

JUSTIFYING CRITICAL DIFFERENCES

Which Concepts of Value Are Sustainable in an Expanded Coordination?

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O. INTRODUCTION

It is now widely accepted that globalization process puts a high strain on the present diversity of values which has been produced by a variety of cultures or civilizations. We are proposed two contrasted types of scenario: one is an eventual reduction of this diversity and unification within one outstanding value frame; the other is a possible composition of a plurality of value frames which would support the kind of enlargement of their scope which a global world requires. If we choose to explore the more attractive second scenario, close attention has to be paid to the two distinct problems of composition and enlargement of value frames.

As a matter of fact, these two problems have long been the core of the political constitution of particular societies, before any global extension was debated. To build a "polity" -- if we use this term to designate such a political constitution of societies-- one has to solve both of these problems: (a) in order to maintain civil peace, a mode of composition should integrate the plurality of goods which the society members are looking for and prevent a violent confrontation; (b) in order to govern the polity, a reference to the public good must enlarge somehow the particular goods and interests which are at stake. Political philosophers were the designers of such constructions of polities. I am particularly concerned here by the "political and moral grammars" which sustain these constructions, and I want to relate them to a problem of coordination between human agents. In the first section, I will recall some of these grammars which govern the kind of agreements and disagreements considered as most legitimate in a polity. The first focuses on collective entities while the second is based on individual ones. I will compare the way each of them fosters, or blocks, a move towards the globalization of human interactions.

Does globalization concern exclusively the kind of human interactions which political philosophy and social sciences usually deal with? I don't think so, considering that globalization is primarily characterized in terms of new communication and market networks which, only in a second phase, affect politics and morals. It then raises a difficult problem for modern political philosophy which is not well prepared to integrate such technical realities. In so-called traditional societies, cosmologies maintained a civil peace which extended far beyond the human community. They aggregate a whole variety of entities to the congregation of human beings. But modern sciences have monopolized the investigation into the order of nature, its laws and uncertainties. Political and moral philosophy only rescues the enquiry on human order and its troubles. In a second section, I state that we are in great need, nowadays, of political and moral grammars of a new sort, which would enable us to sustain a realist polity, in the sense of its being abundantly furnished and equipped with things of nature and artifice. My contention is that values and goods help to coordinate not only the relations between human beings but also in their commerce with natural or artificial entities of their environment. I submit the grammars which I previously sketched out to the question of their ability to integrate relations with things.

This leads to the third section which introduces a third type of political and moral grammar which I analyzed with Luc Boltanski (Boltanski et Thévenot, 1991).¹ This grammar offers an integration of relations to things and departs significantly from the two above mentioned models. Our work originated from the empirical study of disputes involving people and things, when people have recourse to most legitimate forms of evaluation to frame their arguments and put them to a test. What we called "orders of worth". Then, we had a new look on a series of political philosophers whom we selected because they adequately captured the construction of each of these orders of worth. As I argue in the fourth and last section, this grammar of worth is a key construction for our present reflection, because it results in the transformation of a variety of local forms of evaluation in order to make them compatible with a requirement of *common humanity*. In addition, each order of worth places value on a mode of relation with our non human environment while also governing human relationships. The result of a comparative study of repertoires of evaluation in France and the USA (Lamont and Thévenot 2000) helps to situate the place of these different grammars in contrasted political and moral contexts.

¹ For an introduction of the line of argument in English, see: Boltanski and Thévenot 1999, 2000; for a short presentation and positioning of the research program, see Thévenot 1995. For the analysis of economical organizations as devices for compromising complexity, see: Thévenot 2001c. For discussions in English of this research program, see: Dodier 1993, Wagner 1994; on its more recent extensions, see: Wagner 1999; for a comparison with Callon's and Latour's framework and a contrast with Bourdieu's, see: Bénatouil 1999; on implication for economic theory, see: Wilkinson 1997.

POLITICAL AND MORAL GRAMMARS COPING WITH GLOBALIZATION

Looking at Values as Coordinating Devices

My approach to values is the following. I contend that values and similar normative concepts are devices which human societies have crafted to deal with the problematic coordination of human conducts. They serve to frame disputes (not to prevent them) and to find settlements. This perspective on values in use does not confine to contextual interactions or local negotiation. I am concerned by the ways values, or references to the good, support the generalization of arguments and settlements. It allows me to reverse the initial question on the consequences of globalization on a diversity of values. I would rather explore the following question: How do various conceptualizations of values support the kind of enlargement of the scope in the coordination of actions which is required by contemporary societies?

The conception of "modes of coordination" I defend departs from the usual understanding of coordination in the following way. As I view it, coordination articulates two notions which are frequently opposed: the engagement of some *good* and of some *reality*.

On the one hand, practical coordination demands that the agent uses some *form of evaluation* to screen what is most important for him or her to take into account for one's action. This form of evaluation implies the delineation of some *good*, which might be more or less extended, from an idea of the common good to a notion of private interest. On the other hand, coordination is a practical issue. The form of evaluation is put to a reality test when action is effectively engaged. Thus, my approach links the orientation towards some kind of good to a characterization of the access to reality which leads to some sort of *realism*.

Depending on the ways the good and the reality are treated, agents coordinate their conducts along a variety of pragmatic "regimes of engaging the world," as I coined the notion (Thévenot 1990, 2001a, 2001b). Here, I shall focus on public regimes which have been specifically devised for the broad coordination of action at distance, not for engaging in familiarity, for instance.

The Constitution of a "Polity" and Its Political and Moral Grammar

Long before any consideration on globalization was raised, the constitution of *polities* had already coped, on a more limited basis, with the issue of legitimate modes of coordinating actions. Viewed in the perspective of coordination, the political and moral grammars which sustain such polities offers specific answers to the following questions:

(1) Which are the coordinated entities? How are the members of the polity characterized? How do they *qualify for* being represented in the polity?

(2) Which is the relevant *good* which is supposed to orient the agents' conducts and their forms of evaluations?

(3) Which *mode of composition* integrates the various types of goods and contribute to the coordination of conducts?

(4) Which *enlargement* of these goods makes the reference of a *public good* possible?

Let us first consider two contrasted political and moral grammars which are frequently involved in the debate over globalizing values.

A Grammar of Community

A first kind of grammar sustains communitarian polities and might be specified with the following features:

(1) Human agents are treated as members of a particular community and closely linked by this common membership; they are better characterized as a collectivity.

(2) The good is a common good for the community; it might be substantially defined; it is expressed through traditions and rituals.

(3) The coordination succeeds because of the alignment of conducts which are made similar by a strong affinity of shared motives. More or less institutionalized conventions enforce this alignment.

(4) The communitarian good is enlarged at the scale of the whole community, though not at a larger scope.

A Grammar of Liberal Democracy

The political grammar of liberal democracy differs from the previous one on each of its main features:

(1) Human agents are viewed as individuals moved by an autonomous will.

(2) The relevant good has the limited scope of the individual agent. The associated form of evaluation is subjective preference. Even values and references to "common goods" such as altruism are, in this construction, reduced to individual preferences. This individual good is frequently naturalized in terms of a causal interest. Individual goods or interests might be extended to collective interests. But they still remain of the same kind and do not create membership, or strong ties, among individuals who are oriented towards the same good.

(3) The coordination is achieved through the composition of individual goods expressed by individual opinions, and a negotiation between the different interests, stakeholders or lobbies.

(4) The output of this coordination process is a good which has been made public by the composition of a plurality of independent voices.

Putting the Two Grammars to the Test of Globalization

From the previous sketch of the two types of grammars, what can we say regarding the consequences of globalization on each of them?

The first grammar of the community is clearly not well prepared for extension. Membership involves a double attachment to a particular past and to a particular space which solidifies the boundaries of the community and hardens the distinction between those who are within and those who are outside. It raises obstacles for communication across these boundaries. The territorial anchoring also opposes the kind of nomadic detachment which globalization demands. The alignment of conducts is the source of communitarian coordination, but does not help for action and judgment with strangers. Valorization on the basis of common membership might easily lead to ostracism and violent confrontation.

As a result of these features, this first model is generally disqualified when the issue of globalization is at stake. It serves to promote the advantages of the second model, making it to appear as particularly adjusted to a global extension of market and communication exchanges. A third model might actually appear to be even more adequate for a large extension of exchanges, and to combine the benefits both of liberal democracy and of communitarianism, that is multiculturalism.

The Multicultural Enlargement of the Liberal Grammar

Although there are many versions of multiculturalism, I shall state that this last grammar is generally akin to the second liberal one, while absorbing the first –communitarian-- by means of a drastic reduction of the notion of community. The multiculturalist grammar might allow a plurality of communities to find their place in a globalized extension of the polity, following the way they composed more limited immigrant nations. But the reduction has its cost since it transforms communitarian polities into cultural identities.

Social sciences actively cooperated to this political transformation. Ethnologists contributed to obtain equal recognition for the values of most diverse societies, in a brave defense of a universal human nature. The crafting of the notion of culture served the projection of a variety of exotic polities on the same plane, bringing them into an equivalent form and opposing the hierarchical ordering of folks or races. In contemporary politics, this leveling process does not aim at integrating exotic worlds, but at maintaining some coherence in the interior of the polity. The multicultural reduction treats the diversity of communities as a range of identities within which individuals might do their choice for their own benefit, as they do with any other individual good.

THE QUESTIONABLE REALISM OF POLITICAL AND MORAL GRAMMARS

The comparison of the previous grammars shows that the second and the third ones are much more armed to cope with globalization. In fact, they have already been tested in the composition of immigrant nations. However, several limitations appear in the implementation of these models of polity. I will point to some of them which relate to the two key issues I chose to focus on, in my approach of modes of coordination: the kind of *realism* which the grammar allows and the kind of *good* which may be discussed within this grammar. The two issues converge in a reflection on the notion of critical pluralism that the model sustains.

The Missing Good and Reality of Multicultural Pluralism

In the enlargement of the liberal grammar to multiculturalism, pluralism is achieved with two types of sacrifice. First, it renounces the prospect of comparison and commensuration between the variety of values which are embedded in different cultures. It hinders the reflection on forms of good and evaluation which might overcome, for certain purposes of large-scale coordination, the boundaries between these cultures. Such a reflection is discredited because of its universalistic pretension which is supposed to hide the dominating project of a particular culture. I take seriously the threat of a dominating value and this was the point of departure of my talk. But this threat should not prevent the debate on the kind of goods and evaluations which might be compatible with the recognition of a common humanity. In fact, a closer examination shows that some critical version of a multicultural polity assumes a kind of common good. We called it *civic* and it aims at a universal quest of equality and solidarity among human beings. This kind of good is the necessary basis for criticizing the abusive domination of one culture on the other, and claiming solidarity in favor of such and such dominated minority.

Hence, the first sacrifice halts the search for general forms of evaluation, or common goods, which could help coordination between human beings beyond their cultural membership or identity. The second sacrifice prevents the exploration of a second important question for our purpose: How do specifications of the common good contribute to the integration of a material reality within a polity. This exploration is crucial for the issue of globalization since we observe that the development of new technology is playing a central role in the transformation and enlargement of polities. Yet multiculturalism is mainly oriented towards beliefs, or symbolic identities. The limitation of pluralism to a tolerant diversity of beliefs entails a default of realism. If a polity is composed by a juxtaposition of incommensurate beliefs, opinions or values, it does not hold on the reality of nature and artifice which constitutes the "furniture", or the equipment of human societies. We see an unhappy consequence of this limitation in the fact that the political and moral issues raised by globalization are viewed as *debatable* while market or communication networks are considered as *causing* the move and, therefore, out of debate.

In fact, the grammar of multiculturalism has affinity with market realism. In continuity with the liberal grammar, it fits well the kind of reality which privately satisfies the good of individuals and allows negotiation between them. The market formatting of reality which shapes market goods espouse the liberal grammar. Cultural identities are thus marketed as other merchandises. In its less radical forms, the grammar of multiculturalism implicitly includes the common good of market competition and the kind of reality which qualifies for price evaluation. This grammar does not offer a critical interplay between a plurality of common goods, nor the possibility to question the overwhelming extension of market.

The Lack of Material Embedding of Political and Moral Grammars

More generally, political and moral grammars rarely pay close attention to the natural and artificial embedding of human communities. Among few notable exceptions, Marx analyzes, in *Capital*, the role of merchandise, exchange value and use value in political economy (Marx 1887), and Arendt pays careful attention, in *The Human Condition* (1958), to the role played by the environment of human artifacts in the "housing" of individual lives.² The most influential model of political economy conceives politics and morals of human relations with things in the state of commodities. The specific notion of realism which originates in this relation to market goods deeply influenced theories of justice in their views of distributive justice as an individual allocation of scarce resources. I deplore that such theories usually presuppose only one kind of human relations with his/her environment, while we should account for the variety of these relations in contemporary societies. A realist approach to the questioning on the good should not confine to the allocation of market goods. Once we admit that the various conceptions of the good contribute to the coordination of human beings with their surrounding, we need a more open view on the variety of ways human beings engage with nature and artifice. Unrealistic political grammars leave to natural sciences the whole burden of dealing with the material world. In such issues as Genetically Modified Organism, or Cow disease, opinions and values appeared to be weak in many occasions when confronted to scientific statements which monopolize objectivity.

Which Conception of Realist Politics?

Taking things into account usually occurs at a second step, once the political grammar has been built. Many critiques of techniques thus originates in politics and morals which have been devised to govern purely human communities. In a second step, they ask whether the addition of techniques has been advantageous for human communities. I propose to partly reverse these two steps. I shall first consider, from the very beginning of the political and moral enquiry, that human beings are attached to a material environment. I shall even state that moral considerations are built on these attachments. The thrust of the argument is that attachment to things eventually brings asymmetries among human capacities. The perspective of a common human dignity, which remains a principal moral prerequisite, questions the ground or rationale of these asymmetries. The result is a specification of the good which takes into account a certain relation to things.

Attachment to things enhance the capacities of human beings. However, any involvement of things does not immediately triggers the questioning of the good in terms of common humanity, or injustice. A statement about unequal capacities requires that a certain relation to things must be systematically generalized. This is the case, for example, of a systematic relation to things as market goods, or as technical implements, or as signs which support common visibility, or as informational devices, etc. Once generalized, a certain relation to things makes particular situations comparable. Otherwise, they stay too manifold to be comparable and give rise to a shared concern about asymmetrical capacities. Local situations might cause personal uneasiness but do not ease the expression of general statements about injustice or abuse of power. Power is at stake though it cannot constitute an a priori category of analysis: its formulation and questioning vary along with the kind of relation to things which is generalized.

AGRANDIZING REALITY AND VALUES

Values and Systems

Social theories which build on the notion of "system", from Parsons to Luhmann, have the great merit to capture a major feature of human societies: the human tendency to systematize linkages between entities in order to elaborate consistent and auto-referenced worlds. But these theories frequently overlook the cognitive and material operations which achieve systematic linkages. The analyst's task should not be limited to the identification of a "medium", such as money or influence (Parsons), which is supposed to shape human relationships and codify them. The comparison shows that the first medium substantially differs from the second in that it is far more materialized. We need to explore in great detail the process of bringing consistency and establishing systematic linkages between entities through codification or, more generally, what I analyzed as "investments of forms" (Thevenot 1984). What does this systematization specifically demand, by comparison with other ways of engaging reality in non codified forms? Answers to this question cannot be found within the systemic approach. Habermas was quite aware of this problem when he elaborated his theory of communicative action to dispose of an external support and be able to criticize the intrusion of systemic relations into politics. I propose another avenue of research. While I fully acknowledge the role played by systematic integration, I do not stay at the level of codified knowledge and behavior. My contention is that issues of justice and deliberation on the good and its realization cannot develop without the prior constitution of

² "To live together in the world means essentially that a world of things is between those who have it in common, as a table is located between those who sit around it; the world, like every in-between, relates and separates men at the same time. The public realm, as the common world, gathers us together and yet prevents our falling over each other, so to speak. What makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people involved, or at least not primarily, but the fact that the world between them has lost its power to gather them together, to relate and to separate them. The weirdness of this situation resembles a spiritualistic séance where a number of people gathered around a table might suddenly, through some magic trick, see the table vanish from their midst, so that two persons sitting opposite each other were no longer separated but also would be entirely unrelated to each other by anything tangible" (Arendt 1958, pp.52-53).

systematic linkages between human beings and their natural or artefactual environment. And these issues cannot be reduced to codification.

A Relevant Reality for the Good

The systematic generalization of a certain way human beings capture their environment is an historical process. But it also depends on the potential capacities which the human body, nature or human artifices offer. They allow for a certain systematic generalization of the commerce between human beings and their milieu. Such an extension is not only a "social construction" or an ideological elaboration. The present constitution of a new kind of systematic linkage in terms of "information" illustrates both the material and ideological aspects of the process. First comes the development of a whole range of techniques which enhances human communicative abilities. The construction of effective communicative systems is a prerequisite for the comparison of "informational" capacities. Such comparisons pave the way to a questioning of the kind of good which such capacities involve, and of the forms of injustice in their actual distribution.

Acknowledging a certain type of systemic relationship between human beings and their milieu is not enough to expose a new polity. Allegedly factual statements about an "information society" actually encompass and conceal assumptions about the good. A democratic debate demands that they be explicitly stated. It requires the constitution of a new political and moral grammar. Thus, the mixed material and ideological crafting of a new system of relationship makes forth to the delineation of a new kind of common good which would support a generalized "information worth". The canonical distinction between facts and values hinders the proper understanding of the joint constitution of a new systematic form of realism articulated with a new specification of the common good. The value/fact distinction dangerously places politics in the alternative of either a powerless idealism or an a-moral realism.

The elaboration of the general forms of evaluation that are needed for an "equipped" humanity can be sketched in the following way. A certain way of systematically relating human beings to their non-human environment makes comparable the human capacities which are enabled by this mode of relation. The comparison of situations where these capacities are involved leads to the assessment of unequal capacities, and creates a tension with a fundamental moral orientation towards an equal human dignity. Questioning this inequality brings forward issues of injustice and considerations on the good. Modern societies elaborated general forms of value or, more precisely, of evaluation and judgement, in order to deal with this tension. They offer most legitimate frames for disputes which refer to the horizon of the public. In *De la justification* Boltanski and I singled out six "orders of worth" in terms of *inspired*, *domestic* (or trustworthiness), *opinion*, *civic*, *market* and *industrial* worth (cf. table 1) (Boltanski et Thévenot 1991). Each of them integrates a part of the *furnishing* of societies within a common humanity through the specification of the common good. We analyzed these orders and their common grammar. To provide a simplified presentation of this grammar, I shall mention that unequal capacities constitute an order of worth on the following two types of conditions :

- The inequality of states of worth has to be related to the characterization of a common good: the most worthy states should be shown to be beneficial to the least worthy.
- A state of worth should not be attached permanently to a human being, because of the risk of creating a stable differentiation which would challenge the idea of common humanity and equal dignity. Worthiness is not a status, but evolves in relation to an effective capacity which has to be put to a test with regards to a relevant reality.

Making the Reality and the Good More General

Putting the grammar of the most legitimate "orders of worth" in the perspective of our present debate, I shall content that this grammar introduces the possibility of a joint enlargement :

(1) Of the format of the relevant reality which supports the evaluation. Entities qualify for a worth assessment as far as they take place in a generalized systematic relationship between human beings and their environment. Entities qualify as market good, technical implement, sign, patrimony, etc. Depending on these qualifications, the relevant information has different formats: price, statistical measure, oral and exemplary report, semiotic representation, etc.

(2) Of the format of the good which governs the evaluation. Orders of worth result from the aggrandizement of values up to the scope of a common good compatible with a common humanity.

In *De la justification* we have drawn both on empirical studies on practices of justifications and criticisms performed in everyday situations, and on a series of Western political philosophers each of whom systematically developed one of these notions of worth. These orders of worth are clearly historical and cultural constructions. Some of them are less and less able to ground people's justifications whereas other ones are emerging. I mentioned the current elaboration of an "information worth" and also studied the emergence of a new "green worth" (Thévenot, Moody and Lafaye, 2000).

What can I say of this historical and cultural process of emergence in the perspective of our conference? The empirical and philosophical material which served to analyze these orders of worth came from European culture. But I am concerned to test the validity of the analytical framework in other cultural areas. The work was done in a comparison with the United States, and I intend to extend this comparative perspective to a larger range of cultures. A rationale for such a comparative investigation comes from the fact that orders of worth were built from an effort to overcome a great diversity of more "cultural" values. Coordination with anonymous alien raises the need to cope with an extended notion of humanity, and to surmount value discrepancies and obtain shared forms of evaluations. I shall here insist on the way each order of worth results from an attempt to generalize to a common humanity a set of values that have been currently used, in much more specific and contextual terms, to coordinate conducts in more limited cultural and historical domains.

- Table 1 -
ORDERS OF WORTH

	Market	Industrial	Domestic	Opinion	Civic	Inspired
Mode of evaluation (worth)	Price	Productivity, efficiency	Esteem, reputation, trustworthiness	Renown	Collective interest	Innovation, creativeness
Format of relevant information	Monetary	Measurable: criteria, statistics	Oral, exemplary, anecdote	Semiotic	Formal, official	Emotional
Qualified objects	Market goods and services	Technical objects, methods	Patrimony specific asset	Sign, media	Rule	Emotionally invested body or object: artistic, religious
Elementary relation	Exchange	Functional link	Trust	Recognition	Solidarity	Passion
Human qualification	Desire, purchasing power	Professional competency, expertise	Authority	Celebrity	Equality	Creativity, ingenuity
Time formation	Short-term, flexibility	Long-term planned future	Customary path	Vogue, trend	Perennial	Rupture, revolution
Space formation	Global marketplace	Homogeneous, Cartesian space	Anchoring in proximity	Communication network	Detachment	Perennial

ORDERS OF WORTH: THE GROUND FOR A CRITICAL AND REALIST PLURALISM

The "Market Worth" of Competition

The construction of a *market worth* requires two types of expansion of the various kind of exchange relationship which human societies have developed:

(1) A generalized formatting of the merchandises and human agents involved in the relationship of commercial exchange. By contrast to many traditional forms of personal or gift relationship, a generalized market common good requires the detachment from personal ties, an anonymous and common identity of people and things, and a perfect transferability of ownership. People are principally qualified for market by their desire to purchase commodities.

(2) A generalized common good which offers a unified principle for commercial exchange: market competition. Price is clearly the measurable appraisal which corresponds to this common good of market competition.

The sphere of economic relations is not uniquely governed by market worth. Economic actions are based on, at least, two main forms of coordination. One is *market* competition, another is the *industrial* order of technical efficiency and productivity, each of them supporting a different kind of reality test. They also sustain different formation of time. While the market competition test is particularly short-term, the industrial test relies on long-tem investments.

The "Industrial Worth" of Efficiency and Productivity

All human societies developed tools and techniques. The construction of an *industrial worth* requires more in the two directions that I highlighted:

(1) A generalized formatting of things and people based on standardized and measurable technical capabilities instead of personalized or localized skills and craftsmanship. The most qualified persons are experts. The words used to describe their functional qualities can also be used to qualify things. They are said to be worthy when they are efficient, productive, operational. They implement tools, methods, criteria, plans, figures, etc.

(2) A generalized common good characterized in terms of technical efficiency. The *industrial* worth can be measured on a scale of professional capabilities.

Connected to the production of material goods, industrial worth is upheld by way of organizational devices directed towards future planning and investment. The technical objects which qualify for this industrial worth are those which contribute to the formation of a future-oriented notion of time and a Cartesian notion of space and topography.

The "Domestic Worth" of Trustworthiness

Trying to expand personal relationship into a more stable and transportable kind of mutual link is a very common effort among human societies. This process is at the very basis of what we usually call a shared "culture". It leads to place greater value on things and people which are viewed as more acquainted and proximate. Boltanski and I identified as the *domestic* worth of trustworthiness a construction which aims at a most general extension of these personalized and anchored bonds and valuations. This construction assumes:

(1) A generalized formatting of people and things transforming them into grounds which guarantee a generalized trust and confidence. *Domestic* worth depends on a hierarchy of trust based on a chain of personal dependencies. To qualify for this worth, the person is related to his/her belonging, to a family, a lineage, a patrimony. Customary skills and crafts which are disqualified with regards to the *industrial* worth are, by contrast, highly valued as patrimony and heritage within this *domestic* worth.

(2) In order to obtain a transportable judgement of trustworthiness which might be valid for a whole common humanity and not a particular network, one should overcome the specific distinctiveness of cultures and build a common good. This is achieved on the basis of the comparable process through which patrimony, heritage, legacy and tradition are made valuable in diverse cultures.

Heritage supports a notion of time which places value on memory and which is past-oriented. This does not prevent the dynamics of constant re-interpretation of the past from the view of the present situation. The formation of space is also quite different from an homogeneous Cartesian space since spaces extends from an anchoring in proximity.

The "Worth of Renown" in the Opinion

If, in a *domestic* world, worth has value only in a hierarchical chain of beings, worth is nothing but the result of other people's opinion in the world of *renown*. Again, societies developed many political configurations which are based on fame and visibility. Court societies offer clear examples of such configurations. The extension of a worth of renown in the opinion requires:

1) The formatting and measurement of people's worth on the basis of conventional signs of public notoriety. Qualified persons are well-known personalities, stars, opinion leaders, journalists. They are worthy and great when they are famous, recognized, successful, or convincing among public opinion. The current objects in this world are trade marks, badges, logos, message transmitters and receivers, press releases and booklets.

2) The common good is a generalized celebrity which strongly supports a mode of coordination based on conventional signs of recognition. Worthiness rises with the number of individuals who grant their recognition. It is hence entirely unrelated to the realm of personal dependencies.

This order of worth sustains the formation of a highly volatile time, unfolding in vogues or trends. Communication media yielded the space of recognition to be planetary instead of limited to a restricted space of visibility.

The "Civic Worth" of Rules Enforcing Equality and Solidarity

Mutual reciprocity which regulates personal relationships can be generalized by an order of worth which strongly departs from the *domestic* gradient of proximity and hierarchy of esteem. While aiming at solidarity, the *civic* worth involves, in an opposite direction, the most complete detachment from personal dependency. The generalization goes the following way:

1) People and things are formatted in a formal shape which disconnects them from any local or personalized attachment. Worthy people are representative of a collective person. Important persons are, therefore, federations, public communities, representatives or delegates. The relevant objects are highly codified, such as rules and procedures. Praiseworthy relationships are those which involve or mobilize people for a collective action.

2) The common good is oriented towards equality and achieved through solidarity. Persons are less worthy if seen as particulars, following the dictates of a selfish will, and, in contrast, worthy if seen as members of the disembodied sovereign, exclusively concerned with the general interest.

Civic time is perennial although rules are to be changed by the collective will. Civic space is highly universalized, but this extension faces the contradiction of solidarity mechanisms which are commonly bounded to institutionalized groups or nations.

The "Inspired Worth" of Creativeness

Although emotions are deeply entrenched in bodily expressions, they support modes of coordination among human societies. In various and separated domains such as religion, esthetics or even technical innovation, human beings place common value on deep moves which bring about disruption among everyday routine. The worth of *inspiration* offers the possibility to cross the boundaries of these domains and refer to a generalized form of evaluation and coordination.

(1) People and things qualify for this order of worth inasmuch as their singularities express creativeness. Inspired worth arises, particularly, in the personal body when prepared by asceticism, and especially through emotions. Its expressions are diverse and many-sided: holiness, creativity, artistic sensibility, imagination etc. The qualified beings are, for example, spirits, crazy people, artists, children. These beings are worthy when they are odd, wonderful, emotional. Their typical way of acting is to dream, to imagine, to rebel, or to have living experiences.

(2) The common good rests on the idea that inspiration and creativity benefit everyone, and that people can commonly assess this kind of worth in spite of the singularity of the traits and events that are seen as valuable.

CONCLUSION: THE VARIETY OF SCOPE AND WORTH OF THE GOODS TO BE CRITICALLY CONFRONTED IN A GLOBAL COORDINATION

The moral strength of political liberalism originates in its ability to take pluralism into account and to offer some procedure of integration of this plurality. Another appeal of this model comes from its support of the notion of individualized agency. As a result of these two main features, the public is viewed in this liberal perspective as the composition of the kind of individual goods or interests which govern the conducts of individual agents. The composition of such goods in procedures of negotiation is commonly viewed as the core mechanism of the diverse regulatory bodies which develop all over the world.

But this model should not obscure other modes of composition of the public which are based on the aggrandizement of goods into orders of worth. They advantageously integrate within the polity a variety of relations to the material environment, without confining this environment to the state of market goods. While being compatible with a common set of requirements oriented towards universalization with regards to a common humanity, the different orders of worth offer a plurality of legitimate forms of evaluation which allows for a dynamical process of critique and justification. These repertoires of evaluation sustain the process of a global expansion in human relationship while maintaining critical differences. Each order of worth constitutes the basis for the radical criticism of the others. This *critical* relationship between the different orders of worth allows in particular to question some undue extensions of the market worth. The organization of evaluative pluralism also requires *compromises* between these generalized goods and not only between individualized ones. It may sustain a critical pluralism because of the way things are realistically involved. The plurality of worths initiates dynamics of criticism, justification and compromise which go beyond the value- or culture-relativism, while escaping a fierce confrontation of entrenched values shared by particular communities. But we should also bear in mind the reductions which threaten the extension of each order of worth: the limitation to a bounded community; the reduction to systemic constraints of reality (ignoring the dimension of the good); inversely, the restriction to ideas (ignoring the realistic dimension of the human commerce with things).

A French-USA comparison of the way people produce public judgements on people and things (Lamont and Thévenot 2000, Moody and Thévenot 2000, Thévenot and Lamont 2000), demonstrated that both models are actually enforced in procedures of composition of the public good in the USA, although the weight of the different orders of worth and the kind of compromises strongly differ from France. The liberal language of multiple interests, even with its extension to multiculturalism, does not fully capture the variety of scope and of worth of the goods which are confronted in the procedures of composition.

While this talk deliberately focused on the aggrandizement of values needed for large-scope coordination, I don't want to suggest that generalized forms of evaluation are to replace other forms based on more localized kinds of good. I shall illustrate this point in conclusion with the very hot issue coined in France by the term "exception culturelle", and which is not a specifically French problem. The question is the following. Should we conceive and treat "cultural goods" as any other market goods and make sure that the rules of free market competition regulate their distribution? In the light of what I have presented in this talk, my answer is no. We should rather make sure that debates and decision within globalized regulatory agencies do not only preserve a diversity of cultural identities but also a diversity of orders of worth in addition to *market* competition, amongst which are certainly what I presented as *domestic* and *inspired* orders of worth.

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