REMARKS ON THE NATURE OF JUSTIFICATION: A SOCIO-PRAGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this essay is to reflect on the nature of justification. To this end, the analysis draws on Luc Boltanski and Laurent Thévenot's De la justification. Les économies de la grandeur[1] [On Justification: Economies of Worth[2]]. *More specifically, the article aims to examine the extent to which Boltanski and Thévenot's conceptual framework, widely known as 'the sociology of critical capacity',*[3] *permits us to demonstrate that processes of* justification[4] *are vital to the symbolically mediated construction — that is, to both the conceptual and the empirical* organization[5] *— of social life. In order to prove the validity of this contention, the inquiry explores the meaning of 'justification' in relation to the following dimensions: (1) existence, (2) ethics, (3) justice, (4) perspective, (5) presuppositions, (6) agreement, (7) common worlds, (8) critique, (9) practice and (10) justification itself. By way of conclusion, the article maintains that processes of justification constitute an essential ingredient of human reality.*

Keywords: Boltanski and Thévenot; justification; organization; pragmatic sociology of critique; socio-pragmatic; worth

SETTING THE SCENE

Before examining Boltanski and Thévenot's sociological approach in detail, it is worth providing a concise definition of the concept of 'justification'. In the most general sense, *the term 'justification' refers to the act of providing reasons for the validity, legitimacy and defensibility of (a) an action, (b) a belief and/or (c) a social arrangement*. In other words, justificatory practices emerge in relation to (a) empirical and behavioural, (b) conceptual and ideological and/or (c) conventional and institutional processes and structures.

It is striking, however, that, within the history of intellectual thought, most prominent accounts of justification — notably, their philosophical variants — tend to focus on its *epistemological*, rather than its *sociological*, dimensions. Consequently, they tend to conceive of 'justification' in terms of 'the justification of beliefs' [b], rather than in terms of 'the justification of human actions' [a] and/or 'the justification of social arrangements' [c]. Among the most noteworthy, and also most influential, epistemological theories of justification are the following:

- *infinitism*,[6] which posits that beliefs can be justified to the extent that they are situated within unlimited chains of reasons and reason-giving;
- *evidentialism*,[7] which argues that beliefs can be justified to the extent that their cogency can be demonstrated on the basis of evidence, of which there are different forms;
- *externalism*,[8] which suggests that beliefs can be justified to the extent that they make reference to, and thereby implicitly or explicitly acknowledge their dependence upon, factors that are external to a person;
- *internalism*,[9] which sustains that beliefs can be justified to the extent that they can be defended by virtue of a subject's internal states or reasons;
- *coherentism*,[10] which affirms that beliefs can be justified to the extent that they cohere with other beliefs within a general system of beliefs, to which individual or collective actors subscribe in a regular, consistent and categorical manner;
- *foundationalism*,[11] which maintains that beliefs can be justified to the extent that they correspond to a set of core underlying assumptions, upon which practices, convictions and norms are based and with respect to which they can be vindicated;
- *foundherentism*,[12] which — as a combination of foundationalism and coherentism — contends that beliefs can be justified to the extent that they are embedded in a system of both foundationally constituted and logically interconnected presuppositions.

From a sociological perspective, justifications cannot be dissociated from the *social contexts* in which the actors providing them are situated and to which they make implicit or explicit reference. Thus, far from being reducible to

merely epistemological matters, justificatory practices emerge in relation to and are embedded within (a) empirical and behavioural, (b) conceptual and ideological, as well as (c) conventional and institutional processes and structures. The fact that Boltanski and Thévenot's *De la justification. Les économies de la grandeur*[13] [*On Justification: Economies of Worth*[14]] offers the first fine-grained, multi-layered and systematic *sociological* account of the role of justificatory practices in human life forms should be reason enough to take this oeuvre seriously. Drawing on Boltanski and Thévenot's approach, the following sections aim to contribute to a *socio-pragmatic* understanding of 'justification' by focusing on 10 key dimensions.

1. THE JUSTIFICATION OF EXISTENCE

The most fundamental form of justification is the *justification of existence*. Its centrality is due to the fact that existence is the ontological precondition for the human being-in-the-world. As subjects capable of reflection and self-justification, we are able to give reasons for our actions, beliefs and convictions. The acceptability of the behavioural, ideological and institutional dimensions of our existence is conditional upon symbolically mediated processes of explanation, validation and confirmation. As interpretive beings, we constantly seek to make sense of different facets of the universe. We project hermeneutically assembled standards and values upon reality — not only in relation to ourselves, when immersed in the experience of our subjectivity, but also in relation to others, when participating in the daily construction of normativity.

It is only insofar as our existence acquires a minimal degree of legitimacy that we are able to function within the potentially fragile boundaries imposed upon us by our reference groups within the wider context of society. 'It is the question of the *legitimacy* of an existence, an individual's right to *feel justified in existing as he or she exists*',[15] which is crucial to our ability to explore the objective, normative and subjective dimensions of our place in the universe. If we are deprived of approval and legitimacy, we are in no position to live meaningful lives supported by networks of recognition and sociality. Our right to justification[16] expresses our right to a self-determined mode of being, whose quest for autonomy cannot be dissociated from its confinement within varying degrees of heteronomy. If we lacked both the competence and the desire to justify ourselves for what we do, think and believe in, we would not be in a position to convert the daily experience of what is, and what is not, into the challenge of reflecting and acting upon what ought, and what ought not, to be. The justification of our existence, or of particular aspects of our existence, constitutes a *sine qua non* of our capacity to attribute meaning to our lives.

2. THE JUSTIFICATION OF ETHICS

The *justification of ethics* — that is, the justification of the moral principles to which we subscribe as both emotionally and rationally motivated entities — is indispensable to our ability to participate in normatively codified interactions. To be sure, moral justifications can be provided in several ways: implicitly or explicitly, subtly or overtly, rudimentarily or elaborately, practically or theoretically, unconsciously or consciously, intuitively or discursively, and — often as a major source of controversy — *a priori* or *a posteriori*. The fact that we are moral beings — capable of making decisions and determining the course of our actions on the basis of ethical considerations — implies that 'the imperative of justification'[17] pervades our everyday practices, which are embedded in culturally contingent forms of worldly immersion. Indeed, as 'moral beings',[18] we are equipped with a 'moral capacity'[19] and, consequently, 'capable of distancing ourselves'[20] from the circumstances in which we find ourselves situated. While, as moral entities, we do *not* exist as free-floating subjects, we *can* call the normative parameters underlying our own (or other people's) actions into question and, if necessary, distance ourselves from them.

Our moral dispositions cannot be divorced from the fact that we are *perspective-taking* creatures. As such, we have the ability to put ourselves in other people's shoes, permitting us to relate to, to attach meaning to and to act upon reality not only in accordance with our own values, principles and convictions, but also, more significantly, through the eyes of our fellow human beings. A context-transcending attitude is built into the very heart of our moral condition: we are 'moral beings capable of transcending the particularities'[21] that, in many cases, prevent us from recognizing the empowering potential of our common humanity. As members of social groups, we have an interest in pursuing *particular* — that is, species-divisive — interests. As members of humanity, we have an interest in pursuing *universal* — that is, species-constitutive — interests. Of course, to the degree that there are multiple ways of defining 'the common good',[22] it may be difficult — if not impossible — to make a case for the universalizability of moral claims to context-transcending validity. Irrespective of the scope of generalizability that can be attributed to a definite normative position, however, there is no doubt that the daily construction of morality constitutes a cornerstone of human society.

3. THE JUSTIFICATION OF JUSTICE

The *justification of justice* — or, to be exact, the justification of principles of justice — is essential to shaping society in accordance with discursively established codes of normativity.[23] Different 'common worlds'[24] are regulated by different 'principles of justice',[25] reflecting the spatiotemporally variable constitution of

moral values, even if those who advocate them may attempt to prove their universal validity.

> Since the *principles of justice* and the *worlds* in which they are realized are not attached to persons or groups but are instead *embedded in situations*, everyone encounters situations in daily life that arise from the various systems of justice, and in order to behave with *naturalness*, everyone has to be able to *recognize* these situations and *adjust* to them. People in whom this ability is lacking or impaired are deemed psychologically abnormal.[26]

Thus, an individual's *a priori* ability to develop 'a moral sense',[27] which can be employed in order 'to judge justly',[28] is contingent upon his or her *pragmatic* capacity to draw upon, to apply and — if necessary — to defend 'principles of justice'[29] in specific interactional contexts. The 'definition of the common good'[30] hinges on the particular social setting in which it emerges, as illustrated in 'the development of the polity [*cité*] model',[31] which is founded on 'the hypothetical construction of this competence'[32] that allows for the production and reproduction of morally codified worlds. The principles of justice that undergird specific normative settings[33] are constantly being negotiated and renegotiated by those whose embodied performances are shaped by them. Yet, to the extent that actors are equipped with 'heterogeneous resources',[34] which are, by definition, unequally distributed and possess different use and exchange values in relation to the situations in which they are mobilized, the justification of justice — far from being reducible to an objective, let alone a disinterested, affair — is shot through with the normativity of asymmetrically constituted forms of sociality.

The justification of justice, then, is — always and unavoidably — *context-laden*, *value-laden*, *meaning-laden*, *perspective-laden*, *interest-laden*, *power-laden* and *tension-laden*. Regardless of whether one explores the normative constitution of the 'market', 'inspired', 'domestic', 'reputational', 'civic' or 'industrial' world,[35] each regime of action is maintained by a series of 'principles of justice'.[36] While these principles of justice can be endorsed consciously or unconsciously, deliberately or unwittingly, explicitly or implicitly, they concern a wide range of normative issues, notably the following:

- mechanisms of alienation, exploitation, discrimination and marginalization in the *market world*;[37]
- processes of asymmetrically structured valorization in the *inspired world*;[38]
- practices of empowerment and disempowerment, emanating from a stratified — and commonly gendered — division of labour, in the *domestic world*;[39]
- strategies designed for the acquisition of symbolic power in the *reputational world*;[40]
- collective acts of discussion, argumentation and deliberation in the *civic world*;[41]
- disputes concerning the overarching rationality guiding purposive performances in the *industrial world*.[42]

The justification of justice, along with the denouncement of injustice, can be considered vital to the production and reproduction of interactionally viable — and, hence, normatively codified — realities. To be sure, the justification of justice may involve the justification of injustice, especially in cases in which 'a series of ethical oppositions corresponding to a cosmological model in order to justify the hierarchy'[43] can be reinforced in the name of those who benefit directly or indirectly from the asymmetrical structuration of society. The emergence of conceptual or empirical pecking orders manifests itself in the construction of spheres of injustice,[44] whose sustainability rests on their performative capacity to obtain suitable degrees of acceptability in a universe of constantly shifting frameworks of normativity.

4. THE JUSTIFICATION OF PERSPECTIVE

The *justification of perspective* is particularly important in pluralistic societies, in which actors are expected to defend their views, opinions and principles when exposed to those who do not share their ways of conceptualizing, relating to and engaging with reality. Behavioural, ideological and institutional differences between individual and collective actors are not only a hallmark but also a civilizational driving force of highly differentiated societies. The more complex a given social formation, the more pronounced its polycentric constitution and the more eclectic the normative parameters by which it is supported turn out to be. Different social arenas — irrespective of whether they are called *champs* or *cités*[45] — are structured in accordance with different sets of norms, stakes and frictions, whose socio-ontological significance is articulated in context-specific struggles over access to resources, power and capital.

It would be erroneous, however, to reduce regimes of social interaction to domains of conflict and competition, thereby overlooking the existential weight of the meaning-seeking and meaning-exchanging performances that actors accomplish in their everyday lives when driven by specific motifs and when aiming for empowering levels of comprehension, based on the implicit or explicit recognition of their epistemic stances and positions. On this account, 'various forms of worth'[46] can be conceived of as 'various ways of *embodying* others — that is, of duplicating others in one's own person (standing in for them, identifying with them, and so on)'[47] — and, hence, of looking at, engaging with and acting upon reality, or particular aspects of reality, through the intersubjective experience of relating to others. Such a multi-pragmatist approach stresses the importance of 'paying careful attention to the diversity of forms of justification',[48] which are indicative of the perspectival complexity permeating internally heterogeneous social formations.

5. THE JUSTIFICATION OF PRESUPPOSITIONS

The socio-ontological significance of the *justification of presuppositions* can be grasped by paying 'attention to critical operations'[49] undertaken by human actors in particular contexts. In this respect, situations of dispute, crisis or confrontation with unexpected circumstances are especially noteworthy, as they oblige actors to reflect upon the presuppositions that they usually take for granted and by means of which they participate in the largely intuitive construction of social life.

When endeavouring to understand the justification of presuppositions, the following two levels of analysis are of paramount importance: (a) the level of *everyday interactions* and (b) the level of *science*.[50] With regard to the former, there are multiple '*interpretive* principles brought to bear by the actors'[51] within their lifeworlds. With regard to the latter, there are numerous '*explanatory* principles used in the social sciences'.[52] In relation to the former, it is crucial to recognize that 'the modes of justification or criticism used by actors'[53] are vital to the normative *construction* of social life. In relation to the latter, it is imperative to acknowledge that 'the descriptive languages or explanatory principles used by the social sciences'[54] are central to the analytical *reconstruction* of social life. It is no less important, however, to take into consideration that *both* of these epistemic levels have a presuppositional structure — that is, both reflexive scientists and ordinary actors have to draw upon taken-for-granted assumptions and sociolinguistic background horizons when attributing meaning to reality. In fact, their epistemic ambitions share several basic objectives: both experts and laypersons have the capacity to describe, to analyse, to interpret, to explain and to assess specific aspects of reality.[55] All human actors draw upon their epistemic competences, irrespective of whether they do so from the endogenous viewpoint of the 'insider' or from the exogenous viewpoint of the 'outsider'.

When examining the construction of social life, one may place emphasis on the role of *violence*,[56] just as one may draw attention to the role of *justification*.[57] The former is fundamental to Bourdieu's 'critical sociology',[58] whereas the latter is essential to Boltanski's 'pragmatic sociology of critique'.[59] The relationship between these two approaches has been extensively discussed in the literature.[60] In relation to the former, one may wish to focus upon particular modes of *violence*: symbolic or physical, sporadic or structural, behavioural or institutional, disorganized or organized, overt or hidden, real or imagined. In relation to the latter, one may aim to centre upon particular modes of *justification*: ordinary or scientific, informal or formal, practical or theoretical, utilitarian or deontological, contextually motivated or ideologically driven.

Just as all of these types of *violence* and all of these types of *justification* can be directly experienced and mobilized by *ordinary actors*, they can be scrutinized and studied by *scientific researchers*. Regardless of whether they are experienced, mobilized, scrutinized or studied, there are no practices of violence and

no practices of justification without *presuppositional background horizons*. One may have good reason to prefer the potentially *constructive* power of justification to the potentially *destructive* power of violence. The decision to favour 'the forceless force of the better argument'[61] over 'the forceful force of enforced force'[62] requires converting critical reason, rather than arbitrary power, into the motivational cornerstone of civilizational development. Even if one defends the epistemic strength of critical reason against the self-referential force of arbitrary power, however, one needs to concede that the justification of presuppositions is inconceivable without a set of presuppositions underlying the very process of justification.

6. THE JUSTIFICATION OF AGREEMENT

The *justification of agreement* fulfils a pivotal function in both small-scale and large-scale variations of action coordination. In fact, 'the relation between agreement and discord'[63] is central to subjects' capacity to engage in decision-making processes, enabling them to generate more or less stable life forms, to whose existence the emergence of relatively predictable patterns of action and interaction is indispensable.

Democratically organized societies are unimaginable without the basic pluralistic rule that people need to be prepared *to agree to disagree*. While this rule is, for the most part, implicitly followed, it may be explicitly invoked — especially in tension-laden situations characterized by a lack of mutual understanding, respect and tolerance. Actors subscribing to the fundamental conventions of a democratic system, then, have to be both able and willing to accept that they cannot agree on every single issue. While making decisions — which may have individual or collective, small-scale or large-scale, short-term or long-term consequences — actors tend to realize that the significance of both their agreements and their disagreements can vary to a considerable degree, depending on the objective, normative or subjective weight attributed to each of them.

Especially among Habermasian scholars, it is common to assume that one of the key functions of human language is to permit subjects capable of speech and action to reach discursively sustained agreements with one another.[64] Of course, this 'peculiarly narrow focus on language use as essentially a means of coming to *agreement* about states of affairs in the world and what to do about them'[65] is problematic to the extent that it draws attention away from other crucial functions of linguistic utterances. In fact, the constative, regulative, expressive and communicative functions of language — epitomized in the distinctly human capacity to raise objective, normative and subjective validity claims when engaging in symbolically mediated actions oriented towards

intelligibility — are *preconditions* for people's ability to reach discursively constituted agreements with one another.

There is no agreement without *understanding*. In this respect, three levels of understanding are especially important:

(a) understanding in the *cognitive* sense of comprehending something (*Verstehen eines Tatbestandes*);
(b) understanding in the *intersubjective* sense of comprehending someone else's assertions (*Verstehen einer Aussage*);
(c) understanding in the *empathetic* sense of comprehending someone else's motives, feelings or situation (*Verstehen eines Mitmenschens*).[66]

> The picture becomes more complex if we distinguish between the following four terms, which are etymologically interrelated: *Verstand*, *Verstehen*, *Verständigung* and *Einverständnis*. As a species, we have learned to make use of reason (*Verstand*) and to reach different levels of comprehension (*Verstehen*) by learning to communicate with one another (*Verständigung*) and, if necessary, reach agreements with one another (*Einverständnis*). All four practices — that is, *reasoning*, *interpreting*, *communicating* and *agreeing* — are conceivable only as (a) *cognitive*, (b) *intersubjective* and (c) *empathetic* dimensions. As a species, we have learned to *reason*, *interpret*, *communicate* and *agree* with one another by developing (a) the *cognitive* capacity to argue with and against one another, (b) the *intersubjective* capacity to socialize with one another and (c) the *empathetic* capacity to feel for one another. Far from being reducible to a merely semantic argument, the awareness of the etymological affinity between *Verstand*, *Verstehen*, *Verständigung* and *Einverständnis* is vital to appreciating the civilizational significance inherent in the power of human understanding.[67]

Hence, the most robust justification of agreement as a socio-ontological category can be found in its arguably most fundamental anthropological function, which consists in making society — understood as an ensemble of deliberating subjects — possible in the first place. Our capacity to reach agreements with one another lies at the heart of our moral condition, which is inextricably linked to the aforementioned fact that we are perspective-taking entities. The 'possibility of coordinating human behaviour'[68] by virtue of agreement constitutes a daily process that emanates from the necessity of having to ensure that individuals — whose practices are embedded within particular behavioural, ideological and institutional patterns — can live with one another and do so with a sense of responsibility in relation to their natural and social environments as well as in relation to themselves. The 'seeming plurality of forms of agreement',[69] emerging in variegated regimes of action and justification, illustrates the normative complexity pervading highly differentiated societies.

7. THE JUSTIFICATION OF COMMON WORLDS

The *justification of common worlds* is crucial to the construction of social realities that are simultaneously context-dependent and context-transcendent: they

are *context-dependent* in the sense that they reflect the spatiotemporal specificity of behavioural, ideological and institutional arrangements — irrespective of whether they are foundational, contingent or ephemeral[70]; they are *context-transcendent* in the sense that they point at the orientational reference points shared by all members of humanity, who — notwithstanding their diverging social and political affiliations — are directly or indirectly involved in the unfolding of world history.

Within the normative parameters endorsed by Boltanski and Thévenot's variant of 'pragmatic sociology', particular attention is given to the *context-dependent* idiosyncrasies conditioning the course of human agency. As previously stated, different 'common worlds'[71] are regulated by different 'principles of justice'.[72] Thus, the interactions that take place within 'common worlds' are embedded within normative grammars, which codify the social encounters that occur within them. To the degree that people — for the purpose of assessing themselves and one another — 'establish equivalencies and ordering principles',[73] they attribute meanings and values to the objective, normative and subjective dimensions of their existence by mobilizing the symbolic and material resources that are available to them in specific environments.

The *homological* relationship between '*ordinary situations*'[74] and '*political philosophies*'[75] derives from the fact that the 'constructions of a principle of order and of a common good',[76] which one can observe in the daily unfolding of concrete and embodied practices in people's lifeworlds, tend to *correspond* to 'the abstract and systematic solutions proposed'[77] by experts and researchers in scholarly realms of discourse, contemplation and argumentation.

- The former level illustrates that subjects capable of action, reflection and self-justification are able to contribute to the development of 'common worlds' by drawing upon their power of judgement when participating in the objective, normative and subjective construction of reality.
- The latter level demonstrates that the 'classic works of political philosophy […] offer systematic expressions of the forms of the common good that are commonly invoked in today's society'.[78]

Normative frameworks that are relevant to consolidating 'grammars of the political bond'[79] — in the broad sense of communicatively coordinated and discursively constituted practices — 'serve to justify evaluations of the degree of justness of a situation'.[80] In order for an equivalence to be of general significance within a particular regime of action, however, the consensus upon which it is built needs to be 'established at a higher level'[81] — that is, at an epistemic level at which an argument, or a set of arguments, is considered acceptable by everyone who contributes to the hermeneutically mediated creation of a situation.

Regardless of whether one grapples with the normative constitution of the 'market', 'inspired', 'domestic', 'reputational', 'civic' or 'industrial' world,[82]

each regime of action is sustained not only by a series of 'principles of justice',[83] but also by individual and collective experiences of a 'common world'. *A common world is, literally, a world that people have in common.* As such, it fulfils the socio-ontological function of a collective reference point or, to be precise, of a set of shared reference points, whose interconnectedness allows for the emergence of meaning-laden practices embedded in relationally structured contexts. 'Common worlds' may be described as *cités*, which designate 'normative supports for constructing justifications'.[84] As *cités*, 'common worlds' represent symbolically organized realms whose functioning depends on the perpetuation of normative principles, which can be challenged, and even transformed, if considered both desirable and necessary by those whose practices contribute to their existence.

Common worlds are, by definition, contextually constituted. Both their reproduction and their transformation hinge on the 'situated judgement'[85] of those who create, and constantly recreate, them. '[T]he imperative to justify requires that each person be assigned a legitimate qualification',[86] whose judgements may either confirm or undermine the implicit or explicit definition attached to a given situation. It is important to stress, however, that a 'test of worth cannot be reduced to a theoretical debate',[87] since it 'engages persons, in their bodily existence, in a world of things that serve as evidence, and in the absence of which the dispute does not have the material means for resolution by testing'.[88] Far from being reducible to a sterile exchange of abstract concepts disconnected from social reality, the construction of normative orders constitutes a relationally contingent process shaped by embodied actors whose arguments, concerns and preoccupations are rooted in concrete experiences of everyday life. A common world is a world that we share, shape and structure with others as semantically equipped, discursively motivated, psychophysically organized and spatiotemporally situated beings. 'In order to agree on what is just, then, human beings must be acquainted with a *common good*, and they must be metaphysicians'.[89] In order for them to reach an agreement on what is liveable, human entities have to be immersed in a *common world*, obliging them to take on the role of performatively present participants. An actor whose common world lacks justification is tantamount to a creature without a *raison d'être*.

8. THE JUSTIFICATION OF CRITIQUE

The *justification of critique* is vital to actors' capacity to distance themselves from taken-for-granted assumptions, while being able to provide reasons for their acceptance or rejection of particular states of affairs. To be sure, the *justification of critique* is no less central to social life than the *critique of justification*: the former permits actors to *defend* their judgements, evaluations and opinions; the latter enables actors to *scrutinize* the validity of the reasons given in support

of their judgements, evaluations and opinions. As critical entities participating in the quotidian construction of social life, we make judgements about judgements, offer evaluations of evaluations and form opinions about opinions. It is because genuine critique is prepared to criticize itself that the critique of justification constitutes an integral component of justified modes of criticism.

Critique, then, can be regarded as a cornerstone of the very process of justification.[90] In highly differentiated societies, 'principles of justice'[91] are increasingly diversified, requiring discursive processes shaped by people's critical capacity to adapt, and to be sensitive to, the spatiotemporal specificity of the context in which they unfold. 'Every differentiated society may be qualified as "complex", in the sense that its members have to possess the competence needed to identify the nature of a situation and to navigate situations arising from different worlds'.[92] Thus, rather than clinging on to an anachronistic 'one-world model',[93] which is based on a monocentric conception of reality, critical social scientists, insofar as they seek to do justice to the complexity of advanced societies, need to embrace a cutting-edge 'model of many worlds',[94] which is embedded in a polycentric conception of reality.

Such a pragmatico-pluralistic conception of critique, however, in no way presupposes 'a more or less automatic repetition of behaviours',[95] suggesting that every individual is logged into a mechanistic logic of cognition and action, determined by 'an internal guidance system that works by means of a programme inscribed in persons in advance'.[96] Rather, it illustrates the extent to which subjects capable of action, reflection and self-justification are in a position to adjust to different environments, to navigate their way through numerous settings within the social world and to cope with the normative imperatives thrown at them in the course of their lives. To be clear, this is not to posit that human actors always succeed in facing the challenges, let alone in resolving the problems, with which they are confronted in particular situations. Yet, this is to recognize that, at least in principle, human actors have the capacity to take a critical stance in relation to the objective, normative and subjective dimensions of their existence.

> Although the room to maneuver is strictly limited by the way the situation is arranged, a *model incorporating several worlds* gives actors the *possibility of avoiding a test, of challenging a test's validity* by taking recourse to an external principle, or even of reversing the situation by introducing a test that is valid in a *different world*. The model thus includes the *possibility of a critique* for which determinist constructions fail to account.[97]

In other words, both the *justification of critique* and the *critique of justification* take place within particular *contexts* and can be effective only to the degree that they implicitly or explicitly acknowledge the behavioural, ideological or institutional parameters that underpin the specificities of the settings in which they are articulated. In order to assess 'the validity of a test'[98] and, if necessary, 'to denounce its injustice',[99] people have to be 'able to extricate themselves from the grip of a situation',[100] thereby giving themselves the opportunity to

form 'a critical judgement'.[101] This may require them, however, to commit to 'opening their eyes to look at other worlds and at the beings that ensure their presence'.[102] Indeed, they may have to cross-check the standards, values and principles which they intuitively apply in one set of circumstances, but which they may have to revise, or to abandon altogether, in another set of circumstances. In order to accomplish this, they need to be both able and prepared to acquire a level of flexibility that is strong enough for them to function within, and to adapt to, different environments. In some cases, they may find this relatively straightforward or even stimulating; in other cases, they may find this rather difficult, if not burdensome. In light of their ability to make choices based on critical judgement, it appears that human actors possess a significant degree of 'free will':

> By using their ability to open and close their eyes, persons actualize their *free will*. […] But the ability to open and close one's eyes, to let oneself be caught up in the nature of the situation or to avoid doing so, is not manifested in *critiques* alone. It is also at work whenever persons have to complete the *passage between situations* arising from *different worlds*; in a *complex society that includes multiple arrangements*, this capacity is this indispensable to the *normal conduct of daily life*.[103]

People's *critical capacity*, then, is fundamental to the *meaningful construction of different* '*worlds*'.

- In the 'inspired world',[104] critique can serve as a driving force of creativity and originality, enabling actors to go beyond established patterns of tradition, habit and conventionality.
- In the 'domestic world',[105] critique can serve as a driving force of subversion and transformation, permitting actors to challenge consolidated mechanisms of gender-specific control, inequality and hierarchy.
- In the 'world of fame',[106] critique can serve as a driving force of will- and opinion-formation, allowing actors to assess the validity of relationally contingent codes of legitimacy by negotiating principles, standards and reference points capable of acquiring sustainable degrees of acceptability.
- In the 'civic world',[107] critique can serve as a driving force of practice-oriented coordination, giving actors the opportunity to deliberate over the desirability and sustainability of the social arrangements put in place within both the symbolic and the material boundaries of their life forms.
- In the 'market world',[108] critique can serve as a driving force of innovation and productivity, bestowing actors with the capacity to make judgements, calculations and predictions about the ways in which they compete with one another over labour and salaries, as well as over capital and profits, while participating in the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.
- In the 'industrial world',[109] critique can serve as a driving force behind rationally guided forms of economic organization, equipping actors with the capacity to challenge the preponderance of exchange value over use value, instrumental rationality over value rationality, profit-driven expansion over democratic control and cost-effective growth over human development.

In short, critique plays a pivotal role in shaping both the constitution and the development of the multiple worlds constructed by social actors.

9. THE JUSTIFICATION OF PRACTICE

The *justification of practice* lies at the core of culturally codified life forms. It is central to ordinary people's capacity to provide reasons for what they *do* and how they *act* in their everyday lives. Human beings have a need to justify their daily performances, routines and achievements.

(a) As *purposive* entities, they are goal-oriented beings capable of justifying the aims and objectives they pursue when carrying out an action.
(b) As *normative* entities, they are culturally codified and morally motivated beings capable of justifying the values, principles and standards to which they adhere when undertaking an action.
(c) As *subjective* entities, they are mental and emotional beings capable of attributing meaning not only to the external world, by which they are surrounded, but also to their inner world, which they inhabit as self-aware and psychologically complex creatures able to reflect upon themselves before, during and after performing an action.
(d) As *communicative* entities, they are intersubjective beings capable of reaching mutual understanding and, if necessary, agreements about their individual and/or collective actions.[110]

In brief, human beings are meaning-producing entities, who — while immersed in the interconnected worlds of *objectivity*, *normativity* and *subjectivity* — are equipped with the species-distinctive capacity to engage in intersubjective practices oriented towards the hermeneutic construction of spheres of *intelligibility*, which, as they navigate their way through social life, acquire variable degrees of *justifiability*.

To be sure, the *justification of practice* is inconceivable without the *practice of justification*, and vice versa. There is no justification of practice without the *practice* of justification, because providing reasons for our actions constitutes a justificatory *performance*. There is no practice of justification without the *justification* of practice, because justificatory performances presuppose that, in principle, at least a minimal level of epistemic validity and social legitimacy can be attached to, as well as obtained through, acts of *reasoning-giving*.

Our ability to justify our actions demonstrates that reason-giving is itself a practice that is fundamental to the meaning-laden unfolding of social life. From childhood onwards, we learn to provide reasons for our actions when justifying — or failing to justify — both the forms and the contents of our embodied performances. 'Validity-based speech has allowed us to transform the *Mund* (mouth) of the animal into the *Mündigkeit* (responsibility) of the

sapiens. It is from mouth to mouth that we have grown from *Mund* to *Mündigkeit*'.[111] Put differently, our cognitive capacity to use our *Verstand* (reason) and our interpretive capacity to develop a context-specific sense of *Verstehen* (understanding) are inseparably linked to our communicative capacity to participate in processes of *Verständigung* (mutual understanding). Our path to maturity, autonomy and responsibility is intimately interrelated with our symbolically mediated involvement in society. In this sense, both the justification of practice and the practice of justification represent a never-ending accomplishment without which the consolidation of normatively structured life-worlds would be impossible.

Thus, '[t]he *model* of justification'[112] advocated by 'pragmatic sociology' is embedded in the *practices* of justification performed by members of society. 'In fact, in order to face the world, people have to shuttle continually back and forth between reflection and action, shifting constantly between moments of conscious control and moments in which the appeal of the present launches them into the course of events'.[113] Rather than speculating about the allegedly transcendental logic of justification, the key task with which the 'pragmatic sociology of critique'[114] finds itself confronted consists in exploring 'the operations that form the weft of daily life'.[115] Without the socio-ontological preponderance of our quotidian performances, both the justification of practice and the practice of justification would be irrelevant to their principal point of reference: society.

10. THE JUSTIFICATION OF JUSTIFICATION

The *justification of justification* is essential to the legitimation of our existence as reason-giving entities.[116] At first glance, this may appear to be a relatively insignificant issue synthesized in a tautological proposition. Given its centrality for the construction of normative life forms, however, it could hardly be more crucial to sociological analysis. As previously stated, our right to justification expresses our right to a self-determined life. To the extent that the right to justification may be called into question, challenged or jeopardized, it needs to be defended not only by those who are — effectively or potentially — deprived of it, but also by everyone recognizing its anthropological significance. Yet, the task of justifying the right to justification is far from straightforward.[117] This task cannot be accomplished unless we recognize that any attempt to make a case for the *right* to justification is futile if it is artificially dissociated from the *practices* of justification in which it manifests its socio-ontological weight and through which human actors attribute meaning to different *engagements* with the world. Embarking upon such an ambitious undertaking, one may identify different forms of 'justification' on the basis of a typology of 'engagements'.[118]

I. One may classify 'engagements' in terms of their *socio-ontological referentiality*. Three *types of engagement* that are, respectively, embedded in three *realms of existence* are of paramount importance:

(a) Objective engagements are embedded in realms of objectivity.

(b) Normative engagements are embedded in realms of normativity.

(c) Subjective engagements are embedded in realms of subjectivity.

In other words, human beings act upon, make sense of and construct the world on the basis of *objective*, *normative* and *subjective* engagements.[119]

(a) As physical beings, we are immersed in *objectivity*. As such, we engage with different elements of the natural world. Our bodies have a finite life span, are composed of various organic constituents and cannot be dissociated from the environment in which they are materially situated.

(b) As social beings, we are immersed in *normativity*. As such, we engage with different elements of the cultural world. We possess species-constitutive faculties that have permitted us to build a human universe, which comprises a series of empowering resources — notably those derived from our productive, reflexive, socio-constructive, desiderative and experiential capacities.

(c) As self-conscious beings, we are immersed in *subjectivity*. As such, we engage with different elements of our personal world. As individuals capable of developing a sense of identity, we are placed not only in an external world of objectivity and normativity but also in an inner world of subjectivity, to which we have privileged access. Both rationally and emotionally constituted processes of cognition — which are articulated in thoughts and reflections, as well as in moods and sensations — are part and parcel of what it means to be human.

II. One may classify 'engagements' in terms of their *socio-ontological conditioning*. Three *types of engagement* that are, respectively, embedded in three *types of social conditions* are of paramount importance:

(a) Behavioural engagements are embedded in behavioural conditions.

(b) Ideological engagements are embedded in ideological conditions.

(c) Institutional engagements are embedded in institutional conditions.

In other words, human beings act upon, make sense of and construct the world on the basis of *behavioural*, *ideological* and *institutional* engagements.[120]

(a) We engage in and with the world by virtue of different *actions*, which enable us to shape particular aspects of our existence. These actions

may be categorized on several levels: individual or collective, conscious or unconscious, spontaneous or habitualized, reflexive or intuitive — to mention only a few. It is by virtue of our actions that we convert ourselves into the protagonists of our lives.

(b) We engage in and with the world by virtue of different *worldviews*, which permit us to make ideologically shaped — and, hence, perspective- and value-laden — assumptions about specific aspects of our existence. These worldviews constitute ideologies, in the sense that they reflect our interest-laden positioning in social reality, which is stratified in terms of key sociological factors — such as status, class, ethnicity, gender, age and ability.

(c) We engage in and with the world by virtue of different *institutions*, which allow us to generate relatively solidified — and, hence, more or less predictable — patterns of social imaginaries and practices. These institutions — regardless of whether they are primarily economic, political, cultural, artistic, linguistic, sexual, educational, judicial, military, religious, scientific or otherwise — make us relate to the world in a socially organized and symbolically codified manner.

III. One may classify 'engagements' in terms of their *socio-ontological situatedness*. Three *types of engagement* that are, respectively, embedded in three *types of social fields* are of paramount importance:

(a) Foundational engagements are embedded in foundational fields.

(b) Contingent engagements are embedded in contingent fields.

(c) Ephemeral engagements are embedded in ephemeral fields.

In other words, human beings act upon, make sense of and construct the world on the basis of *foundational*, *contingent* and *ephemeral* engagements.[121]

(a) *Foundational fields* constitute civilizational ensembles of relationally structured conditions the existence of which is *necessary* for the emergence of social order. *Foundational engagements* constitute activities that take place within, and unfold in relation to, foundational fields. These engagements are equally *necessary* for the emergence of social order. Unless human actors undertake foundational engagements, social order collapses or does not come into existence in the first place. Obvious examples of both foundational fields and foundational engagements are those that are primarily (i) *economic*, (ii) *political*, (iii) *cultural*, (iv) *artistic*, (v) *linguistic* and/or (vi) *sexual*. No society can exist without (i) some degree of division of labour, (ii) small-scale and large-scale modes of value-guided action coordination, (iii) various forms of habitualization, (iv) diversified realms of aesthetic expression, (v) everyday spaces of communicative interaction and (vi) subtle or overt methods of regulating sexuality.

(b) *Contingent fields* constitute societal ensembles of relationally structured conditions the existence of which is *possible* within, but not necessary for, the emergence of social order. *Contingent engagements* constitute activities that take place within, and unfold in relation to, contingent fields. These engagements are equally *possible* within, but not necessary for, the emergence of social order. By undertaking contingent engagements, human actors may shape, as well as experience, social order in a meaningful fashion. Yet, in principle, the latter can exist and persist without the former. There are abundant examples of both contingent fields and contingent engagements, such as those that are primarily (i) *judicial*, (ii) *military*, (iii) *religious*, (iv) *scientific*, (v) *academic* and/or (vi) *journalistic*. Society may be organized more or less efficiently with, but can — at least in principle — exist without, (i) legal arrangements, (ii) armed forces, (iii) spiritual practices and sacred institutions, (iv) systematic forms of knowledge production, (v) disciplinary divisions of cognition and (vi) media industries.

(c) *Ephemeral fields* constitute interactional ensembles of relationally structured conditions the existence of which is largely *irrelevant* to the emergence of social order, although they tend to be far from meaningless to the actors by whose performances they are brought into being. *Ephemeral engagements* constitute activities that take place within, and unfold in relation to, ephemeral fields. These engagements are also largely *irrelevant* to the emergence of social order. Granted, by undertaking ephemeral engagements, human actors may contribute to the quotidian production and reproduction of social order in significant ways. Yet, in principle, the latter can exist and persist without the former. Given the diversity of everyday involvements in the world, one may identify a countless number of examples demonstrating the prevalence of both ephemeral fields and ephemeral engagements, which are, by definition, relatively short-lived and which, in terms of their typological specificity, are not indispensable to the reproduction, let alone to the emergence, of social order.

Summary

One may classify 'engagements' in terms of a *combination of socio-ontological variables*, notably in relation to the aforementioned dimensions. Numerous *types of engagement* that *intersect* with different *socio-ontological variables* are vital to human existence. As such, they can be constituted by an assemblage of the following — interconnected — modes of being-in-the-world:

I. objective, normative and/or subjective;
II. behavioural, ideological and/or institutional;
III. foundational, contingent and/or ephemeral.

These crucial modes of being-in-the-world have significant implications for a critical understanding of human existence:

I. Human beings act upon, make sense of and construct the world on the basis of *objective*, *normative* and *subjective* engagements. The domains of objectivity, normativity and subjectivity constitute the principal spheres in and through which human actors establish a materially constituted, symbolically mediated and personally assimilated relation to the world.
II. Human beings act upon, make sense of and construct the world on the basis of *behavioural*, *ideological* and *institutional* engagements. It is by virtue of their interactional, conceptual and organizational capacities that human creatures engage in and with the world in a performative, reflective and coordinative manner.
III. Human beings act upon, make sense of and construct the world on the basis of *foundational*, *contingent* and *ephemeral* engagements. The first type is necessary for, the second type is possible within, and the third type is irrelevant to the emergence of social order.

As illustrated above, the task of shedding light on key forms of human engagement in and with the world is a complex affair. When navigating our way through the universe, we pursue a large variety of conceptually distinguishable, yet ontologically intertwined, forms of engagement. As immersive entities, we cannot live in the world unless we act upon, make sense of and construct it. We cannot find our place in the world unless we engage in and with the multiple ways in which reality presents itself, and poses an existential challenge, to us on a daily basis. The challenge of engaging in and with the challenge of engagement remains, and will always remain, a challenge based on engagement.

Engagements and Justifications

Human beings provide justifications in relation to (I) *objective*, *normative* and *subjective* engagements, (II) *behavioural*, *ideological* and *institutional* engagements, as well as (III) *foundational*, *contingent* and *ephemeral* engagements.

I. Human beings provide justifications by referring to *objective* conditions of existence (such as factual circumstances), *normative* arrangements of existence (such as cultural specificities) and/or *subjective* interpretations of existence (such as personal perceptions).
II. Human beings provide justifications by referring to *behavioural* patterns of existence (such as interactional conventions), *ideological* representations of existence (such as conceptual arguments) and/or *institutional* assemblages of existence (such as organizational structures).
III. Human beings provide justifications by referring to *foundational* realms of existence (such as economic, political, cultural, artistic, linguistic and/or

sexual matters), *contingent* realms of existence (such as judicial, military, religious, scientific, academic and/or journalistic affairs) and/or *ephemeral* realms of existence (such as situational and peripheral dimensions of their lives).

Unsurprisingly, the challenge of justifying the right to justification is far from straightforward. The right to justification can be defended within different contexts, from different angles and on different grounds. Irrespective of whether one favours a *universalist* perspective, according to which human beings are born with a set of rights, or a *particularist* perspective, according to which rights are invented by individual or collective subjects within spatiotemporally contingent contexts, the task of justifying the right to justification remains — and will always remain — a multifaceted challenge, not only in intellectual thought but also, more fundamentally, in day-to-day interactions.

CONCLUSION

As argued in this article, processes of *justification* are fundamental to the symbolically mediated construction — that is, to both the conceptual and the empirical *organization* — of social life. More specifically, they are central to individual and collective practices oriented towards the meaningful engagement with, and the purposeful involvement in, the world. Yet, processes of justification are just as *complex within* as they are *vital to* the production, reproduction and transformation of quotidian realities. This inquiry has aimed to demonstrate the validity of this contention by exploring the meaning of 'justification' in relation to 10 key dimensions: (1) existence, (2) ethics, (3) justice, (4) perspective, (5) presuppositions, (6) agreement, (7) common worlds, (8) critique, (9) practice and (10) justification itself. In light of the preceding reflections, it becomes apparent that these aspects of justification play a pivotal role not only in sociological research but also, more fundamentally, in everyday life. For human socialization is inconceivable without processes of justification. To the extent that we, as rational beings, are expected to provide reasons for the validity, legitimacy and defensibility of the behavioural, ideological and institutional facets permeating our involvement in and exposure to different forms of material or symbolic actuality, processes of justification constitute an essential ingredient of human reality.

NOTES

1. Boltanski and Thévenot (1991).
2. Boltanski and Thévenot [1991]).
3. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1999). See also, for instance: Lemieux (2014); Susen (2011a, 2012, 2014 [2012]); Wagner (2014).
4. On the concept of 'justification' in Boltanskian thought, see, for example: Blokker and Brighenti (2011); Boltanski (2002, 2009b); Boltanski and Thévenot (1991, 2006

[1991]); Borghi (2011); Corcuff (1998); Eulriet (2014); Habermas (2004 [1999]); Jetté (2003); Lemieux (2014); Livet (2009); Müller-Doohm (2000); Silber (2011); Stark (2009); Turner (2007); Vaisey (2009); Wagner (1999).

5. On the concept of 'organization', see, for example: Adler (2009, 2014); Godwyn and Gittell (2012); Grusky and Miller (1981 [1970]); Handel (2002); Hatch (2011, 2013 [1997]); McAuley, Duberley and Johnson (2013 [2007]); Ray and Reed (1994, 1992); Scott (2008 [1995]); Tsoukas and Chia (2011).

6. See, for example: Steup, Turri and Sosa (2014 [2005]), Chapter 11; Turri and Klein (2014).

7. See, for example: Aikin (2014); Conee and Feldman (2004); Dougherty (2011); McCain (2014).

8. See, for example: Bergmann (2006); BonJour and Sosa (2003); Goldberg (2007); Kornblith (2001).

9. See, for example: BonJour and Sosa (2003); Kornblith (2001); Steup et al. (2014 [2005]), Chapter 13.

10. See, for example: Bouchard (2002); Poston (2014); Steup et al. (2014 [2005]), Chapter 10.

11. See, for example: Crook (1991); Porter (2006); Rockmore (2004); Steup et al. (2014 [2005]), Chapter 10.

12. See, for example: Haack (2009); Steup et al. (2014 [2005]), Chapter 10.

13. Boltanski and Thévenot (1991).

14. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006[1991]).

15. Bourdieu (2000 [1997]), p. 237 (italics in original). See Bourdieu (1997), p. 280 (italics in original): 'La question de la *légitimé* d'une existence, du droit d'un individu à *se sentir justifié d'exister comme il existe*'. — On this point, see Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 127 (italics added): '[T]he imperative to justify requires that each person be assigned a *legitimate* qualification'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 161 (italics added): 'L'impératif de justification exige en effet une qualification *légitime* des gens'.

16. On this point, see Forst (2012 [2007], 2015). See also, for instance: Di Blasi and Holzhey (2014); Forst (2002 [1994], 2013 [2003], 2013 [2011], 2014).

17. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), 'Part One: The Imperative to Justify' (pp. 23—61). See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), 'Première Partie: L'impératif de justification' (pp. 37—82).

18. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 27: 'a moral being'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot, p. 42: 'un être moral'.

19. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 27. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 42: 'une capacité morale'.

20. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 27: 'capable of distancing themselves'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 42: 'capables de s'abstraire'.

21. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 30: 'moral beings capable of distancing themselves from their own particularity'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 45: 'des êtres moraux capables de dépasser ces particularités'. In the official English translation 'dépasser' is translated as 'distancing' and 'particularités' (plural) as 'particularity' (singular). On this point, see also Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 30: 'This commonality […] offers persons a way to transcend their own particularities'. In parallel, see Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 46: 'Cette universalité[…] ouvre la possibilité aux personnes de dépasser leurs particularités'.

22. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 31. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 46: 'le bien commun'.

23. On the concept of 'normativity', see Susen (2007), pp. 33—34 (italics in original):

> Here, the term 'normativity' is used to refer to the interpersonal establishment of rules and norms. To be more precise, normativity contains five crucial features. (*a*) Normativity is largely

implicit in that we, as ordinary actors, are largely unaware of the presuppositional nature of the social horizons in which we are immersed. (*b*) Normativity is *intersubjective* in that it unavoidably emerges out of the interactions between individuals. (*c*) Normativity is *regulative* in that it defines and stipulates what is right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate, legitimate or illegitimate, thereby allowing for the possibility of more or less regulated and stable social interaction. (*d*) Normativity is *value-laden* in that conventional standards are never simply factual but always also prescriptive, transforming the genuinely contingent into the seemingly universal. (*e*) Normativity is *contestable* in that conventional standards are always — at least potentially — criticisable, negotiable, and transformable. In short, normativity is implicitly, intersubjectively, regulatively, prescriptively, and contestably established. It is the task of critical theory to question the givenness of the social by problematising the taken-for-grantedness of normativity, including the normativity of its own presuppositional grounds.

24. On the concept of 'common world' ('*monde commun*'), see Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 130—133, 140—144; see also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 164—168, 177—181.

25. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: '[l]es principes de justice'.

26. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145 (italics added). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182 (italics added): 'Les *principes de justice* et les *mondes* dans lesquels ils sont réalisés n'étant pas attachés à des personnes ou à des groupes mais *saisis dans des situations* relevant des différentes justices et doit être capable, pour se conduire avec *naturel*, de les *reconnaître* et de s'y *ajuster*. Les personnes chez lui cette capacité est absente ou perturbée sont considérées comme psychiquement anormales'.

27. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 146. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 183: 'ce sens moral'.

28. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 146. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 183: 'juger juste'.

29. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: '[l]es principes de justice'. Furthermore, see Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 146: 'bring into play the corresponding principle of justice'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 183: 'mettre en œuvre le principe de justice'.

30. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: 'La définition du bien commun'.

31. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: 'l'élaboration du modèle de cité'. On the concept of *cité*, see, for example: Susen and Turner (2014a), pp. 9, 42, 56, 67, 70—71, 79, 156—163, 165—167, 174, 231, 276, 301, 317, 319—323, 325—326, 328—332, 335, 353, 395—396, 404, 421, 430, 432, 438—439, 497, 555, 571, 574, 614, 616, 619, 644, 646—647, 687, 690—694, 699, 701, 709, 712, 716.

32. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145: 'a hypothetical description of the mental competence that is adapted to the minimal requirements of agreement reaching in a polity'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: 'construction hypothétique de cette compétence adaptée aux exigences minimales de l'accord dans une cité'.

33. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 151: 'the underlying principle of justice'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 189: 'les principes de justice sous-jacents'.

34. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 151: 'resources that are heterogeneous'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 189: 'ressources hétérogènes'.

35. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), Part Two, Part Three, Part Four and Part Five. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), Deuxième Partie, Troisième Partie, Quatrième Partie et Cinquième Partie. In addition, see, for instance: Susen (2014b), pp. 9—10; Susen (2014d), pp. 644, 659, 694, 699, 707, 712, 717—718, 733, 737; Susen (2014 [2015]), p. 331.

36. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: '[l]es principes de justice'.

37. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 193—203, 261—269, 332—335. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 241—252, 320—329, 404—407.

38. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 83—90, 159—164, 237—241, 293—304. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 107—115, 200—206, 291—296, 357—371.

39. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 90—98, 164—178, 241—247, 304—317. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 116—126, 206—222, 296—303, 371—386.

40. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 98—107, 178—185, 247—251, 317—325. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 126—137, 222—230, 304—308, 386—395.

41. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 107—117, 185—193, 251—261, 325—332. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 137—150, 231—241, 308—320, 396—404.

42. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 118—123, 203—211, 269—273. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 150—157, 252—262, 330—334.

43. Bourdieu (2001 [1998]), p. 85. See Bourdieu (1998), p. 93: 'système d'oppositions éthiques correspondant à un modèle cosmologique pour justifier la hiérarchie'.

44. In opposition to the concept of 'spheres of injustice', see Walzer's account of 'spheres of justice', notably in Walzer (1983). See also, for instance, Merle (2013).

45. On both the commonalities and the differences between Bourdieu's conception of *champ* and Boltanski's conception of *cité*, see, for instance, Susen (2014 [2015], 2015b).

46. Boltanski (2012 [1990]), p. 12. See Boltanski (1990a), p. 30: 'les différentes formes de grandeurs'.

47. Boltanski (2012 [1990]), pp. 12—13 (italics in original). See Boltanski (1990a), p. 30 (italics in original): 'différentes façons de *comprendre* les autres, c'est-à-dire de les redoubler dans sa personne (de les incarner, de les identifier, etc.) […]'.

48. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 12. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 25: 'être très attentif à la diversité des formes de justification'.

49. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 10—12: 'Attention to Critical Operations'. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 23—26: 'L'attention aux opérations critiques'.

50. On this point, see, for example, Susen (2011a). See also Bourdieu and Eagleton (1992).

51. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 10 (italics added). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 23 (italics added): 'principes d'*interprétation* mis en œuvre par les acteurs'.

52. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 10 (italics added). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 23 (italics added): 'principes d'*explication* en usage dans les sciences sociales'.

53. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 11. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 24: 'les modes de justification ou de critique utilisés par les acteurs'.

54. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 11. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 24: 'les langages de description ou les principes explicatifs mis en œuvre par les sciences sociales'.

55. On this point, see, for example: Susen (2011a); Susen (2012), pp. 714—715; Susen (2013a), p. 224; Susen (2015a), pp. 5, 54—55, 63, 148—151, 157, 158, 168.

56. On this point, see Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 343—346. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 417—421. In addition, see Susen (2010), pp. 109, 116.

57. On this point, see Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 343—346. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 417—421. Moreover, see Susen (2010), p. 110.

58. See, for example, Susen and Turner (2011a). See esp. Susen (2011b) and Susen and Turner (2011b).

59. See, for example, Susen and Turner (2014a). See esp. Susen (2014b, 2014c, 2014d) and Susen and Turner (2014b).

60. On the controversial relationship between 'critical sociology' and the 'pragmatic sociology of critique', see, for instance: Bénatouïl (1999a, 1999b); Callinicos (2006), pp. 4—5, 15, 51—82, 155—156; Celikates (2009), pp. 136—157; de Blic and Mouchard (2000a, 2000b); Frère (2004), esp. pp. 92—93, 97n.4; Nachi (2006), esp. pp. 188—189; Nachi (2014); Robbins (2014); Susen (2007), pp. 223—224, 227n.25, 228n.50, 229n.51, 229n.52, 271n.24; Susen (2014e, 2014 [2015], 2015b, 2016b); Wagner (1999, 2000). On this debate, see also, for example: Boltanski (1990a), pp. 9—134; Boltanski (1990b), pp. 124—134; Boltanski (1998), pp. 248—253; Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), pp. 303—311; Boltanski (2002), pp. 276—281, 281—284; Boltanski (2003), pp. 153—161; Boltanski (2008); Boltanski (2009a), esp. pp. 39—82; Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), esp. pp. 633—640; Boltanski and Honneth (2009), pp. 81—86, 92—96, 100—114; Boltanski, Rennes and Susen (2010), pp. 152—154, 160—162; Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 40, 41—43, 43—46, 265—270; Boltanski and Thévenot (1999), pp. 364—365.

61. On this point, see, for example: Habermas (2001), pp. 13, 45, 79. See also, for example: Apel (1990 [1985]), pp. 35, 41—42, 50; Ray (2004), pp. 317—318; Susen (2007), pp. 114, 244, 251, 286; Susen (2009b), pp. 102—103, 114; Susen (2010), pp. 109, 116; Whitton (1992), p. 307.

62. On this point, see previous note. See also, for example, Pinker (2011).

63. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 25. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 39: 'la relation entre accord et discorde'.

64. This presupposition is central to Habermasian conceptions of 'deliberative democracy' and 'discursive democracy'. On this point, see, for instance: Brookfield (2005); Cooke (2000); Eriksen and Weigård (2003); Festenstein (2004); Günther (1998); Habermas (1996 [1992]; 1998, 2005); Janssen and Kies (2005); Johnson (1993); Johnston Conover and Searing (2005); O'Neill (2000); Pellizzoni (2001); Power (1998); Sintomer (1999); Susen (2009a); Susen (2010), esp. pp. 110—111, 116—117; Young (1997).

65. Outhwaite (2013), p. 248 (italics added). On this point, see also Susen (2013b), pp. 325—326.

66. See Susen (2013b), p. 326.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 326 (italics in original).

68. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 25 (American spelling — that is, 'behavior' — used in the official English translation). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 53: 'la possibilité de coordination des conduites humaines'.

69. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 39. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 56: 'l'apparente pluralité des formes d'accord'.

70. On the relevance of this tripartite distinction to Bourdieusian field analysis, see Susen (2013a), p. 236n.121.

71. On the concept of 'common world' ('*monde commun*'), see Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 130—133, 140—144; see also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 164—168, 177—181.

72. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: '[l]es principes de justice'.

73. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 65. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 85: '[les gens se mesurent] en établissant des équivalences et des ordres'.

74. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 65 (italics added). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 85 (italics added): '*situations ordinaires*'.

75. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 65 (italics added). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 85 (italics added): 'philosoph[i]es politiques'.

76. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 65. Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 85: 'les constructions d'un principe d'ordre et d'un bien commun'.

77. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 65. Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 85: 'les solutions proposées de manière abstraite et systématique'.

78. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 66. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 87: 'des œuvres classiques de philosophie politique proposant des expressions systématiques des formes de bien commun auxquelles il est fait couramment référence aujourd'hui, dans notre société'.

79. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 66. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 87: 'grammaires du lien politique'.

80. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 66. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 87: 'servent à justifier des appréciations sur le caractère juste ou injuste d'une situation'.

81. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 66. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 87: 'établi à un niveau supérieur'.

82. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), Part Two, Part Three, Part Four and Part Five. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), Deuxième Partie, Troisième Partie, Quatrième Partie et Cinquième Partie. In addition, see, for instance: Susen (2014b), pp. 9—10; Susen (2014d), pp. 644, 659, 694, 699, 707, 712, 717—718, 733, 737; Susen (2014 [2015]), p. 331.

83. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: '[l]es principes de justice'.

84. Boltanski and Chiapello (2005 [1999]), p. 22. See Boltanski and Chiapello (1999), p. 61: '[l]es cités comme points d'appui normatifs pour construire des justifications'.

85. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 127. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 161: '[l]e jugement en situation'.

86. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 127. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 161: 'L'impératif de justification exige en effet une qualification légitime des gens'.

87. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 131. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 166: 'L'épreuve de grandeur ne se réduit pas à un débat d'idées […]'.

88. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 131. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 166: '[…] elle engage des personnes, avec leur corporéité, dans un monde de choses qui servent à l'appui, en l'absence desquelles la dispute ne trouverait pas matière à s'arrêter dans une épreuve'.

89. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145 (italics added). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 183 (italics added): 'Pour s'accorder sur ce qui est juste, les personnes humaines doivent donc connaître un *bien commun* et être métaphysiciennes'.

90. On the centrality of critique for a pragmatist account of justification, Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 213—273: 'Part Four: Critiques'; see Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 263—334: 'Quatrième Partie: La critique'.

91. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 145. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 182: '[l]es principes de justice'.

92. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 216. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 266: 'On peut qualifier ces sociétés de "complexes" au sens où leurs membres doivent posséder la compétence nécessaire pour identifier la nature de la situation et pour traverser des situations relevant de mondes différents'.

93. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 217. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 267: 'modèle à un seul monde'.

94. On this point, see, for example: Boltanski and Thévenot (1983, 1991, 2006 [1991]); Corcuff (1998); Honneth (2008, 2010 [2008]); Kaufmann (2012); Lahire (1998); Lemieux (2014); Stark (2009); Thévenot (1990, 1998); Thévenot (2001, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2014).

95. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 216 (American spelling — that is, 'behaviors' — used in the official English translation). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 267: 'avec une sorte d'automatisme, la répétition de conduites'.

96. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 216 (American spelling — that is, 'program' — used in the official English translation). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 267: 'un guidage interne au moyen d'un programme préalablement inscrit dans les personnes'.

97. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 216 (italics added). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 267 (italics added): 'Bien que le jeu soit étroitement limité par le dis- positif de la situation, un *modèle à plusieurs mondes* donne aux acteurs la *possibilité de se soustraire à une épreuve* et, en prenant appui sur un principe extérieur, *d'en contester la validité* ou même de retourner la situation en engageant une épreuve valide dans un *monde différent*. Il inclut par là la *possibilité de la critique* dont les constructions déterministes ne parviennent pas à rendre compte'.

98. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 233. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 287: 'la validitéde l'épreuve'.

99. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 233. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 287: 'dénoncer l'injustice'.

100. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 233. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 287: 'capables de se soustraire à l'empire de la situation'.

101. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 233 (American spelling — that is, 'judgment' — used in the official English translation). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 287: 'un jugement critique'.

102. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 233. Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 287: 'en ouvrant les yeux sur d'autres mondes et sur les êtres qui assurent leur présence'.

103. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 234 (italics added). Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 287—288 (italics added): 'En mettant en œuvre leur capacité à ouvrir et à fermer les yeux, les personnes réalisent leur *libre arbitre*. […] Mais la capacité d'ouvrir et de fermer les yeux, de se laisser prendre par la nature de la situation ou de s'y soustraire, n'est pas seulement manifeste dans la critique. Elle est également àl'œuvre chaque fois que les personnes ont àaccomplir le passage entre des situations relevant de mondes différents, ce qui la rend, dans une *société complexe comportant des agencements multiples*, indispensable à la *conduite normale de la vie quotidienne*'.

104. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 83—90, 159—164, 237—241, 293—304. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 107—115, 200—206, 291—296, 357—371.

105. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 90—98, 164—178, 241—247, 304—317. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 116—126, 206—222, 296—303, 371—386.

106. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 98—107, 178—185, 247—251, 317—325. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 126—137, 222—230, 304—308, 386—395.

107. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 107—117, 185—193, 251—261, 325—332. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 137—150, 231—241, 308—320, 396—404.

108. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 193—203, 261—269, 332—335. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 241—252, 320—329, 404—407.

109. See Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), pp. 118—123, 203—211, 269—273. See also Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), pp. 150—157, 252—262, 330—334.

110. On this point, see, for example: Susen (2007), Chapter 3, section ii, esp. pp. 74—90. See also Susen (2013a) and Susen (2013b).

111. Susen (2007), p. 82.

112. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 347 (italics added). See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 425 (italics added): '[l]e *modèle* de justification'.

113. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 357. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 438: 'Les personnes doivent en effet, pour faire face au monde, procéder à un continuel va-et-vient entre la réflexion et l'action, en basculant sans cesse entre des moments de maîtrise consciente et des moments où l'appel du présent les embarque dans le cours des choses'.

114. On the 'pragmatic sociology of critique', see, for example: Adkins (2014); Bénatouïl (1999a, 1999b); Blokker (2011); Bogusz (2014); Boltanski and Browne (2014); Boltanski and Honneth (2009); Boltanski, Honneth and Celikates (2014 [2009]); Boltanski, Rennes and Susen (2014 [2010]); Boltanski and Thévenot (1991, 2006 [1991]); Fowler (2014); Nachi (2014); Quéré and Terzi (2014); Susen (2012, 2014b, 2014c, 2014d, 2014 [2012], 2014 [2015], 2015b, 2014a); Susen and Turner (2014b); Thévenot (2001, 2014).

115. Boltanski and Thévenot (2006 [1991]), p. 358. See Boltanski and Thévenot (1991), p. 438: '[…] les opérations qui forment la trame de la vie quotidienne'.

116. It should be spelled out that, unlike the previous sections, this section does *not* draw directly on Boltanski and Thévenot's approach but, rather, aims to develop it further. See, in particular, Susen (2016c).

117. On this point, see Forst (2012 [2007], 2015). See also, for instance: Di Blasi and Holzhey (2014); Forst (2002 [1994], 2013 [2003], 2013 [2011], 2014).

118. On this point (and the following sections), see Susen (2016c).

119. On this point, see, for example: Susen (2007), Chapter 3, section ii, esp. pp. 74—90. See also Susen (2013a, 2013b). In addition, see, for instance: Susen (2015a), pp. 101—103, 110—111; Susen (2016a), esp. pp. 39, 45—47, 50, 68, 69—70, 71, 72, 80, 81, 83, 104.

120. On this point, see, for example: Susen (2012, 2014 [2012], 2014a, 2014e); Susen (2015a), pp. 10, 46—47, 51, 90, 118, 164, 252, 255, 275, 280; Susen (2016b).

121. On this point, see Susen (2013a), p. 236n.121.

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