The Social*, vii.

310 Thrift N., “Pass it on: Towards a Political Economy of Propensity” in Canada M. (2010), *The Social after Gabriel Tarde*, 248-270. Thrift, “Driving in the city,” 54. Barry A. et al. (2007), “Gabriel Tarde: imitation, invention and economy,” *Economy and Society*, 36.4, 509-525.

311 See also, Latour, “Gabriel Tarde”, 117-132.

312 Tarde, *Monadology*, 7.

313 Latour, “Gabriel Tarde”, 117-132.

314 Latour, “Gabriel Tarde”, 117-132.

315 Lorenc Th., “Afterward: Tarde's Pansocial Ontology,” in Tarde G. (2012), *Monadology and Sociology*, 73-95.

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- ___ "Driving in the City," in *Automobilities*, eds. M. Featherstone, N. Thrift, and J. Urry, 41-60, London, Thousand Oaks, and New Delhi: Sage, 2005.
- ___ "Pass it on: Towards a Political Economy of Propensity" in *The Social after Gabriel Tarde. Debates and Assessments*, ed. M. Candea, 1-23, London and New York: Routledge, 2010.
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