BOUNDDED JUSTIFIABILITY
Assurance and oppression in securing life together with binding engagements

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When introducing our workshop Paul Dumouchel and Reiko Gotoh questioned the entrenched opposition between universal justice and particular cultures, bringing together the two opposed terms with the help of the transversal notions of bonds and boundaries. This questioning meets two intertwined research programs in which I have been involved. First, I developed a sociology of régimes of engagement to differentiate a plurality of socially acknowledged ways in which the humans are committed to their environment – from public stances to intimate forms of proximity – while striving for a certain kind of "good". Each regime is characterized by a dynamics guaranteeing a kind of capacity. They are distinguished according to the type of good they promise as well as to the degree to which the guarantee being offered can be held in common. Acknowledging these bonds between a person and her environment – her way of being bound to the world – is viewed as a realist basis for recognition, for mutual engagements, and for critique of abusive power and injustice, as well as concern for oppression. More precisely than current notions of social bonds permit, and in relation to both realism and warranty, the category of engagement allows for useful distinctions between different ways of considering that an action is justifiable. Second, I have been cooperatively carrying out, in different cultures, a series of comparative studies on the construction of what can be justified as worthwhile in living together. Striving to overcome the opposition between the terms “justice” and “culture”, we investigated practical claims and tests of justifiability held in common, a notion that may bridge the gap between the two terms.

My contention here is that the disciplinary conflict raised between two contrasted views, one that is oriented towards what is universally right, and the other that is geared towards what makes sense in living together within a particular culture, prevents us from identifying shared issues and relevant
distinctions in addressing it. I shall provisionally phrase this issue as follows: How do persons proceed, in their taking part in a human community, to secure life together and find assurance in commonality, in spite of strong disagreements ensuing from the plurality of acknowledged ways to secure capacities. Universal human rights on the one hand, and cultural mores and customs on the other, offer two contrasted answers. We need a broader perspective to clarify the shared and distinctive features among these two answers to the same question.

I will present here such a perspective based on several international programs of comparative research on justification and culture which I have run, and on theoretical elaborations which evolved with them, and which I mention in the introductory part of the text. In three further steps, I successively lay out three grammars of securing life together through different arrangements of commonality in the plural that lead to different ways of making the first person plural. All three grammars are compatible with a notion of common humanity, although they offer contrasting solution to the problem of acknowledging differences within this shared humankind. Justifiability held in common takes a different shape in each of three grammars, depending on acceptable modes of differing in common. Each grammar specifies the kind of assurance found in commonality, and consequently the kind of oppression and exclusion resulting from such bounded justifiability. The three grammars secure life together by integrating a plurality of: orders of worth for the common good (part 1); individuals opting in the liberal public (part 2); affinities to commonplaces (part 3). I will give more concrete insights into each of these grammars, introducing case studies extracted from comparative studies in Europe, the United States and Russia among other countries. These cases studies will help us highlight the proper way in which justifiability is bounded because of the kind of bonding it assumes. In a final conclusive part, I will suggest how grammars of commonality and regimes of engagement enlarge the scope of the critical analysis of injustice and our approach to power, oppression and exclusion.

INTRODUCING THE BASIC ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES: REGIMES OF ENGAGEMENT AND GRAMMARS OF COMMONALITY IN THE PLURAL

In studying life together, I will build on the assumption of an anthropological inquietude of human beings in quest of confidence, security, assurance, in their relations to the world, beginning with their commitment with the non human world which informs their sense of reality. Such a question faces the key tension of life together which result from the confrontation between divergent kinds of assurance. This tension cannot be reduced to canonical oppositions between the collective and the individual, nor the public and the private. It regards ways of maintaining oneself in the world, and looking for security

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I chose the term "commonality", rather than the usual "public", because the grammar of common affinities does not sustain the kind of detachment of the public which is supported by the two others, although it stills governs commonality.
in a broad sense. As a political and social sciences researcher, I will concentrate on regimes of assurance or security which are socially acknowledged and which, thus, constitute a basic component of life together. Commonality brings about a kind of social security in dealing with the shared reality of the non human world, which is guaranteed by common knowledge and conventional qualifications. At the opposite of the spectrum, a kind of highly personal security by familiarity with one's close environment is also socially acknowledged. But this confident sense of reality cannot be communicated to another person unless she is intimate with the first one. This relevant difference between the common acknowledgement of a kind of security, and the impossibility to communicate it, is neglected by social and political sciences since they privilege collectiveness, even when they approach the habituation of the world still viewed in the category of social (and thus collective) practices. Therefore, my first concern has been to build a proper analytical category to grasp the range of contrasted senses of reality within a plurality of regimes of engagements with the non human world.²

Human animals produced highly sophisticated forms of commonality, in the double meaning of sharing features or attributes which maintain a community, and referring to the general body of a group. Commonality grounds the possibility of justifiability held in common with the help of language, symbolic forms and objects taken from a rich prop room. By ways of such justifiability, actions qualify for the maintenance of the community. Justifiability has to cope with the aforementioned tension between kinds of assurance, and therefore between the plurality of regimes of engagement. This leads to my second concern for the development of another analytical category, the grammar of commonality in the plural. How can the plurality of engagements with the world, which all contribute to a kind of assurance while being unequally suitable for commonality, can be integrated into some kind of first person plural?

In quest of assurance: the plurality of regimes of engagement

Three main regimes of engagement have been identified, allowing transversal comparison, even among cultures: the regime of publicly justifiable engagement, the regime of engagement in a plan, the regime of familiar engagement. The word engage has been chosen since its two meanings grasp two key aspects of the category: engaging as concretely fitting together (engaging gears), or pledging in a promise (engaging in a contract of marriage)³. The category firstly highlights that confidence in

³ In a recent reformulation of his theory of recognition Axel Honneth grounds it on an attitude of recognition, or acknowledgement, in front of the non human world. He views it as a more elementary "existential" mode of recognition with regard to the more substantial ones he studied formerly. He relates this existential recognition to Martin Heidegger's "Besorgtheit" (concernedness) and John Dewey's "engagement" which he regard as both challenging the opposition between the subject and the object and promoting a concerned and engaged relation of human beings to the non human world (Honneth 2007 [2005]). The regime of familiar engagement grasps features of such experiences (with
the person’s capacity to act is highly dependent on the arrangement of the material environment he or she relies on while grasping it by means of a certain format: publicly conventional, functional, familiarized. The category secondly enlarges a notion of promise in a temporal perspective, and characterizes a quest for a good that makes it possible to select and assess what is relevant to grasp. When prepared in a relevant format, the environment offers a pledge (gage) that guarantees the kind of good that orients evaluation in the regime. One can rely on or gain confidence from a *conventional public landmark*, or from *normal functionality*, or from *familiar usage*. None of the three is stronger than the other, but they vary in their possibility of being extended in common, of being communicated or ‘commonized’. At the public level of *justifiable engagement*, the evaluative format involves some common good, at least the maintenance of the community. In the regime of *engagement in a plan*, the good, which depends on the functionally prepared environment, is the satisfaction generated by an accomplished action, without further consideration of which other goal or value the plan might contribute. It refers to felicitous exercise of the will by an individual and his or her ability to project themself successfully into the future. The regime of *familiar engagement* maintains a personalized, localized good: feeling at ease. The wellbeing experienced in familiar human and material surroundings is heavily dependent on the path by which a person familiarized himself with a milieu shaped by continued use. This arranged milieu does not allow for grasping publicly qualified objects or even objects integrated by a function. In this regime it only specifies certain clues or access keys, particular points of attachment whose beneficial effects turn them into valuable familiar attachments.

Because of the temporal dimension of each regime of engagement, and the commitment which it involves, a fresh view on personal identity can result from this category. It provides a solid basis for an analysis of the *consistency of the person* which escapes both the too strong (and collective) notions of identity, or the too light flexibility and hollowness that leaves no place for the kind of continuity required by promise.

**Justifiability held in common : the two basic operations of communicating and composing which characterize each grammar of commonality in the plural**

Commonality is not sufficient to characterize the answer which is given to the tension previously underlined, and to analyze the production of some first person plural. It does not leave room for differing. Each *grammar of commonality in the plural* relies on the acknowledgement of a primary difference among various voices. The model of all grammars brakes each of them into two basic successive operations. *Communicating* is the first. The term should not be understood in the narrow contemporary meaning of exchanging information, but also in the broader sense of practically connecting with some common *locus*, as different rooms communicate to a common corridor. How do

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personal attachments to the world, which contribute to the assurance of the person without the possibility of joining up with others, can be transformed and allow for relations to these others? Composing is the second operation to be done. It aims at arranging the different voices to form a whole which can then be referred to as commonality. One should recall the significance of "composing a difference" as settling a dispute between dissimilar voices, which is archaic in English but not in the French expression "compose with" (composer avec) different positions in an effort to integrate them all. Composing the difference between a plurality of components which communicate, results in the composition of commonality. Since the first operation risks getting obscured by the second, I shall insist on this first one in the differentiation of grammars.

Three case studies highlighting the ways of binding oneself assumed by justifiability in common, and the way in which this justifiability is bounded and oppresses other regimes of guarantee

To make more concrete my argument, I will draw on empirical research while using the framework introduced here. I extracted three main case-studies from international comparative studies. It happens that all of them are related to environmental issues. Yet, each conflates a wide range of justifications held in common. Although each case, as most human situations, involve a variety of grammars, I will concentrate on one of them so that we can draw further consequences regarding this grammar. I will finally mention fateful consequences of the prevailing grammar which demonstrate the bounded character of the justifiability it entails, and the pressure or oppression on engagements which are not taken into account.

1. JUSTIFYING BY THE PLURALITY OF SPECIFICATIONS OF THE COMMON GOOD: THE GRAMMAR OF PLURAL ORDERS OF WORTH

The grammar of plural orders of worth offers an interesting intermediate position within the polarity between universalizing, which is aimed at by disciplines of justice, and particularizing, which is assumed by disciplines of culture. Each order of worth meets the double requirement of (1) resting on a specification of the common good while (2) satisfying conditions of extension to the common humanity and being transversal to particular cultures (Boltanski et Thévenot 1991, 2006).

The genealogy of orders of worth could be viewed as the result of an early modern effort to go beyond cultural particularities, and look for more general constructions of commonality. Instead of searching for a substantial common good which would be proper to a particular community, generalization overflows the boundaries of cultures by relying on systematized bonds which result from dependences on some common relation to the material world. We can find such a generalized

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4 “The moral complexity of an ‘equipped' humanity” presented the various ways an equipment is engaged and evaluated in different orders of worth and more bounded regimes of engagement: the personal track, the nature path, the scenic road, the European speedway for the "integrated market", etc. (Thévenot 2002).

5 For a larger presentation of this genealogy and of the questionable realism of political grammars, see: Thévenot 2001.
interdependence through a certain relation to the material world at the basis of order of worth: the domestic housing and inhabiting of the world for the domestic worth, techniques and methods for the industrial worth, merchandises for the market worth, urban and city public amenities for the civic worth, recognition signs and medias for the worth of fame, and even the body as the support of an emotional excitement for novelty in the case of the worth of inspiration. These intermediations are not limited to the variety of medium identified by Parsons, or systems by Luhmann, but they allow comparability and generalization while enhancing the capacities of human beings. This enhanced power, in conjunction with interdependence by the mediation of such equipped relations to the world, raises suspicion and concern for justice: isn't such an equipped power, with its inequalities, abusive? Answering to this question may result in the elaboration of an order of worth which appeases the tension between unequal states of worth and common humanity. It does so by offering a definition of worthiness which qualifies for a specification of the common good, claiming to benefit to all without being permanently attached to persons, and to be put to the reality test of qualification. Criticisms are obviously attacking each of these claims.

**Communicating by aggrandizing personal attachments into worth as qualification for the common good**

In this grammar, communicating implies connecting to worth, i.e. with a specification of the common good. Aggrandizing personal attachments supposes to relate to some kind of general interest, and thus to generalize one's concern above the particularities of one's own idiosyncratic situation.

**Composing the difference by denunciating and compromising between the plurality of orders of worth**

Once particular concerns have been made general and communicable by virtue of their aggrandizement into one order of worth, they get comparable. They can be articulated and put to the kind of reality test which grounds justification within this order. Composing commonality involves the plurality of orders of worth which have be taken into account to allow for differing. None should be forgotten in the making of commonality. The composition is controversial, and even confrontational, since each worth grounds critical denunciations of the rival pretension of another worth to qualify for the common good. Because all orders of worth meet the same model, it facilitates the possibility of assuaging critical tensions between them, and reaching a compromise in the following sense: a local and temporal aiming at a common good that transcends two different forms of worth in presence by including both of them and overlapping their boundaries. This compromise is consolidated by composite objects and devices which qualify for several orders of worth while avoiding the critical tension to break out. Thus, compromises take part to commonality, by contrast to private arrangements.
A case study: environmental disputes in the U.S. and France

As a case study, I will use the comparison between two environmental disputes which were paralleled within the context of a broader U.S.-French comparative study about legitimate justifications and repertoires of evaluation in the public (Lamont and Thévenot 2000), and which brought light on the American and French polity (Thévenot and Lamont 2000). The US dispute related to a dam project on a remote stream running through the pristine canyon of the Clavey, in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California. The French dispute was concerned with a heavily-contested road and tunnel project being built in a wild valley and through Pyrénées mountains connecting France and Spain. The comparison was intended to test whether orders of worth were transversal to such different cultures, and to open research to further developments on different grammars (Thévenot Moody and Lafaye 2000, Moody and Thévenot 2000). The output was that all the orders of worth were effectively used in the two countries, although with a different weight (the domestic worth based on tradition, heritage and locality leading to domesticating nature, was less referred to in the US; American citizens put more importance on market worth and the price of deregulated electricity than on universal access to public utility which presumes civic worth solidarity) and with different compromises: market worth evaluations were more common in the U.S. and were often compromised with other orders of worth, often with the civic worth and also the with green worth, which is surprising given the anti-capitalism bent of some environmental movements.

The comparison brought to the fore the place, much stronger in the U.S. than in France, of the liberal grammar which will be considered in the part 2. It might explain a more planned and even strategic utilization of the plurality of orders of worth in the U.S.. The local, grassroots Coalition focused mainly on domestic worth about their "backyard", or certain types of green arguments relating to attachment to their environment. The Tuolumne River Preservation Trust in San Francisco intentionally focused on the worth of fame, making opinion arguments about the extent of national and state-wide opposition. Finally, the Turlock Ratepayer’s Alliance focused very explicitly on market worth arguments such as the high cost of the project and low demand for it, and strategically avoided any sort of green argument which would have little resonance in the agricultural and industrial Turlock area.

Bounded justifiability within the grammar of worth: curbing close attachments

The case study also helps to figure out the way justifiability is bounded. It does not necessarily imply the boundary of a sharp border. At the light of distinct regimes of engagement, the restriction brought by the grammar might rather be viewed as an oppression on a certain capacity engaged in the realization of a kind of good which is hampered by the justifiability held in common. In the Clavey river case, the Me-wuk Indian tribe placing value on customs and tradition readily qualifies for the domestic worth, as do claims in favor of tradition and customs which issued from persons proclaiming their concern for Béarn culture in the French case. We clearly observe in such cases that the domestic worth allows justifiability based on custom and tradition to cross cultural boundaries. On the other
hand, since Me-wuk worship specific sacred natural areas, their opposing the dam project which would destroy such places can qualify for the worth of *Inspiration*. One of the French activist in the Somport case study, Eric Petetin, was himself frequently arranging evidence congruent with the test of the qualification for *inspiration*. Besides, he repeatedly claimed to be an "*Indien*". The worth of *inspiration* also provide a bridge crossing the border between the two profoundly contrasted cultural spaces.

However, none of these two qualifications for worth would allow the recognition of some cause of concern expressed by the Me-wuk community. The tribal member who is most active in the Clavey controversy is a grandmother who expressed her attachment to the Clavey in many ways, including the fact that her grandson is named "Clavey." One of her primary self-descriptions is as a "gatherer"--one who collects plants, particularly mushrooms, from the ancestral lands which surround the Clavey. Her intimate attachment to this place could only be "proved" to us through being present in the place and approaching her emotional involvement. Thus she asked us, as sociologists, to familiarize with the experience of being near the Clavey. This sort of presence demonstrates an intimate attachment to the natural place that is supported by the *regime of familiar engagement*, and that is not taken into account by the *grammar of plural orders of worth* since it resists the possibility of generalization and transportation required by public qualification for worth.

2. JUSTIFYING BY THE PLURALITY OF CHOICES BETWEEN PUBLICIZED OPTIONS: THE GRAMMAR OF INDIVIDUALS OPTING IN THE LIBERAL PUBLIC

The previous analysis of the *grammar of plural orders of worth* helps to single out features which characterize the *liberal grammar of individuals in public*. Obviously, this elementary grammar does not encapsulate the rich and various tradition of political liberalism. It only grasps core features which are most significant to distinguish a diversity of grammars on the basis of the two principal operations that we have identified.

*Communicating by transforming personal attachments into choices for options open to the public by individuals in public*

*Communicating* is the operation by which a person transforms her personal attachments and intimate commitments so that they can be exposed in the relevant format for *composing* the *liberal public*. The vocabulary of individual or individualization confuses the empirical person with the formatted state of *individual-in-the-liberal-public*. This state is actually the result of some sort of aggrandizement of the human being above his most personal worries, although this enhancement has no pretense to qualify for a specific characterization of the common good. The dramatic confrontation between claims referring to the common good is haunting the liberal grammar as a threat of civil war which should be avoided by virtue of the more limited format of the good engaged as the individualized interest. More precisely, this individual good should be publicly expressed as a *choice*
for *options* which are named either interests or opinions. Options should themselves be made manifest in a format that is accessible to all other individuals, so that each individual can be treated on the same level. The transformation required by the operation of *communication* might be quite severe, as we can guess from the case of religious faith which resists the format of choice, or from loyalties and even intimate attachments which also defy this format.

**Composing the difference by negotiation between individual choices**

*Composing* proceeds by exchanging, negotiating, finding trade-off and quid pro quo. The language of the balance of interests conceals the prerequisite of shared mediations needed to find such a balance. Mediations are not necessarily monetary but, at least, they rest on common knowledge, clear-cut and objective *options* staying in-between individual *preferences*.

**Variants of the liberal grammar based on multiple cultural choices or group interests**

A well-known variant of the *liberal grammar* is relevant for our purpose since it aims at bridging the gap between cultures in a *grammar of liberal multicultural individuals*. We studied it in action, as other grammars, in the course of an international project (USA, France, Russia) comparing the learning of life together by students in their collective residence. In the "International house" of a Californian University presented as a special place "to bring down cultural barriers", the staff aimed at pairing the two roommates "to be as different as possible: Arab and Israeli would be together, Korean and Japanese would be together, depending what’s going on in the world, who are enemies at the moment" (Zambiras 2004). The operation of *communication* is still *liberal* and requires "to have independence and take responsibility for what they are doing" and default of communication is phrased the following way by the staff: "some people exclude themselves, but I don’t think anyone is excluded […] when you go to coffee hour, you don’t see any Asian there […] It is an open invitation to everyone, but they choose not to come, and they make it hard for other people to meet them" (id.).

What is most relevant for our topic is that the liberal operation of *communication* demands the transformation of personal attachments so that they be exposed in public as individual *preferences* for common knowledge *cultural options*. It leads to a kind of publicizing which, from some participants' view, result in stereotyping cultures. Cultural costumes are asked, as well as preparing cultural dishes. It begins with the selection of candidates and a Korean girl thus explains her being accepted: "I emphasized that I’m able to communicate my culture better". She has already spend ten years in the US and knew how to communicate it the proper way for the liberal grammar. Yet, she complains: "you have to be so French or so Korean, you have to know certain things about your culture that are traditional and that you can show people, you can’t just be a person, you have to be a Korean person or a French person, those kinds of things bothered me… I mean, do French girls all know how to do the traditional I don’t know what in their culture? And not all Korean girls, specially in the twenty-first century, know how to do traditional Korean fan dance… And they expect you to wear traditional costumes". A retreat provides training for participants with exercises in which residents are brought
together in small groups and asked to expose in public a "memorable intercultural experience". "The dating thing that I explained at the retreat, now everybody thinks that everybody does that, but, many people do it, but it’s only for one or two years, in college, but then you don’t really do that… a difference becomes a stereotype, a generalization". She feels oppressed by this format of public stylized cultural preferences: "you don’t want to feel like a freak show on parade. Why do you always have to show off how you're different?" (id.).

A Russian girl describes a similar oppression: "I was performing at Sunday Supper last semester and I was doing salsa with a professional salsa dancer, his name is Raphael, an incredible guy, Mexican… his nationality has nothing to do with why I decided to do this […] We had some guests who actually had the guts to call me up and ask me to do some kind of performance for the faculty club or something, or for some older ex-professors, and I’m like 'but why do you want me for?' and she didn’t say, 'well, I just thought you were good', she was like 'well, I thought it was great that there was a Mexican guy dancing with a Russian girl, I thought that was SO culturally great'. I was just like ‘are you kidding me?’, to her, he was just a monkey, it was like a show, it was just like you put two people that don’t look like they would go together, and that’s why we want you, I mean that was ridiculous! And I felt like she was treating him like some kind of ape, and not a human being. And me as well, because she was saying this for both of us. Like 'oh, let’s put you in a cage, we’ve never seen a Russian girl with a Mexican guy before', and I’m just like 'you’re the most racist person I’ve ever met'. We connected like two human beings, not as a monkey and a rooster, or something that needed to be put in a cage and showed around…." (id.)

In another variant of the liberal grammar, the preference which is communicated is that of an interest group, or stakeholder. I could have used the U.S.-French comparison to make more concrete this grammar which was quite influential on the U.S. side in the making of a legitimate "coalition", and much less on the French side: "when you're looking at fighting a political battle, you collect a list of special interest groups, and then expand on that" (rafting company owner: Moody and Thévenot 2000). I would rather present another case that takes place in a long-term research on "governing by standards" (Thévenot 1997, 2009a, 2009b) and concerns a recently developed large-scale international device of this kind6.

A case study: the global roundtable on sustainable palm oil, and governing through standards

The NGO WWF was instrumental in the making of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) which, as other roundtables on agri-food industry commodities (soy, coffee, cocoa, sugar cane, cotton, biofuels), propose a transnational "multi-stakeholder" device assumed to cross boundaries between nations and cultures and bring together seven categories of stakeholders: "growers, processors and traders, consumer goods manufacturers, retailers, banks and investors, 6

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6 This case was studied by Emmanuelle Cheyns (2009) and, as a fieldwork of three months in Indonesia within the context of his Master of sociology at Ehess, by Philippe Barbereau whose adviser I was.
environmental/nature conservation NGOs, social/developmental NGOs". RSPO is supposed to compensate for the "failures of governments" caused by their "incapacity to take a quick decision". RSPO aims at taking responsibility for environmental goods by producing "private" and "non mandatory" standards and certifications.

The voluntary capacity of the stakeholder and the promotion of what is "practical", "realistic" and "effective" against what is "absolute or the ideal" point to the engagement in a plan and the associated preparation of the environment which are needed for communication. The additional notion that stakeholders "are in a hurry" and have no time to waste drives them to designate their planned engagement as "expediency". The operation of composition demands further requirements: be aware of the others' options ("to understand the stakes") and express vividly one's own ("I want that!", "not to be shy", "to be proactive", "to intervene", "to make the first move", "to take the floor"). Composition is a negotiation between kinds of good which have been formatted as opinion and preferences: "I go there, and I am of the opinion that biodiversity loss should be stopped. And then, there are farmers, and they tell me, that is all very fine, but ‘I want to develop, I want to cut the forest to install a farm and make a living’. And then we sit down, talk to each other, and come to a decision that allows him to cut maybe part of this forest, and conserve the rest, or whatever. So that’s negotiation". (NGO, NL) (Cheyns 2009).

**Bounded justifiability in the liberal grammar: curbing engagements in the common good and in close attachments**

Participants of "local communities" and small family farmers, "smallholders" as they are usually designated, find it difficult to have their voices heard through the operations of communication and composition which are required by the liberal grammar. As a matter of fact, they were left aside for long, since they were considered as unable of participating in the right format, for "cultural" reason. By contrast, directors of Indonesian companies "are used to negotiating, to speaking with other cultures, for example European cultures" (certifier, NL). But after the creation of a local NGO, and a small planters' union, the situation changed.

There are actually oppressed in two respects which can be clarified by the regime of engagement and the good which is respectively affected by the predominant engagement in a plan and liberal grammar. First, they are disqualified when they refer to specifications of a common good, or worth, in particular the civic worth which sustain their denunciations of their domestic subjection (due to the companies which they depend on), market subjection (due to the highly fluctuating fixation of prices) and industrial subjection (due to the over-emphasis on high productivity). Civic arguments

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7 Apart from their being still excluded from the strategic restricted groups in which is drawn up the agenda of the annual roundtables and are appointed the experts for the working groups (id.).

8 Cheyns makes the parallel with the roundtable on soy: "Called on by the WWF in 2004 to participate in the Roundtable on soy as a member of the organising committee, the Brazilian federation representing family agriculture
concerning solidarity and “value sharing in the value chain” between family producers and the downstream operators in the chain were exposed in the public consultation on the Internet, but sidelined in the forums of the roundtable. They gave way to a different formatting which fitted the liberal grammar. NGOs promoted, and industry accepted, the equality of "rights" which are comparable to the liberal conception of individual "legal rights" although constructed in a "non-mandatory" framework: the right to be informed, the right to give prior consent, the right to a minimum wage, the ban on exercising any form of discrimination based on "race, caste, national origin, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, union membership, political affiliation or age" (id.).

Second, "smallholders" are disqualified when they engage in their most familiar attachments and concerns of their daily life. Whereas the former statements were "too abstract", these are "too specific": "they use this forum to express complaints about one particular case […] there is this tension, between somebody expressing his own problem and raising an issue which is of general interest of the discussion." (NGO, NL). Viewed from the "smallholders" themselves who are engaged in this regime, they defend their very life: "The difference between them and me is that they are here as part of their job whereas I am here to defend our very lives, and we aren’t paid for that." (Indonesian farmer, interviewed by Barbereau). The format of information for this engagement (Thévenot 2007) needs pointing to specific cases and narrating entangled and emotional stories. It contrasts with the functional formatting of the world and the functional utilization of language.

3. JUSTIFYING BY THE PLURALITY OF COMMONPLACES: THE GRAMMAR OF COMMON AFFINITIES

In each of the two prior case studies, we observed that some actors' worries were far from being accommodated by the two prevailing grammars. Pressure and oppression on these actor's engagements ensue from the distance that the public creates from personal attachments. Such a distancing is currently associated to the modern public space and its potentiality for universalizing. Unfortunately, it is embedded in the categories of contemporary political and social sciences. The presumption of distance precludes a correct understanding of the harsh confrontation between modernity and ways of holding justifiability in common which do not assume such a public distance and are thus relegated as

publicly (Fetraf-Sul) manifested its position, from the very first roundtable in 2005, in favour of a model of diversified agriculture to define sustainability (opposing the monoculture model) and against GMOs 'which reduce the autonomy of family farmers and threaten biodiversity'. In a subsequent meeting of a smaller number of members, different members of the organising committee, including industry and the environmental NGOs, requested of Fetraf-Sul that two issues – 'monoculture vs. diversification and GMOs vs. non-GMOs' – remain 'outside the roundtable debate' due to the excessively large disparities between these production models (Fetraf-Sul interview).
archaic. This prejudice hampers a good assessment of the confrontational consequences of globalization which puts pressure on kinds of justifiability which do not meet the requirements of the two previous grammars. Confrontation is usually framed in the opposition between liberalism and communitarianism, this last orientation stressing the responsibility of the individual to the community. The identification of the grammar of the plurality of common affinities, from the same two operations as the two previous ones, attempts to grasp the specific features of a type of justifiability held in common which is widely spread in ancient cultures, but which is also a significant component of the up-to-date cultures which are equipped by information and communication technologies.

**Communicating by personal affinity to a commonplace**

I noted in the introduction that communicating should be understood in the broad sense of connecting with some common locus, as rooms communicate to a common corridor, or apartments communicate to the communal parts of the building. This spatial meaning fits particularly well the grammar of common affinities. In this grammar, communicating is achieved by personal affinity to a commonplace, the term commonplace being devoid of the pejorative sense of a trite saying or topic. In this grammar, the most intimate concern is invested in the commonplace, short-circuiting any intermediation. The result of this shortened contact is an emotional arousal which signals that the operation has been fulfilled, this emotion being itself communicative. On the opposite, the deprecatory meaning of cliché indicates the failure of the operation, when connecting to the commonplace is nothing but superficial because of the lack of any strong personal experience infusing into it. Such things and spaces invested in common are deposited in language or any medium of communication pertaining to literature and the arts, and thus registered as canonical. This limited list of shared topoi is denigrated, when viewed from the liberal grammar or the worth of inspiration, as a source of rigidity, prejudice and lack of creativity. Such views miss the fact that a person who goes through a commonplace to take part to commonalty and justify in common, makes this topos her own and is herself by personally relating her particular situation to this commonplace.

**Composing the difference by joining together multiple affinities between commonplaces**

This grammar does not produce unanimity. In spite of communal parts – or because of them - there is plenty of room for differences and need to compose them. Differing in not only the result of diverse personal affinities to the same commonplace, but also of the plurality of affinities between one shared commonplace and others divergent ones. Hence, composing operates by bringing to the fore the commonplace which proved to be hospitable to a plurality of affinities. Another distinctive feature of this composition is the variable geometry of commonplaces. The size of commonality is quite variable, without the threshold marked by limitation of the common good in the grammar of orders of worth, or by the public space of individuals in the liberal grammar. One can already compose commonality with close friends. One commonplace can fit into another like a Russian doll, although the whole entanglement of commonplaces is not simply structured like such dolls.
As a consequence, this grammar does not offer the frames of procedural arguing that the two former provide, and which contribute to a public space governed by democratic equality. The kind of equality that this grammar fosters is obtained in festive and convivial moments, when everyone meets up again with the humanity of every other participant, in spite of the strongest differences. But this high-spirit celebration is still brought together by some commonplace.

A case study: coming to terms with divergent affinities to nature held in common in Russia

The elaboration of the third grammar benefited from fieldworks in various cultural contexts of Western or Eastern Europe and Brazil. Laura Centemeri started her own research from the observation of the following paradox (Centemeri 2010). One of the most severe European environmental disasters which occurred in 1976 at Seveso (Italy) and contributed to the definition of a European directive on major-accident hazards of industrial activities (Directive 82/501/EEC, so-called “Seveso Directive”) led to the mobilization of an international social movement aiming at the impersonal solidarity for more equality which qualifies for civic worth. However, inhabitants of Seveso rejected this civic solidarity. In this respect, the leftist militants were as unable as public authorities has been to understand what Seveso people considered important in responding to the dioxin crisis, that is the risk of the community to disappear. They strove to restore the kind of commonality which was affected by the tragedy, looking at this adversity as an opportunity to reinforce binding engagement with the local community. More recently, former internationalist activists, environmentalists, Feminists and various members of the local community settled in Seveso and cooperated to deliberately build new commonplaces with personal relations of care towards the affected common environment. Speaking with the words of one of the members of the local committee in charge of the writing of the panels of the "memory path" (one of the commonplaces which were elaborated for the recovery of the community after the adversity): "The memory we are here writing must be a tactful memory, respectful of the personal suffering. We ought to avoid in this process to re-open old wound, to force people harking back to painful or anguished things they want to forget. We have to avoid the nihilism that thinks the recovery from such a damage as impossible, and to stress instead how the community has hung in there." (id.). Noticeable for our reflection is the fact that troubles in close relations to the environment that were oppressed by the civic aggrandizement have found in the vocabulary of culture and in particular of "cultural specificity under threat" a way to be heard in the public space. We identify, in this path from the intimate trouble to the shared issue, transcultural features of the grammar of common affinities with communication and composition through commonplaces.

Although this grammar grasps shared features of many ancient cultures – and brand new ones too, through the Internet – the comparative Russian-French program has been particularly useful to characterize this grammar (Thévenot 2005). The reason is that this grammar governs a wide variety of commonalities in Russia, of various scales, from close friendship to relations to the fatherland. While

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9 Translation of one of the words to designate the homeland in Russian (otchestvo). The other means native land (rodina).
the roundtable machinery fostered by WWF was deeply informed by the *liberal grammar*, as other NGO developed in Russia on the model of Western ones, I could have chosen the Russian NGO "Committees of Soldiers Mothers of Russia" which brings to light the place of the *grammar of common affinities*. It has been extensively investigated by political scientists, most of them using categories entrenched in the *liberal grammar* so that their works converge in pointing to defaults of civil society in Russia. By contrast, other political scientists like Françoise Daucé and Anna Lebedev were able to contrast Russian NGOs with respect to the different grammars which govern their construction of commonality.

I chose another fieldwork of the same French-Russian comparative program, which was studied by Olga Koveneva. It addressed the tensions raised by the multiple uses of nature in urban context. She compared a suburban park in Moscow to another in Paris (Meudon) (Koveneva 2007, 2010). For a Westerner, the extreme variety and discrepancy of usages of the space in the Moscow "natural park", and the surprising compatibility which is maintained all the same, offer a small scale laboratory of living together in Russia. To list but a few of these usages: observing protected species, taking babies out for a breath of fresh air and children for activities in functional playgrounds, worshipping a holy spring and picking holy water from it, picking water in plastic bottles from a regular spring a hundred meters further, organizing barbecue parties with drinking and singing, skiing with a new commercial ski lift or a free, old and unauthorized one that is removable and installed every winter by members of a trade union, participating four-wheel drive races "Russian Winter", launching the festival of extreme sports "Pure energy" sponsored by Nestlé, projecting a real estate of cottages and a village dedicated to sports and leisure which would "harmoniously fit the landscape" according to the advertisement, etc.

Westerners are astonished by such a wide range of usages taking place in a protected wilderness area, with proper regulations, inspectors and specific management. The previous list offers possibilities of justifiability within the whole plurality of orders of worth, with consequent harsh clashes between them due to cross denunciations. Therefore, "living together" in such a place appears to be a challenging experience fraught with severe conflicts. Clashes did happen. They were stimulated by a local group of activists ("The Source") who were oriented by the *civic* and *green* orders of worth. They appealed to national organizations dedicated to the protection of nature, used the media to make their denunciation heard and even took court action against "the violation of constitutional rights to favorable environment" and won (Koveneva 2010). Up to this point, nothing in different to what the *grammar of plural orders of worth* sustains. Yet the president of The Source underlines that their *civic* activities is closely linked to bonds between "ecological-friends" who "think the same" (*edinomyshlenniki*) in the sense of solidarity but also of *affinities*. The president adds that the formal registration of the group does not change its fundamental character of "spiritual communication" (*doukhovnoye obscheniye*) for a "common matter" (*obscheye delo*). *Communication* points her to the possibility to be and to act in a way that obtains commonality. The term for the common cause implies doing things in common, common deeds. Theses precision make
clear that communication is here specified in the sense of the grammar of common affinities. In addition to The Source group, many residents personally take care of familiar places in the park. One is concerned by the cleanliness of the spring which is listed as a conservation area, "without necessary willing neither to join a local environmental association nor to make his action public. […] He is fueled by strong familiar and personal attachment to this place and, in the same time, oriented toward the conservation or this spring as a commonly shared place, treasured and cherished by local residents." (Koveneva 2007). This caring engagement in a intimately attached familiar environment is similar to the aforementioned engagement by the Me-wuk grandmother, or by the Seveso inhabitants. Interviewed at length by Koveneva, the woman who is the park manager demonstrates her concern not to pick out and make public small infractions to regulations. So doing, she presents herself as "an inhabitant who understands" and she communicates with a series of commonplaces. She places value on them because these usages of the space foster commonality: "children playground" ("for those who lack country houses"), "small benches who help tired mothers" ("without kolkhozian legs"), "places to drink" ("for big moujiks") (Koveneva 2010). The Sporting Club of the park is another place for composing the differences according to the grammar of common affinities. The most potentially conflicting uses of nature are supported by members of the same club, from nature walks to the Nestlé festival of extreme sports. Yet each can be related to a commonplace which is firstly perfectly understood as contributing to commonality and, secondly, which is encompassed by the more overarching commonplace of Nature, their linkage passing by the other crucial commonplace of Life.

These components of the grammar of common affinities are also made visible by default. The young Russian PhD student expresses her disappointment, at the beginning of her research, when she discovered the French urban park. Such a view which is symmetrical to the Westerner, is needed in the reflexive reciprocal and symmetrical device that was designed for our comparative studies. "It seemed that almost for everybody and everything there was his/its own representative and that all relations between people and things were mediated by institutionalized public structures. As the research went on, a lonely fisherman calmly fishing in the local pond was proving to be a member of Regional Fishing Federation. Isolated groups of idle walkers wandering around the neighboring forest were proving to be members of a local Hikers Association. And the frogs and toads croaking and singing at ease in the nearby pond were proving to be 'rare endangered species' protected and supervised by a Naturalistic Association. Strangely and to my great regret, I started to loose the sense of space tangibility." (Koveneva 2007).

**Bounded justifiability within the grammar of common affinities: curbing the public**

The way justifiability is bounded within the grammar of common affinities, was already clarified by what we noticed before. It curbs the public. Concessions permanently made by the park management to the plurality of "entrenched practices" and to personal attachments is criticized by an activist of The Source who ironizes on the transformation of the protected area into a soviet-style "culture and leisure park". The manager's understanding attitude goes hand in hand with her despise of
any public forum that would contribute justifications to be publicly expressed and contradictorily debated.

**CONCLUSION: POWER, OPPRESSION, EXCLUSION AND SUPPORT TO SECURE LIFE TOGETHER**

This concluding section draws some lessons from our analysis which regard the enlargement of the critique of injustice. They regard critical social theory but also practical concerns with the most appropriate devices to give way to the expressions of discontent, to redress grievances and secure life together.

**How grammars of commonality and regimes of engagement enlarge the scope of the critical theory of power and oppression**

Grammars of commonality in the plural and regimes of engagement enlarge the scope of critical theory. We shall consider three enlargement. The first regards the power issuing from commonality. The second ensues the oppression from commonality on engagements and the good they secure. The third takes into account the testing experience of the newcomer to the community.

**Power abuse ensuing the exploitation of the hierarchy that is intrinsic to commonality**

The various types of assurance which are aimed at by the different regimes of engagement are not comparable in their respective strength. But they can be ranked in accord to their possible extension in common, leading to the higher hierarchical position of justifiability referring to commonality. Although each grammar makes room for pluralism and for the dynamics of differing and contesting, it is nonetheless clear that the hierarchical power of partaker of commonality can be captured and monopolized, the operations of the grammar becoming instrumental in bringing about this take over. Thus, each grammar allows to critically address structural relations between claims to participate commonality on the one hand, and power abuse on the other.

The grammar of orders of worth makes explicit the inequalities that result from reference to commonality. The claim of legitimacy that rests on the model of worth, and its expected ability to assuage the tension between inequality and common humanity, thus openly face fierce suspicion and criticism against power abuse.

The liberal grammar is quite different in that it does not acknowledge the previous hierarchy of commonality that can still be found within this construction, as in any construction of commonality in the plural. On the opposite, it claims to emancipate from hierarchies and obtain "horizontal" equality between the individuals that take part to the public through the exposition of their choice in favor of one opinion or interest. As long as the liberal civility is respected, differing is much less confrontational than within the grammar of orders of worth since no claim engages directly a specification of the common good. Formal procedures are intended to frame the negotiation and obtain the expected balance of interest. Criticism thus focuses on procedures or the list of stakeholders, but
not on the abuse of power issuing from the aggrandizement into the format of the optional individual. Yet power abuse results from it, since attachments differentially accommodate this format of interest or optional choice, some stakeholders thus staying in a hierarchical position vis-à-vis others.

The grammar of common affinities does not either provide explicit acknowledgement of the hierarchy resulting from commonality in the plural. It could also be presented as "horizontal" at first sight, by contrast to the grammar of domestic worth which also builds on familiarity. Yet it contains the previous hierarchy although hidden by the personal investment in the commonplace. Power abuse results from taking advantage of this hierarchy, notably when someone contributes to elaborating a kind of commonplace that mixes up with one's own person, leading other ones round to pass through this commonplace in person. This passage point currently ends in authoritarian power which might pretend to be helpful in virtue of this position.

**Oppressions resulting from each grammar and its basic engagement**

This distinction also reveals harmful consequences ensuing the prevalence of each grammar. Each of them puts pressure on regimes of engagement which are sources of assurance but cannot be held in common. From these pressures result oppressions which usually remain invisible because they are not ready to be exposed in the public format of injustice, nor currently grasped by political and social sciences which focus on the public and the collective.

Such oppressions are clarified by a feature which came into view once the three grammars had been built inductively from the fieldwork. It appeared that each grammar maintains a privileged relation to one of the three regimes of engagement that is aggrandized (communication) and pluralized (composition) to secure commonality in the plural. The grammar of the plurality of orders of worth is clearly based on the regime of publicly justifiable engagement which governs the quest for guarantee within each order of worth. Consequently, this grammar puts high pressure on other engagements which do not aim at guaranteeing a common good. The fulfillment of an individual project, which is the kind of good secured by the regime of engagement in plan, or the primordial good of ease in one's habituated and inhabited environment, which is secured by the regimes of familiar engagement, are ignored as kinds of good and reduced to insignificant "particularities" or "singularities" on the axis towards generalization for the common good. The liberal grammar of the plurality of individuals opting in the public is based on the regime of planned engagement. As a consequence, it oppresses the engagement to the common good through the regime of publicly justifiable engagement which is reduced to the same format of individual choice for an option, or disqualified as non practical, too abstract and ideological. It also oppresses the intimate good of ease through the regime of familiar engagement which is downplayed as egotist and narcissist. The grammar of the plurality of common affinities is based on the regime of familiar engagement while requiring intense affinities between familiar attachments and commonplaces. As such, it oppresses the regime of publicly justified engagement that requires a conventionally formatted common good, this convention of worth being disregarded as too formal and insufficiently infused by authentically personal concern. It also
downgrades the good of the *regimes of the engagement in plan* that is viewed too as inauthentic and preventing the simplicity of the direct relation between the most personal attachment and the commonplace.

**Newcomers: bounded community and bounded commonality**

The distinction of the three grammars also enlarge the critical approach of exclusion and boundaries, by showing that the fate reserved to the newcomer significantly varies from one grammar of commonality to the other\(^\text{10}\). Structural tensions raised by bounded communities weigh differently on the newcomer, depending on the prevailing grammar of commonality.

Foreigners qualify differently for various orders of *worth*. Strangers in a broad sense have the smallest state of *domestic* worth, although they are welcome under the hospitable protection of the host that entertains them as guests. By contrast, the foreigner is in a high state of worth of *inspiration* since her epiphanic irruption promises a moment of sudden revelation or insight. The solidarity based on the *civic* worth is explicitly internationalist and particularly suspicious against any boundary of strangeness. Yet, the *grammar of the plurality of orders of worth* per se is blind to the problems raised by the boundary of the community, because of the focus on the most extensive common humanity which is aimed at by universalization. By contrast, the *liberal grammar* builds a community among individuals who are relatively alien to one another (once they share the grammar), opening the possibility to welcome highly differentiated populations and newcomers\(^\text{11}\). Regarding the *grammar of common affinities*, the foreigner clearly lacks the frequentation of commonplaces. Yet, the operation of *communication* that is specified by this grammar involves a highly personal investment, and the operation of *composition* allows for the elaboration of commonplaces with a variable geometry. Consequently, the host and the guest can possibly *communicate* within a relatively short period of time – deeply and emotionally – and meet on some appropriated *commonplaces*, although without the rich entanglement of them which is available to the long-standing member of the community.

**Disclosing the full range of harms and wrongs, and paving the way from affected personal attachments to claims of justice and rights**

Paralleling critical theory, critical stances could be shown to be informed by the different grammars. Distinguishing grammars of commonality and relating them to regimes of engagement allows a reflexive view on competing critical stances which use different vocabularies to unveil wrongs and harms. The way criticism is formulated depends on the grammar which channels

\(^{10}\) Joan Stavo-Debauge brought a remarkable and original contribution to political and moral sociology by considering the community from the testing experience and path of the newcomer and of the hospitable guest: 2009, 2005.

\(^{11}\) Current deep misunderstandings result not only from different customs of hospitality, but from the confrontation of the fate reserved to foreigners by each of these two grammars. For a systematic and symmetric analysis of such a misunderstanding between the *liberal grammar* and the *grammar of common affinities*, based on the case of a Russian newcomer in the U.S.A, see: Thévenot and Kareva 2009.
justifiability held in common, and this dependence sheds light on contemporary debates between divergent critical stances. A comprehensive framework clarifies the tensions between them and the conditions of their conciliation. Whereas politics of difference are deeply embedded in the *liberal grammar*, politics against socioeconomic inequality are embedded in the *grammar of orders of worth*. As we have shown in *On Justification*, the socialist thrust against injustice and in favor of redistributive justice is grounded on two orders of worth: the *civic* worth which places value on impersonal solidarity within a collective aiming at correcting inequalities; the worth of *inspiration* which places value on the creative and emancipating rupture. The social critique of class inequalities is a variant of this *denunciation* based on the *civic* worth that reveals the origin of inequality in the division of labor. Hence, it specifically criticizes the *industrial* worth which might provide legitimate justification for such a division. Yet both these two critical stances which are embedded in the two grammars do not fully capture new kinds of mobilization for injustice. Therefore, we shall consider now the case of support for displaced persons. They are not foreigners since they durably inhabit and familiarize a place which is distant from their former attachment. In many aspects, their primordial attachment to the world is oppressed. This case highlights the problems raised by such oppressions which are difficult to address within current critical stances.

**The case of undocumented displaced persons**

The case of the "Sans papiers" (undocumented immigrants in France) is illuminating because of the exceptionally wide variety of modes of mobilization in support for them which can be clarified by the respective grammars and regime of engagement which have been privileged in each of them. In particular, a large support came from the mobilization of parents whose kids attended the same classes as undocumented immigrants' children which were forced by the government to move back to their country of origin, the children being deported with them. The Réseau Education Sans Frontières (Education Without Borders Network: RESF) network consists of groups of parents who gather in a school when one parent has been arrested or received obligation to leave the French territory. Persons get involved on the basis of close engagement and frequently have no former experience of activism (de Blic & de Blic 2006). Even if they have, for instance when they participated the committees of the 90's, they do not make it explicit since there is reticence in the network toward generalization, and rejection of the vocabulary of political activism. Strikes and demonstrations are viewed as too impersonal. Participants describe an engagement which is neither shaped by the format of publicly justifiable engagement, nor informed by the political public debate, and not even by the voluntary engagement in an individual plan which is encapsulated in the word volunteer. A profound and partially passive feeling of disquiet results from their familiar environment being suddenly

\[\text{12\ Marc Breviglieri's own creative contribution to political and moral sociology rests on the systematic exploration of the anthropological dimensions of "inhabiting", drawing political consequences on the way to approach both living together and the affirmation of the self: 2009a, 2009b.}\]
affected by a "shock". This affection is expressed as "the uneasiness ensuing the loss of control on a familiar environment", and the emotional shock fuels action\textsuperscript{13}. Mobilization involves a constant presence which generates the assurance of mutual familiarity with the threatened family. Taking care of this family implies to prepare their applications and accompany them in the process of regularization\textsuperscript{14}. Yet mobilization does not remain within the boundaries of this familiar engagement. It implies to embark upon actions in common. However, public protest marches and demonstrations are themselves altered by personal attachments.

Commonality is, on many respects, informed by the grammar of common affinities. Commonplaces which are used to coordinate actions must not be the conventional qualifications of the grammar of orders of worth, neither the individually chosen options of the liberal grammar. They remain loosely defined and interconnected; above all, they are personally and emotionally invested\textsuperscript{15}. Schools, hostel, police station are invested as commonplaces of a neighborhood community based on the quarter which was not formerly a current basis for civic mobilization. "They are over here with us, they pay taxes, their children are the buddies of our children, we stay at their side".

Some devices combine this grammar of common affinities with the grammar of orders of worth. Thus, petitions are signed in favor a particular family and circulated by closeness. "Figures have a face" is one of the RESF slogans. Another earlier mixed device was the "civic godparent" (parrainage civique). A famous artist becomes the godparent of a young "godchild" who is threatened to be deported. Some activists criticized the paternalism of such a device, and reacted by creating a collective "civic godparent" to the undocumented immigrant.

It is noteworthy that the regime of familiar engagement and the grammar of common affinities allow persons to pass over cultural boundaries and create strong bonds across them, leading participants to take care of the familiar attachments of the person they get close to, without passing through the generalizing qualification of customs and tradition for the domestic worth, nor the public stylization required for liberal multiculturalism.

This support is not contradictory with the defense of rights, but how can the way be paved from affected personal attachments to claims of justice and rights? We guess the problem which is raised by the stretching of the required path and support chain from the intimate trouble - which frequently stays mute – up to voices in public and claims for rights. The resulting tension can be observable in the situation of a local branch of the French League of Human Rights (Ligue française des Droits de

\textsuperscript{13} Ongoing research by Claudette Lafaye and Damien De Blic presented at the seminar "Sociology of a liberal world: fascination, oppression, depression", organized by Laurent Thévenot, Nicolas Auray and Marc Breviglieri, EHESS, Paris, 25-01-10.

\textsuperscript{14} And hiding them, despite the fact that any support provided to an “illegal” resident faces a penal punishment in France. Thus participants now fight against the growing trend of considering solidarity as an offence.

\textsuperscript{15} Individuals who do not accept to participate, at the cost of breaking off close bonds with friends, explain that they refused by the fear to "get caught up".
l’Homme et du citoyen: LDH). The League promotes universalistic causes, since it was founded in 1896 to defend Alfred Dreyfus. Among other political organizations, it has a specific expertise in the promotion and defense of human rights, with an extension to economic and social rights which allows for social criticism in addition to the liberal criticism of flouted individual rights. With issues such as undocumented displaced persons, the local branch also needs to open a specific permanent office to be in touch with persons' need when they come and narrate at length their embroiled distress. This last segment of the chain is extremely demanding and straining since it assumes to familiarize and take care of the affected familiar attachments of another person who is initially a stranger, going across what would be publicly named as cultural differences. Women, more than men, are involved in this first segment of the chain. It raises issues of the unbearable gendered division of labor, and puts high tensions with respect to activist members of the LDH who focus on the civic cause and the format of rights.

**Back to justice and culture, bonds and boundaries: redressing the bias in approaches of multiple modernities**

In many instances coming from case studies, we found explicit expressions of conflict if not contradiction between the notions of justice and culture. We tried to demonstrate that the apparent dead-end ceases to be a blind alley once we open our eyes to the shared issue of securing life together in spite of differing dynamics, which is viewed on a distinct angle by each notion. We had recourse to a unified analytical framework which addresses the issue of the guarantee offered by commonality in the plural, the notion of guarantee covering justice and law as well as cultural mores. The opposition between justice and culture ceased to be the heart of the debate once the analysis revealed the structural consequences of the underlying grammars of commonality in the plural, and of the regime of engagement each grammar builds on.

The paper confirmed the fruitful articulation between the ideas of bond and boundary, shedding light on the kind of bond that is needed by each grammar and the kind of boundary or exclusion that it entails. The paper also proposed some advances in the way to handle each of these two ideas. The binding dimension of the bond was formulated in the category of engagement which grasps the dependence of the human capacity on the pledge offered by the security of an appropriately prepared environment. The bond is not only a relationship between several persons but also involves a milieu of nature or artifice. As for boundary, we also opened the idea of a dividing line that marks the limits of a social group or community, explored bounded justifiability and formulated the category of oppression as a pressure excluding persons from the benefit of an engagement. A grammar and its predominant regime exercise such pressure on other engagements, the kind of good they secure and the kind of capacity they support.

Contemporary debates about globalization, even when they open to a wide variety of scenarios, multiple modernities, or scales of justice, are most frequently flawed by a serious bias. It comes from
the predominance of the liberal grammar which even informs the descriptive categories, apart from the explicit normative stances. The reason is well known: "international" political and social theory is strongly marked by the Western enlightenment former project. My contention would certainly not be to fight against this project in a conservative mood, neither to call for other strictly area-specific counter theories. This is the awful recent temptation for a part of scholars in humanities in nowadays Russia. Under the dubious banner of "culturology", they ask for purely Russian humanities. The comparative studies mentioned in this paper do not address cultural singularities. It would be completely inaccurate to think of a correspondence, term to term, between the three grammars and the political cultures of France, the US and Russia. These grammars can all be found in action in the three countries among others.

My contention is that biased western political and social theories are even inadequate for the West. They are too strongly involved in the modernization project to correctly grasp resistances to it, and even to correctly reflect upon it. We need to enlarge our basic analytical and descriptive tools, so that they can also account for a-liberal constructions of commonality in the plural without reducing them to the archaic remainder of modernization. The framework presented in this paper is one step in this direction. It offers insights into modernization, and globalization in our contemporary world, which gain an understanding of the conditions of the confrontation between the all-embracing liberal grammar (its aim at justice and the enforcement of individual rights) and other grammars of commonality. The confrontation recurrently leads to conservative, reactionary and closing momentum in the history of Western democracies. Such episodes of closing reactions occur repeatedly in XXth century France, and up to the present. September 11 US also triggered one of these episodes. They can always be presented as closing the opening aspirations for universalization, and bringing to the fore the substance of a proper "culture". But such reactionary substantialist responses should not prevent the analysis from studying the engagements and constructions which were oppressed and gave rise to such dangerous reactions. Because it is not based on the more heavily equipped regimes of planned and justifiable engagement, the grammar of common affinities remains as a recourse for those who do not face up with the demands of the other grammars. They can recover the power to take part to commonality by way of affinities to commonplaces which do not require the formatting of clear-cut objective options neither that of conventional qualifications for worth, but only the usual frequentation of commonplaces. Once a more symmetrical view is gained thanks to the acknowledgement of the different grammars, we are also better equipped to analyze the dynamical and creative crafting of

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16 This does not prevent the most acute of the scholars which are informed by this liberal grammar to carefully work at its extension and transformation. Yet, they still ill-conceive alternative commonalities

17 Some readers may object that Robert Nisbet's Sociological tradition corrected such a bias. However, his impetus is conservative and thus suffers from another bias. By contrast, Fuyuki Kurosawa's reading of Western social thought as fueled by an "ethnological imagination" builds on the possibility to defamiliarize and denaturalize the Western modernity through the encounter with non-Western cultures (Kurasawa 2004).
mixed constructions which can even bring together on the web components of the *liberal* grammar and elements of the grammar of *common affinities*.

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