The Imaginary: Challenges in Defining a Multifaceted Concept

Othmane HIRRANE

Phd student, Interdisciplinary Laboratory of Social Sciences,

Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of IBN ZOHR, Agadir, Morocco

Abstract:

Researchers in the social sciences, particularly in sociology, encounter difficulty in conceptualizing or developing an applicable operational framework for the concept of imaginary. This challenge arises from the multitude of definitions proposed for the concept and its varying interpretations across different scientific approaches, including philosophy, anthropology, psychology, history, physiology and sociology. Additionally, there is an overlapping of meanings in imaginative terms, such as social imaginary, cultural imaginary, collective imaginary and individual imaginary. In this context, this paper aims to highlight the differences among specialists' definitions, theoretical orientations, and the approaches used in studying imaginary within the field of social sciences.

Keywords: Imaginary, Collective Imaginary, concept, conceptualization

Introduction:

The widespread use of the term "imaginary" implies that its meaning is clear and easily distinguishable from other adjacent terms (representations, collective unconscious, ideology, utopia...)[1].However, when the question is posed in an academic context, researcher encounters difficulties to get a precise definition. Thus he finds himself faced with a complex task after discovering that the imaginary is a multifaceted concept that casts a shadow over various disciplines such as history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, philosophy or even literature. In this context, researchers argue that the first challenge in studying imaginary is to define it (Alina Şalgău Corocăescu, 2018).

The Examination of previous studies, especially sociological ones, does not necessarily lead to a ready-made understanding of the concept or to a widely accepted and field-tested procedural definition. In contrast, this process tends to increase the size of questions and the accumulation of characteristics that fall under the concept (Excessive amplification of the concept). Gilbert Durand(2015) recognized the preponderance of ambiguity in the use of expressions associated with the concept of imaginary, to the extent that researchers could not distinguish between images, meanings, metaphors, symbols, myths, drawings and icon.

Being aware of these difficulties will not free the researcher from the necessity to formulate a sociological conceptualization. Instead, at least, it will guide him towards constructing the concept of imaginary with more caution, by drawing it from all perspectives that intersect in this field. Taking these considerations into account, this study aims to highlight differences among the definitions and theoretical frameworks concerning the concept of imaginary, as well as the methodologies employed to investigate it within the domain of social sciences, in order to delineate its boundaries. The first axis will be devoted to delimit the objectives of the conceptualization process in social studies, while the second axis will concentrate on elucidating the differences between definitions presented by specialists.

---

[1]-This observation is noted by more than one researcher:

« Plusieurs chercheurs en sciences sociales utilisent le concept d'imaginaire social. Cependant, peu d'entre eux ont véritablement cherché à construire avec rigueur ce concept, voire même plus simplement à le définir. Ils l'utilisent le plus souvent en supposant que leurs lecteurs savent spontanément de quoi ils parlent. Le concept d'imaginaire social semble ainsi pour plusieurs auteurs relever en quelque sorte du sens commun. Pourtant, comme on le verra à l'instant, le concept d'imaginaire social est polysémique » (Patrice Leblanc,1994)

Sociological conceptualization:

Concepts constitute the fundamental building blocks within the field of social sciences, particularly sociology. They are the essential tools that link theories to the realm of research. Therefore, specialists agree on the significant importance of precisely defining concepts. Conceptualization refers to the process of defining and specifying the meanings of a concept and its semantic components, in order to arrive at an abstract or theoretical formulation that distinguishes it from other closely related concepts. This process is common to both quantitative and qualitative research, as it represents the initial step in its construction. Operationalization, on the other hand, refers to the process of measuring a concept by identifying the variables it encompasses. Operationalization is confined to quantitative studies and constitutes the second step in the construction process after conceptualization[2] (Joop J. Hox, 1997).

A concept can be defined as an abstract formulation that describes a part of reality, symbolizing a general term that refers to aspects of the studied phenomenon. It defines its characteristics and features in the social reality (Pamela J. Shoemaker et al, 2004), serving as a cognitive symbol with meaning within the scientific community that employs it (Philip M. Podsakoff et al, 2016).

The challenges of conceptual construction and its role in research, as well as the formulation of this construction, vary depending on the nature of the study. Quantitative research, following a deductive methodology, typically includes a section dedicated to defining concepts and key terms at the beginning of the thesis, and it provides an operational formulation of the concept right from the start. The main concern here is the measurement of variables. This proposed conceptual structure remains unchanged throughout the subsequent stages of the research (John W. Creswell, 2009).

In the case of qualitative studies, the researcher initially formulates a definition of the concept based on previous studies. This definition is included at the beginning of the research but is not comprehensive. It merely serves as a starting point for the area's exploration. The conceptual construction gradually unfolds as the study progresses, depending on the participants' understanding of the concept. This construction can be modified whenever necessary. A final formulation of the concept is only achieved at the end of the field study (John W. Creswell, 2009)

In this context, some scholars propose terminological differentiation between these two categories of concepts by labeling the concept developed in quantitative deductive studies as an isolated operational concept and naming the concept designed for qualitative inductive studies as systemic (Raymond Quivy et al.,2017). Raymond Quivy and Luc Van Campenhoudt(2017) point out that the difference between the systemic concept and the isolated operational concept is not merely methodological but also lies in the ability to uncover reality and break

---

[2] -Also see: Gary Goertz, 2006, p. 6, and Corbetta Piergiorgio, 2003, p. 77.

away from preconceived judgments. They argue that building an isolated operational concept experimentally based on partial observations and often biased and incomplete information exposes it to unconscious influences stemming from preconceived judgments and mental predispositions. In contrast, deriving the systemic concept through abstract thinking and systematic comparison with other concepts helps break free from these judgments.

Despite these differences, the scholars conclude that both the systemic concept and isolated procedural concept share the necessity of formulating their dimensions, components, and indicators. Any concept that does not include these levels is considered incomplete (Raymond Quivy et al.,2017). However, it's worth noting that the goal of extracting these elements as a common objective for building quantitative and qualitative concepts is not embraced by all scholars. Some quantitative researchers focus on extracting indicators and variables, while qualitative approaches emphasize defining a semantically-based definition by specifying its characteristics, similar to how dictionaries operate (Gary Goertz et al., 2012). To bridge the gap between quantitative and qualitative researchers in the concept-building process, some experts have proposed focusing on the conceptualization phase as the common ground between them (Philip M. Podsakoff et al., 2016).

It is admitted that the lack of conceptual precision in the social sciences is a major obstacle to scientific progress. The lack of precision in defining a concept can pose several obstacles. Conceptually, it may become difficult to distinguish the focal concept from other adjacent concepts. Furthermore, introducing a new concept that lacks the necessary rigor can lead to a proliferation of concepts, where the same meaning is expressed using different terms. It can also result in the overlap of elements and characteristics of concepts, causing confusion in the overall scientific output within the study's field of knowledge.

On a procedural level, the lack of precision in building a concept and defining its indicators and variables can have a significant impact on the robustness of research. It can lead to results that lack the necessary credibility. Indicators and variables that do not accurately represent the concept will not effectively capture the phenomenon and will not provide credible measurements. As a result, they will fail in their purpose of understanding or explaining what is truly happening in the field of study (Philip M. Podsakoff et al., 2016).

Standing on our research on the concept of "concept", particularly in English sociological studies, we noticed that the terms "construct" and "concept" are sometimes used interchangeably. However, some specialists have intentionally made distinctions between these two terms to remove ambiguity. For example, Joop J. Hox,(1997) identifies the difference between the two as a subtle one, with the first term being a more abstract and general concept than the second. He provides an example to illustrate the difference in generality between them: "deviance" and "delinquency." These terms differ in that "delinquency" represents

a specific case of "deviance," meaning that "deviance" is more general than "delinquency." The book "How To Build Social Science Theories"(2004) offers a simpler illustrative example that highlights the difference in abstraction and generality between "construct" and "concept." For instance, "media usage" is a construct, and its components such as "television usage," "newspaper usage," and "radio usage" are concepts.

We observed that in studies written or translated into Arabic, there is no differentiation between concept and construct. This suggests that the term "مفهوم" (concept) is sometimes used to refer to both, without the need for terminological clarification regarding in generality or abstraction. The absence of this essential distinction between concept and construct in sociological studies written in Arabic language will inevitably pose additional challenges for researchers.

The article emphasizes the importance of conceptualization as a common foundation between quantitative and qualitative approaches. In both quantitative and qualitative studies, a good conceptualization is essential. In quantitative studies, any solid operationalization of a concept must rely on a well-defined concept. Similarly, in qualitative studies, the precise formulation of the initial concept definition determines the paths for theory development from the field. Any deviation in the conceptualization can disrupt or undermine the construction of theory. Therefore, any hasty entry into the field without a well-defined concept can result in wasted effort and counterproductive outcomes.

Given that some concepts in the social sciences lack consensus, the concept of imaginary is considered as one of the most complex and multifaceted concept with no unanimity among experts. Sociological studies related to imaginary are still in their early stages. In this context, this article represents a direct result of the initial steps of conceptualization. It examines previous studies and delves into their theoretical approaches to clarify the differences and commonalities in the definitions in social sciences.

The Imaginary's Multivalence:

Imaginary is a polysemic[3] concept with multiple meanings, often used to refer to various phenomena, sometimes carrying distinct and even conflicting connotations. It can be considered as a vague or fuzzy concept. Patrice Leblanc(1994) highlights this complexity surrounding imaginative research, stating that scholars don't speak of a single concept but employ the term imaginary to encompass different phenomena and concepts, such as utopia, ideology,

---

[3] - Fred W. Riggs give indicates that one of the major challeges that hinders concept-building in sociology is polysemy : "it is often easy enough to distinguish between the various meanings (concepts) signified by a word, sometimes it is very difficult because overlapping and closely related concepts are designated, "polysemantically," by a single word. When several possible meanings of a word are so entangled that it is difficult to sort them out, we speak of the word as a "polyseme," and of the resulting problem as "polysemy." The core of sociology's terminological problem is the disambiguation of polysemes"(Fred W. Riggs,1979,p176).

representations, and collective memory. One of the reasons for this, according to Leblanc (1994), is the nature of the concept itself, as it doesn't exist in raw, observable form in reality, unlike simpler concepts. The main reason is the lack of priority given to defining or establishing a scientific basis for imaginary by scholars (Patrice Leblanc, 1994).

Research and scientific articles provide us with some definitions of imaginary, drawn from studies by pioneers in this field. However, these definitions are often vague and open to multiple interpretations. For example, Valentina Grassi (2005) cites the following definition of Gilbert Durand:

"Imaginary is the inevitable representation, and the encoding capacity from which all aspirations, hopes, and their cultural fruits that have continually arisen for a million and a half years since the emergence of Homo Erectus on Earth." (Valentina Grassi, 2005)

This definition may be subject to various interpretations and may be challenging to break down into its internal characteristics. It may not serve as a starting point for sociological studies. The questions posed by this definition go beyond its ability to encapsulate imaginative phenomena in reality. For example, does imaginary in this case refer to a repository of representations? Is it common to all humans, or are there distinctions among societies and individuals? Has imaginary been a continuous repository since the emergence of humanity? Is it innate, genetically inherited, or acquired? What is the relationship between representations and imagination, and what are the boundaries of each? Is it individual or collective? These are just a few of the legitimate questions that researchers may address when making imaginary as a central concept in their theses.

In another definition, Durand acknowledges that imaginary is "a museum of all images... present everywhere and can appear to us in dreams, hallucinations, and visions... it appears in more specific forms: in myths, in artistic creations... and today, in cinematic production" (Anne-Pauzet, 2005)[4]. This definition specifies the form of imaginary as a museum of images - not a force that codes. It also refers to its appearance in collective forms like myths as well as in individuals' dreams.

It's worth noting that these two definitions are different, and if we were to simplify the quotations without returning to the theoretical context from which they were taken, it might seem that Gilbert Durand is referring to two different

---

[4] - «L'imaginaire peut se définir comme le musée de toutes les images, qu'elles soient passées, possibles, produites ou à produire. Il est difficile de décrire de quelle façon il se manifeste, parce qu'il Ya de l'imaginaire partout. Il peut arriver sans crier gare, dans le rêve ou la rêverie, dans le délire, les visions ou les hallucinations. Mais il se présente aussi sous des formes plus abouties: dans les mythes, dans la création artistique, qu'elle soit littéraire, musicale, picturale, et aujourd'hui dans les productions cinématographiques.« Gilbert Durand, dans Philippe Cabin, »Une cartographie de l'imaginaire. Entretien avec Gilbert Durand«, Sciences Humaines, no 90, janvier 1999, p. 28

concepts with the same term. The term **museum** used above refer to a fixed place with defined landmarks where images are stored, distinct from a **laboratory**, for example, which has the ability to produce symbols. On the other hand, Valentina Grassi defines imaginary - based on Durand's work - as the power responsible for transforming representations. The purpose of this transformation is to reach the process of imagination, through which the representation is completed (Valentina Grassi, 2005). It should be pointed out that this definition aligns with the notion that imaginary is a "laboratory" and not a "museum". What we seek to emphasize here is that the concept of imaginary is difficult to define precisely, even in the studies of the same researcher.

This process to define the concept becomes more complex when we move to other scientific fields. In analytical psychology, Jacques Lacan was the first to introduce the concept of imaginary into the field of social sciences. Florence Quest-Desprairies (2016) defines imaginary from Jacques Lacan's perspective as referring to a set of images, assumptions, representations, similarities, and meanings that affect the individual and shape their ego during a state of illusion.

Lacan used the concept of imaginary in his study about the formation of the ego in the "mirror stage." In the early stages of a child's life, the child's encounter with his reflected image in the mirror is one of the foundational factors in the formation of the ego, where the child realizes that his reflected image is his own extension. This image constitutes the imaginary part of child's "self," in addition to the realistic dimension reflected by his actual feelings about his body, and then the symbolic dimension recognized through language (Didier Castanet, 2021). Lacan turned imagination into a fundamental aspect of understanding psychological phenomena, but his concept is limited to grasp individual cases and does not extend to revealing collective phenomena. Thus, Lacan's imaginary remains confined to the psychological domain and cannot surpass it to explain other levels.

On the other hand, John Jack Wunenberger (2003), a specialist in philosophy and Imaginative studies, notes that imagination applies to individuals as well as to groups, cultures, and peoples. He defines it as a collection of mental and material productions generated by the process of encoding. It includes linguistic levels (myths, poetic images) and visual levels (drawings, images, icons, etc.). This definition is crucial from our perspective because it manages to bridge the formulations of both the "laboratory" and the "museum" presented by Gilbert Durand. This definition clarifies that imaginary is a coding mechanism that simultaneously produces and accumulates its own productions.

According to the historian, sociologist and specialist in imaginative studies, Gérard Bouchard, this definition is incomplete because it does not encompass all aspects of the concept. He criticized previous definitions for lacking the psychological dimension (Psyché) and for the ambiguity surrounding them, as they fail to distinguish between the fixed, evolving, and producible elements

within it. Bouchard substitutes the concept of imaginary with the concept of "collective imaginary". He distinguishes it from social imaginary. Gérard Bouchard excluded the use of the term "social imaginary" because it refers to the conscious and rational part of social life, lacking the psychological dimension (Gérard Bouchard, 2014).

It's essential to note that Gerard Bouchard did not take into account that his concept of collective imaginary, had previously been employed in a different context and with a different meaning within the field of social psychology by Giust-Desprairies since 1989. It serves as a central concept in her studies. The use of the concept, from the researcher's perspective, is limited to the micro-social level, especially in the context of relationships between individuals within a group that shares membership in a specific organization, institution, association, or work group, all of which are united by a common project (Florence Giust-Desprairies, 2019). She defines imaginary as a set of elements organized within a specific semiotic unit for the group, with the condition that the group may not be aware of the existence of these elements. One of its functions is to implicitly shape harmony and consensus within the group (Florence Giust-Desprairies, 2016). This is a good typical example of the proliferation of imaginative concepts in social sciences.

These two perspectives differ in that the collective imaginary, as defined by Bouchard, constitutes a complex concept that addresses macro-social phenomena and cannot be confined to lower levels. It serves as a framework that combines psychological, cultural, and social aspects, and it can be broken down into four dimensions: The base composed by the unconscious, encompassing emotions, sentiments, and feelings, is followed by cognitive dimensions, analytical categories, and finally cultural forms produced by collective representations (Gérard Bouchard, 2014).

One of the additions made by Bouchard is his division of imaginary into a fixed part that individuals and groups cannot change and another part that is dynamic and linked to collective representations (myths and ideologies). In this context, he emphasizes the difference between imaginary and collective unconscious in Durkheim, where the former includes fixed parts while the latter refers to dynamic cultural forms like mythical representations and ideological structures (Gérard Bouchard, 2014).

Gérard Bouchard focused on the study of myths, considering them as powerful social mechanisms with a real impact on the lives of individuals and societies. He viewed their construction as a rational social process. This idea extends the argument put by Gilbert Durand, who emphasized that myths are dynamic systems and the starting point for the rationalization of symbols, images, and initial ideas (Gilbert Durand, 20016). In this context, Bouchard explored the relationships and forms of power that shape the conditions for the emergence of myths (Gérard Bouchard, 2014, p. 17). This proposal adds an important dimension

to the rationalization process proposed by Gilbert Durand, suggesting that myths are the products of social actors in competitive situations.

This idea opens up the possibility to link imaginary to ideology and to the struggle for symbolic and material power centers throughout history. It means that the conflict between human groups may give rise to symbolic mythic conflicts, where the spread or decline of a social myth can be one of the consequences Thus, the direction of myths, as defined above, is a conscious process that can be undertaken by groups or systems to preserve their interests. Consequently, any support for the spread of one myth at the expense of others can lead to variation in power dynamics within society.

Within the same framework, Gilbert Durand(2016) highlights a controversial idea, affirming that the occidental's superiority over other civilizations finds its roots and justifications in imaginary and his mythological representations. This is based on the idea that mythological narratives in Indo-European cultures, especially in the occident, are structured around the triad of the priest, the warrior, and the producer. This symbolic division has been reflected in the division of functions in social life, particularly in the political sphere, where legislative, executive, and judicial powers are separated. We believe that this imaginative justification for Western superiority is tainted by many doubts. Especially if we take in consideration that civilization progress is relative throughout history, not exclusive to the occident alone.

Sociology entered the field of imaginary studies later compared to psychology, philosophy or anthropology. All imaginative studies were classified under the "Sociology of Imaginary." However, it is not a distinct scientific field like other traditional subjects. Patrick Legros, Frédéric Monnier, John Bruno Ronaro, and Patrick Tacosel define in their book "Sociology of the Imaginary"(2006) that this scientific field is not defined by a specific subject matter, as is the case with urban sociology, labor sociology, or sociology of religion, etc. Instead, it is a perspective on the social that focuses on studying the imaginative aspect of all social phenomena (Patrick Legros et al., 2006). Therefore, according to this definition, all social topics and activities contain a deep imaginative dimension that must be explored, where mythical and symbolic thought is the subject of this sociology (Aurélien Fouillet, 2015). This stance leads to confining the field and subject under sociology of the imaginary to the study of symbolic and mythical representations that underlie human activities. Thus, any sociological research on the imaginary must necessarily be connected to the mythical dimension, which constitutes the hidden and profound basis of all phenomena.

Michel Maffesoli is the first sociologist to delve into the subject of imaginary (Valentina Grassi, 2005) . His research falls within the interpretive paradigm, so he rejects any attempts to embrace reductionism in sociology. Instead, he follows Duranian conceptualization and Weberian approach, to emphasizing the limitations of statistics, causality, and linearity in the exploration of imaginative

aspects of human beings (Martine Xiberras, 2002). In an article titled "L'imaginaire comme force invisible,", Maffesoli defines imaginary as the basis of social life, which forms the "hidden church"(Michel Maffesoli,2016). This hidden church has the power to reintroduce magic into a disenchanted world. So, society can restore the magic, illusion, and religion that Max Weber declared had been removed from the world due to rationality.

To understand this definition, it is necessary to consider the context in which Michel Maffesoli introduces the concept. Maffesoli focuses on studying societies classified as "post-modern," where social life is characterized by the reliance on common instincts and the invisible forces of collective memory. These societies aim to create "relational" relationships between individuals and between them and the world, based on trust and emotion. This idea represents a skip from modernity founded on the control's ideology of self and world (Michel Maffesoli, 2016).

From Maffesoli's perspective, the post-modern society embodies the concept of sociality, in contrast to the "social" denoting the mechanistic relationships of modernity (Valentina Grassi, 2005) . Post-modern technologies, including social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), cyberspaces, and video games, function as tools employed by post-modernity to reintroduce a sense of enchantment into the world. While modernity and its rationality sought to eliminate enchantment, post-modern technologies have successfully revived it. Virtual communities, within this re-enchanted society, represent a tangible manifestation of post-modern communities built upon interconnectedness (Maffesoli, 2013). In this reenchanted society, imagination plays a profound role in fostering solidarity and unity by "being together." According to Maffesoli, imaginary serves as the underlying spiritual foundation responsible for shaping every individual's life within the community (Maffesoli, 2016).

Conclusion:

This article presents the result of a literature review, aimed at highlighting the differences in definitions of imaginary provided by specialists. As we discussed earlier, these differences give rise to ambiguity in delineating the concept. Some of these definitions perpetuate this ambiguity by using various terms (such as imaginary, collective imaginary, social imaginary, popular imaginary, and individual imaginary) interchangeably and without clear differentiation between them. Furthermore, the tendency of some researchers to establish their own conceptualizations without investigating its previous uses in social sciences has led to a proliferation of imaginative concepts, including the concept of the "collective imaginary". Faced with the difficulty of defining this concept precisely, Brigitte Mounier (2018) points out that its excessive use in various disciplines has diluted its precision. Therefore, the term 'imaginary' deserves to be labeled as a rogue concept[5].

Despite the absence of a precise scientific definition of imagination, methodological necessity in sociology requires starting by defining it based on previous studies. Given this situation, we suggest narrowing the scope of studies on imaginary to mythic representations that guide individuals and groups, as advocated by sociologists such as Patrick Legros, Frédéric Monnier, John Bruno Ronaro, Patrick Tacussel, Gerard Bouchard, and Michel Maffesoli. This narrowing necessitates directing every attempt to define imagination toward a focus on mythic representations. Additionally, we believe that the AT9 test, conducted by Yves Durand in psychology, can provide hope for operationalizing imaginary for the benefit of sociological quantitative studies. Hence, sociology should capitalize on the accomplished transition of the imaginary concept, moving it effectively from a collective to an individual level (Yves Durand, 2010).

---

[5] « une trop grande plasticité due à un emploi transdisciplinaire a fragilisé la notion d'imaginaire jusqu'au galvaudage menant au discrédit : elle en vient à désigner pêle-mêle l'univers des croyances, des valeurs et des images peuplant l'inconscient d'un individu, d'un peuple ou d'une culture. » (Brigitte Munier,2018,p52)

References:

Bouchard G. *Raison et déraison du mythe : au coeur des imaginaires collectifs*, de Gérard Bouchard, Montréal, Les Éditions du Boréal, 2014.

Castanet D. L'imaginaire. Du stade du miroir à l'objet a et au nœud borroméen. Clinique et éthique. L'en-je lacanien. 2021 Dec(2):5-8.

Corbetta P. Social research: Theory, methods and techniques. Sage; 2003.

Creswell JW, Creswell JD. Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches. Sage publications; 2017.

Durand G. Les structures anthropologiques de l'imaginaire-12e éd. Armand Colin; 2016.

Durand, Yves. "Les structures des systèmes de l'imaginaire." (2011).

Fouillet. A. Esquisse d'une sociologie phénoménologique de l'imaginaire. Sociétés. 2015(1):49-65.

Xiberras M. Pratique de l'imaginaire: lecture de Gilbert Durand. Presses Université Laval; 2002.

-Wunenburger, Jean-Jacques. *L'imaginaire*. France : Presse universitaire de France. 2003.

Shoemaker. Pamela .J., Tankard. James. William. Jr., & Lasorsa. Dominic .L.. *How to Build Social Science Theories*. California : Sage publications, 2004.

Podsakoff, Philip.M., Mackenzie, Scott.B., & Podsakoff,Nathan.P.. Recommendations for Creating Better Concept Definitions in the Organizational, Behavioral, and Social Sciences. *Organizational Research Methods*,1-45, 2016.

Pérez,Claude-Pierre.. « l'imaginaire » : Naissance,diffusion et métamorphoses d'un concept critique. *Revue Littérature*,173(2),102-116 , 2014.

Pauzet,Anne.. Representations picturales et imaginaire collectif. Éla. Études de linguistique appliquée,138(2), 137-151. 2005.

Munier, Brigitte. L'imaginaire, un concept-voyou. Hermès, La Revue, 80(1),51-55. 2018.

Maffesoli, Michel.. L'imaginaire comme force invisible. *Im@go A Journal of the social imaginary*, n°8, 6-14. 2016.

Maffesoli, Michel. *Imaginaire et postmodernité : Synergie de l'archaïsme et du développement technologique*. Paris : éditions Manucius. 2013.

Leblanc,Patrice.. L'imaginaire social.Note sur un concepte flou. *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie*, vol97,415-434. 1994.

Goertz,Gary, & Mahoney,James. Concept and measurement :Ontology and epistemology. *Socialo Science Information*,51(2),205-216. 2012.

Goertz,Gary. *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide. New Jersey* : Prinetone university press. 2006.

Giust-Desprairies,Florence.Castoriadis Cornélius(1922-1997). In Barus-Michel.Jacqueline , Eugène.Enriquez & André. Lévy(Eds), *Vocabulaire de psychologie*. Èrès.450-462. 2016.

Grassi V. Introduction à la sociologie de l'imaginaire. Erès; 2005 Jan 14.

Campenhoudt LV, Quivy R. Manuel de recherche en sciences sociales. Paris, Dunod. 2011.

Gilbert D. L'imagination symbolique. Paris, Quadrige. 2015.