

KNOWING AND THE KNOWN:

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
LECTURE 4: ANALYTICISM

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Supplemental Course • ECPR Bamberg, Germany

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DUALISM

- philosophical ontology
 - the situation of the observer/knower
 - about a *relation*, not about “mind” or “world”
- dualism = “mind-independent world”
 - the world *is* some way in and of itself
 - mind *discovers* world; world *pre-exists* mind

MONISM

- not “idealism”
 - privileging ideas (mind) over the material (world) presumes dualism
 - idealism = reverse Descartes
- not “subjectivism”
 - autonomous knowing subjects presume dualism
 - thinking does not make things so

DIS-SOLUTION OF DESCARTES

- start with embedded and embodied knowers
- no constitutively autonomous subjects
- no mind-independent world to be known; no world-independent minds to know it
- *process is central*
 - in particular, the process of constructing knowledge
 - practical involvement comes first!

WITTGENSTEIN, AGAIN

- language-games...
- no private rules; no private languages
- ...and forms of life
- tacit agreement about how to decide



INVOLVED KNOWING

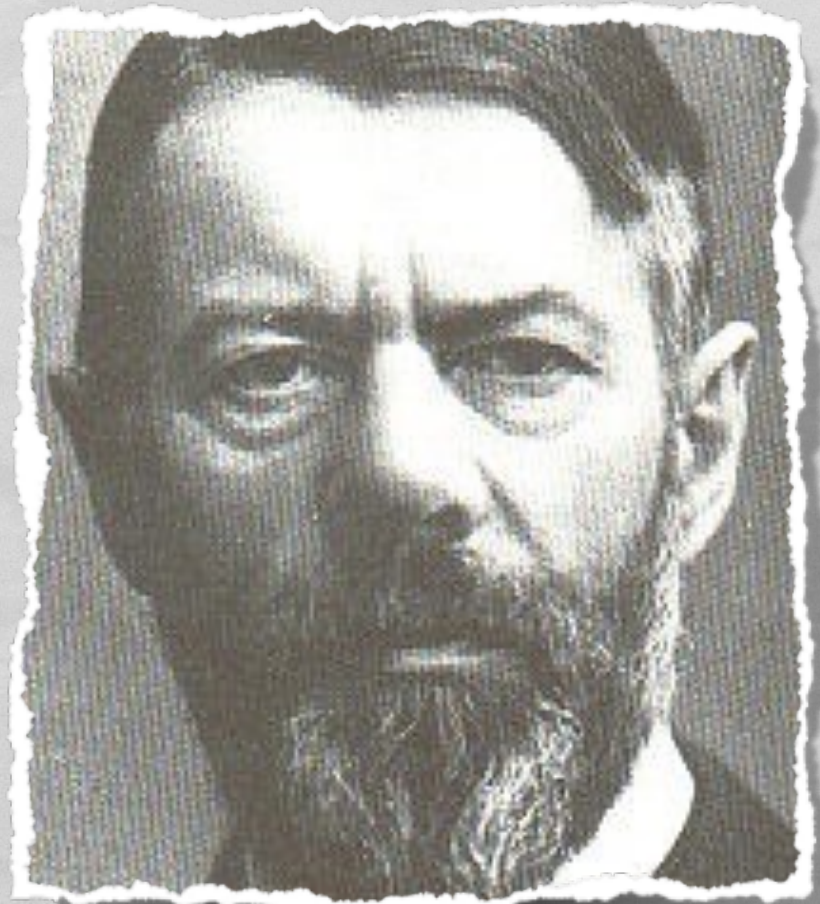
- scientific vs. other kinds of knowledge
 - primary involvement is the community of scientists
- the activity of research
 - use tools and procedures to answer questions
 - production of the world through exchanging symbols
 - generate consensus *intersubjectively*

INTERSUBJECTIVITY

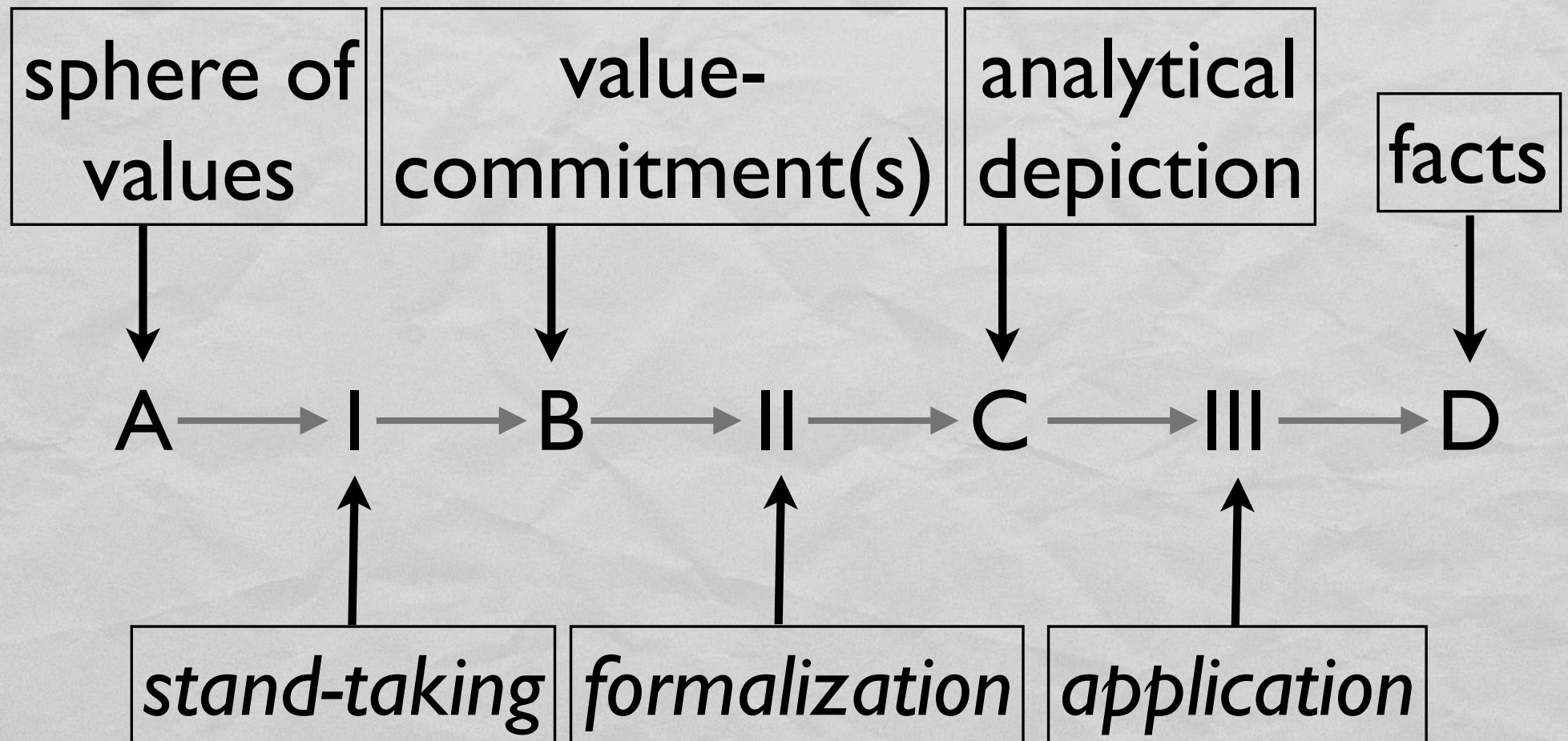
- priority of the “between”
 - structured/organized/arranged social space
 - start outside of any individual minds, but not outside of *all* minds
- no independent knowers
 - can't just make stuff up
 - change and continuity are both negotiated outcomes

WEBER

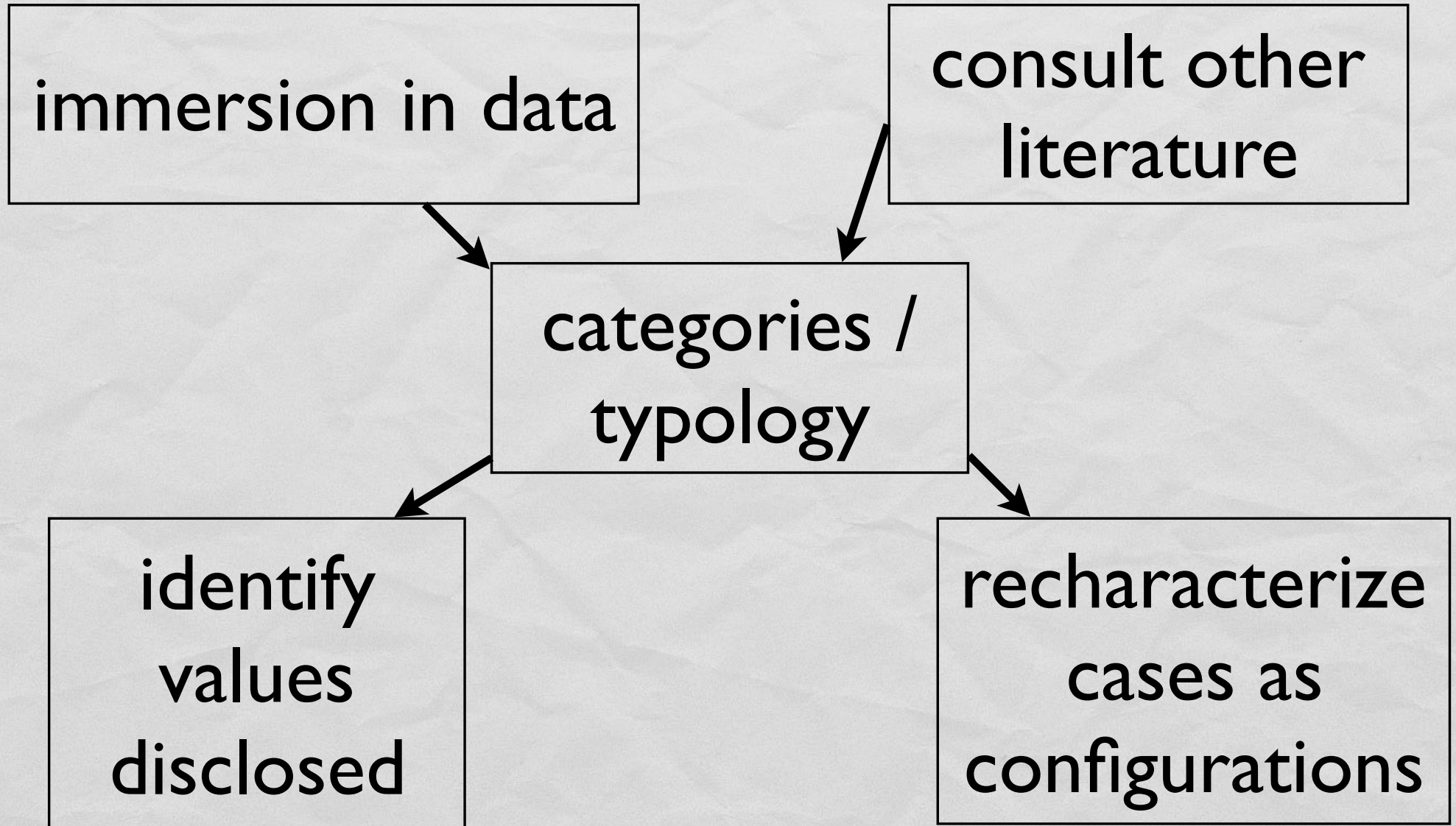
- ““Objectivity””: an editorial statement
- ideal-types: deliberate oversimplification
 - not “ideals” (but: utopias)
 - not “pure types” (but: both abstract and idealized)
- culturally grounded



IDEAL-TYPIIFICATION



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IDEAL-TYPICAL ANALYSIS

- central role of *imagined* counterfactuals
 - counterfactual \neq perfect comparative case
 - helps the community of researchers decide what is causal and what is not
- configurations of factors/processes are key
 - always more than one ideal-type involved
 - mediating tensions key to social life

INSTRUMENTALITY

- ideal-types are useful conceptual devices
 - “realism” or “accuracy” of assumptions is a non-starter
 - all ideal-types would be falsified in practice
- social-scientifically valid evaluation:
 - does the ideal-type helpfully order empirical actuality?
 - does the ideal-type coherently formalize its declared values?
 - *not*: do we agree with the value-commitments involved?

PHENOMENALISM

- knowledge confined to the sphere of experience
 - can't "know" anything about an ideal-type
 - can't use an ideal-type to normatively evaluate situations
- scientific knowing a *disciplined* form of world-making