Towards a theory of political action: cognition, modality and pragmatism to understand political agents

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Medellín

2019

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Dissertation to opt for the title of magister in political studies

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Master program in political studies

Medellín

2019

Medellín, enero de 2019

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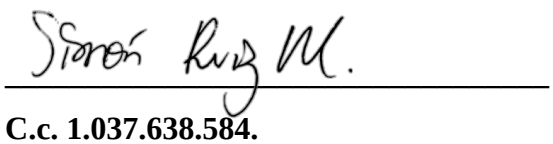

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Acknowledgments

This thesis was made under the research grant "formación investigativa" provided by the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana; and it is presented as a product of the research project "discurso y prácticas políticas en el marco del pluralismo democrático" (955b-12/17-36), in the line of political theory of the political studies research group of the same university. Therefore, I should like to thank the university and its research department (Cidi) for the grant provided.

To my thesis director, Freddy Santamaria, who has made it explicit to me the cruciality of taking our stance as linguistic subjects in order to understand better our actions allowing us to give and ask for reasons; with whom I have worked towards better understanding of an analytical theory of political action; as well as new ways to understand pragmatism within the social sciences. I am glad to consider him not just as a director but as a friend.

Also, I would like to thank professor Carlos Builes for reminding me the importance of the social projection of any philosophical investigation, professor Antonio Dávila for pushing me towards more rigorous presentations of my arguments and to professor Porfirio Cardona-Restrepo of whom I learn the prolixity needed for any research. I am grateful to have worked with them as well as the rest of the political sciences' faculty staff.

The most important thank of all goes to my mother; who has supported all my academic process.

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Summary

To elaborate the tools with which a theory of political action could be construed, the first task is to start from what stays the same throughout most of our practices (both within a person herself and among different people), i.e. Our cognitive capacities. The basic set of which will be defined as basic cognitive practices. They are described as being deeply action-oriented thus allowing different levels of social complexity; along the idea of intentionality as the voluntary bringing about of a desired state of affairs. The notion of cognition that will be presented serves as a basis into which reasonability could be elaborated, and furthermore, some relevant political behavior could be taken into consideration along the lines presented; specially the idea of state of affairs that exceed the possible actions for their bringing about.

The elaborated notion of reasonability is complemented by the proper description of the linguistic practices that defines the best rational choice: modality. Such linguistic practice is presented as the socially complex aggregation of basic cognitive practices where probabilities become possibilities. Such rational behavior constitutes the condition of possibility for normative reasoning, and so, morality (as the explicit expression and commitment on the regulated cognitive behavior). The outcome is a definition of morality that is based on modal linguistic practices that are heavily supported by basic cognitive practices; morality understood as an explicit practical stance of evaluating other's behavior.

But being the main subject political action, an articulation of morality and the latter is presented with a 'loose' interpretation of Kantian thought. The most salient example is the conception of the categorial imperative as an operative, rule-according behavior that must allow prioritization between different sets of principles. Such set of principles are the base into which the evaluating practices are understood in the form of a practical background. Thence, political action is understood as the external evaluation of one's acknowledged moral principles. This idea leads to the defining of three relevant practices which are evaluated that pertain to what one takes as 'political': authority, legitimacy and justice.

The definition of the domain of political action into which a theory could be constructed is determined by those three aspects.

Some conclusions about where to go from such determinates are presented at the end, along some discussions on the pertinence and selection of the arguments selected for this work.

1. Introduction

The relation between political theory and philosophy has led to a manifold of descriptions. I see two ways in which they have been presented: whereas some authors describe a division of social linguistic labor, where each field works on its own (as Putnam called it), others understand the relation as a construction of hybrid fields that overlap each other. Winch's (2003) *idea of the social sciences* is closer to the former, while Williams' (2011) conception of the relation between *political theory and the analytic tradition* is closer to the latter. From the analysis of these two perspectives I want to extract some conclusions that draw the attention to some ideas I would like to maintain in my own description of a theory of political action.

Now, winch's (2003) motivating idea is to present a clear conception of social science against the role that philosophy should have among them; all in comparison with the 'advances' made in natural sciences. Using Wittgenstein's idea of rule, human behavior is taken as meaningful in virtue of the particular generalizations one could extract as an interpreter of certain activity. Although contradictory, the generalizations that could be achieved could not be said to constitute a broad description of social action. Rather, every culture institutes particular set of rules that determine particular types of games. Therein, understanding social institutions amounts to understand the living rules they have in their practices.

What winch (2003) is interested in is not some vitiated form of relativism. Instead, his Wittgensteinian proposal emphasizes the contextuality of each human's form of association where the difference requires a 'meta'-practice of justification as the end of the rule following behavior. Thus, accompanying the discussion, there's a form of reasonability, that helps to constitute a particular kind of prediction: one that could be achieved through the linguistic analysis of the mind, that is, the intentional. In such analysis, philosophy fulfills its role as the pruning instrument that should *help the fly to get out of the fly-bottle* (Wittgenstein, 2009, I, §309).

Such affirmations, and although not explicitly acquainted by winch, might lead one to say that philosophy serves a therapeutic role towards social sciences. This is compatible with Rorty's (2009) vision of philosophy as edifying, as continuing the conversation of the different human

linguistic practices. The most important interlocutor of such conversation should be the discipline that has given us reasons since the beginning: philosophy. As a critical practice of thought, this view of the matter puts philosophy in service of political sciences as presenting the metaconceptual pruning of ideas and values with which better societies could be factually achieved.

Opposed to the edifying conception, the systematic idea of philosophy is closer to the proposal of Williams (2011). His idea is that, if the classical pretension of the analytic philosophy of being pure and non-normative is overcame (as, for example, the distinction fact-value), then political theory could articulate an interpretive vision of reality (regarding historical aspects as well as normative ones) with what he calls, a systematic exigency rather than a system as such (p. 189). Thus, philosophy doesn't have a proper task of its own, it is more a toolbox to understand, for example, situations where our sentiments and our values are in conflict (cf. Williams, 2011, p. 184). The practical evaluation that philosophy allows is supported by the pertinent connection with other practices of philosophy, such as epistemology. Then, what the systematic conception of philosophy leads to is a conception of political theory that is supported by different philosophical stances. Then, there's no actual separation between the philosopher's and the social scientist's task.

Having presented both perspectives, I would say that none of them is completely adequate to describe my own position. For I think there will be no gain in trying to analyze the role of philosophy among political theory[1]. I would be more inclined to Williams proposal though. That is because what I try to show along this work is the possibility of a toolbox with systematic exigencies, rather than a reflexive task of the ideas of a particular discipline. Thus, moving *towards a theory of political action* should amount to describe some basic tools that allow some degree of systematization that should only be of interest insofar as it helps the understanding of social institutions; in this particular case, political institutions[2].

[1] Which is not to say that it's not useful at all. Just that it won't add to the present discussion.
[2] There's a profound misunderstanding in the use of the term 'institution'. Although a formal definition won't be presented, the term should not be understood as an administrative polity. It is more a set of rules and norms that regulate behavior.

Two considerations are important in respect of the latter assertion. First, any description is burdened with the interim[3] character of any human justification or theorization. Thus, the three determinants of the domain of political action that would be presented here have a twofold pretension: they must be as flexible as to withstand the changes among cultures, but they must remain coherent to be a proper analytic tool that could be applied, not just along different places but within different levels (and times). And second, the results are not to be taken as true or false, as correct or incorrect; but as pertinent or not. It is only through the scope of pragmatic consequences that the analytic toolbox presented should be helpful or not.

But what should be taken as 'pragmatic consequences'? Williams' ideas were presented as practical, not pragmatic. And its common in the literature to find them interchangeably. Although there are closely related, they involve different collateral commitments and it is very enriching for the discussions that will take place further on this work to try to clarify their difference.

Being the 'father' of both practical and pragmatic philosophy (the latter being a word he himself coined), Kant is the best representative to understand the idea of a practical philosophy. His definition of it is as follows:

> The morally practical precepts, which are founded entirely on the concept of freedom, to the complete exclusion of grounds taken from nature for the determination of the will, form quite a special kind of precepts. These, too, like the rules obeyed by nature, are, without qualification, called laws—though they do not, like the latter, rest on sensible conditions, but upon a supersensible principle—and they require a separate part of philosophy allotted to them as their own, corresponding to the theoretical part, and termed practical philosophy (Kant, *KU*, 5:173).

Then, practical amounts to the conditions of possibility of a free action under a set of moral laws. This is of great importance being the first chapter of this book an apology to the sensible capacities that Kant describes as being part of the theoretical philosophy. Then, from a Kantian point of view,

[3] Some would prefer the term 'historic'.

the outcome of this work could not be practical for it is not founded solely on the voluntary actions of moral persons.

I don't find any reason to abandon Kantian thought nonetheless. Although 'impure', Kant's insights play a major role in the articulation of the notions of reasonability and morality that this investigation presents. Thus, where Kant is presented, the conclusions that I extract from his writings should be regarded as closer to the pragmatist political Kant of Sellars that the 'actual' Kant. I hope that such broad interpretation still holds the best of Kant's political ideas while losing some others that are not so highly pressing for today's political discussions. One of them, being the insistence on the importance of freedom, to which I give here very little attention.

This might be so because within a pragmatist framework, freedom loses its grip and habits and action take its place. To a very broad extent, this work is based upon the classic pragmatist maxim[4]: "consider what effects, that might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object" (Peirce, w 3:265). The practical effects of a conception of an object is not now the free action under a moral law but a habit or conduct. Thus, the articulation that the pragmatism elaborates between thought and action is leads to the evaluation of the behavior of making explicit what is implicit (cf. Brandom, 1994).

Then, this pragmatist framework allows a broad Kantian reading that follows the itinerary of the political perspective of Williams (2007): in order to describe aptly a political argument, one must take into consideration the cognitive aspects and the rational practices. With these two considerations, within the pragmatist framework, three habits of conduct that have political practical bearings as effects are presented as the keys to understand the relevant aspects of political action: these are authority, legitimacy and justice.

They are, though, not baldly presented. The underlying idea is that they share a common characteristic that allow their articulation. What holds them together are justifying relations. Thereof, the domain of political action is described as composed by such relations. There's always

[4] I encourage the reader who wants a more rigorous description of pragmatism to regard Misak (2016).

the possibility to describe the doings of a political agent in terms of a claim of authority, legitimacy or justice (and commonly, the claims involve a relation between two or even the three components).

But why should justification be taken as fundamental? Ever since Gettier's (1963) critique of the justifying model of knowledge there has been some reluctance to address justification as a basic element of claims of knowledge. Why should be political action any different?

Gettier cases ask for the foundation of a certain knowledge: why is someone entitled to her claim that she knows something is true? That is, how does she know that she is right? These epistemic cases run along a tradition that grasps, with all its strength, some type of world-thought correspondence. And although this is highly disputable (cf. Brandom, 1994; Sosa, 2011), for political theory, the insistence in such correspondence is just impertinent. Perhaps there is some sense in the assertion that someone's claim of a democratic nature of a state is not correspondent to the facts, thus his justification of it would not be enough to be knowledge. But it should be undeniable that such assertion is somewhat strangely formulated.

Thus, the justifying relations that are basic here are not epistemic in a Gettier sense. For they are not justified by subjects on interactions. Instead, they are the explicit claim to acknowledge, to commit to something already done in practice. Take, for example, the latter situation of someone's claim of a democratic state. This could be said about some country that may violate directly or indirectly human rights. Therefore, the claim can be disputed, and reasons could be asked to justify the assertion. But there should be more to it.

When a triad of elements is presented as determining the domain of political action, the mere interaction of two individuals that question each other's claims would not exhaust such domain. Then, the claim about the democracy of a state should be justified, not from one person to another regarding their personal claims, but from the public administration and the citizens that must receive public goods. This regarded in terms of legitimacy. Then, the relation between institutions and individuals bring to light that justification arise when effective actions fail.

To say that political action could be understood in terms of justifying relations means, then, that citizens can demand to know what to expect so they can act towards the achieving of their own goal (which must be compatible with the common goal). This not being anything more than a different way to say that political constitutions must solve a basic coordination problem: how to coordinate and assure the possibility of citizens' actions.

In order to know what someone should expect, the way those expectances are formed is presented here in terms of cognitive processes. And being of interest the way citizens can act, the best approach to describe cognition is the predictive processing. Such approach understands perception as action-driven. In order to avoid a naturalistic fallacy, the description made of the way we apprehend the world is not presented as actual actions but conditions of possibility. Therefore, what is being said is not what humans do when they perceive, but what they might or could do.

Such individual expectations wouldn't go too far if they are not articulated in a common practice of using language. There is a strong claim here: reasonability arises from the use of language in the practice of giving and asking for reasons (i.e. Justifying). When expectations are not met, action should be postponed or reoriented towards another goal. But the only way to choose the best option is to ask for the causes of the expectation not being met: is it the responsibility of an institution? Was an isolated case? Is it an issue of material lacking? Is it a problem of global extension? The adscription of a responsibility for the expectations not being met is a matter that runs along the responsibility of proper modifications for its achievement. Hence, the authority of different political agents to undergo the pertinent actions, and the legitimacy of governments when they are responsible and won't do anything about it.

Modality is the best way to understand the possibilities of the actions of the agents, so the responsibility could be attributed properly. Also, it is one of the best ways to define reasonability in terms of language usage: one counts as reasonable when conforms to the possible (that is, acts and attributes responsibility based on what is actually possible). There's no easy way to describe, on one hand, the relation between the formation of expectations and the construction of reasonability, and on the other, the relation between reasonability and attribution of responsibility.

Furthermore, to articulate both, an effort has to be made for those subjects involve some technical concepts that might not be too reader-friendly. Nonetheless the gains on such bet can be found in the extended definition of the conceptual tools with which political action could be properly understood.

What can be put in a straightforward manner about modality is the following: to understand what is possible one must extract the norms of what actually happens (cognitively speaking) to commit oneself to the possible actions that could be made to bring about some politically desired state of affairs. Then, there is a normative correspondence between causality and moral responsibility; one that is articulated with the modal notion of a 'counterfactual robustness range'. To this one can commit to without being necessarily one's responsibility. Such range determines what is *actually* my responsibility either for causing or failing to prevent. So, even though I can't be responsible for there not being potable water in a desert country, I am to blame for not failing to prevent people for severe dehydration (and possibly death because of it).

From that perspective, morality should amount to the attribution of responsibility about someone's actions. And, in order to make reasonable attributions of responsibility, they have to be done according to a norm. Thus, evaluating an action under a particular norm is to be understood as assuming that someone's behavior is rule obeying, thus apt for responsibility imputation. This differentiation between norm and rule is of special importance in the sense that the interpreted norm that is the rule, only lives in behavior. It's a thing that happens, and not just something one holds as binding. Then, the sense in basing this whole argument in a practice of giving and asking for reasons has to do with such living character of a rule. One could not ask for a reason of a norm, but the living aspect of it in rule obeying behavior (in the sense that it violates or accords to the norm itself).

The outcome of this normative conception, where causality matters, and morality involves the evaluation of conduct as responsibility attribution is a framework of political action that attends to institutions as well as communal practical commitments; to purely practical reasons as well as purely normative claims. This is how a theory of political action could be construed so that it understands the different roles that political agents have in the manifold of choices and encounters.

Under such broad prospective theory, it is difficult to present examples of its practical expressions without diminishing its reach or misleading about its advantages. Nonetheless this is an open door for posterior investigations that could be formulated under this proposed framework.

Without adding any more to it, each of the following chapters would present a brief summary of the subjects that would be presented. They serve as an analytic map that should help the reader navigate through the roughest parts of the argument.

2. Basic cognitive processes and political action

This chapter presents a battery of concepts that are directly involved in political action that pertain mostly to basic cognitive practices. That term, being as ambiguous as it might, pertain to the relevant basic cognitive processes that should be considered in the relevant political instances. Those are to be constituted and bounded by political institutions and the relations they establish with the 'beneficiaries'[5] of its constitution. A description, then, of how we perceive the world (in the relevant operative aspect rather than the anatomical one) is developed in first place. Here, I follow the predictive process theory (pp) which has great practical outcomes that are deeply relevant to political actions as the generated models and priors (§§1-2).

Then, a description of two common notions that are used when speaking about political actions is presented: representation (§3) and consciousness (§4) are understood as a double-layered structure that has, as a base, some basic cognitive skills and, as a top, a complex socially-mediated practices. There are some great implications of that structure, especially for political instances as it is shown by the attributional aspect of the socially-mediated complex level. Then, the relevant implications of the complex level of both concepts are emphasized (§§5-6). Along with their importance, the feasibility of their acquirement is analyzed as well (§7): what is the domain of those type of agents? The answer to this question could show whether such a system is universally applicable or just narrowly aimed. The importance of which is that, although there are some 'universal' pretensions in our actions and some shared components that support such idea, there are cultural relevancies that serve as an environment that shape the possible domain of the normative choices of the agents (§8).

The whole system is, then, to be supported on the notion of action. That is the backdrop against the whole cognitive processes (whether basic or socially complex) must be understood. Action must be understood, not in isolation, but with others, as interaction (§9). The roles that determine interacting processes helps to define it as the voluntary bringing about of a desired state

[5] This is a contractualist way to put the question. This whole discussion is very keen to contractualism, but in the later chapters would be evident that the contractualist that can be maintain here is more a pragmatic one that might be more closely related to a broad form of consensualism.

of affairs (§10). That definition involves two major ways of understanding intentionality and how one is to be understood as an agent (in the base of the described set of cognitive abilities) (§10). Finally, the relevance of the whole approach is examined by contrasting it to another possible description (§11). As a consequence, a necessary articulation to more sophisticated linguistic practices that would be described in chapter 4 is presented in order to understand the pertinence of a pragmatic conception of the political cognitive agent[6].

From what has been said, a last precision is necessary: this is not a cognitive theory. There are no systematic proposals for a novel cognitive function such as political cognition; instead, an already elaborated theory (if pp can even be called so) is developed towards its political implications. For this, the results of this chapter do not conform a closed set of theoretical principles but the bases that will allow a better 'cognitive-pragmatic' explanation of political action in the last chapter.

2.1. Predicting and inferring

§1. To start with the right foot, an old precision has to be reiterated, as it has been presented already by Kant's epistemology (cf. *KrV*). I am talking about how the world is *not* given to us, but instead, we actively shape its apprehension. That includes not just the way we perceive things but also how we describe them. So, for a proper account of the cognitive processes that make us rational enough to give and ask for reasons (and so, be reasonable), one must actually clarify how is the notion of 'world' to be understood (following, evidently, the pragmatic thrust that underlies this whole investigation).

To call it by its name, the idea that the world is, in some way, given to us is a nothing but a myth (Sellars, 1956). The reckoning of it has been duly accepted long ago by some philosophers. Kant (*KrV*, B45) understood it well when asserting both the impossibility and the impertinence of trying to grasp things in themselves (although he certainly did not used the term 'myth of the

[6] As it might be evident from this brief presentation, there are a lot of concepts and new conceptual tools throughout this chapter. I ask then to the reader that evaluate their pertinence at the end of it and pardon the intensity of this first pages. I think all of them work together to form a nice conceptual toolbox that would help to constitute a fruitful theory of political action.

given'). Sellars (1956), in an impeccable and rigorous manner, has long developed the reasons why its nonsensical to hold on to the given qualia (i.e. Substantial aspects of the world that we passively apprehend). And, along this same line of thought, Dennett (1991) disregards qualia (pp.459-460) moving towards a 'teleofuctionalism' (p. 460), the idea that such description of perception could have a function towards the end of our intentional states. This is important because Dennett represents the phenomenological tradition which has been historically closer to cognitive sciences, as opposed to the analytic-pragmatic tradition which hasn't committed appropriately to present its own account. Nonetheless, pragmatism has long understood that we perceive only to act (cf. Wittgenstein, 1969, §402).

Phenomenology –and the strength it had in the cognitive scientist's descriptions– has recently began to converge to the understanding of the world as being actively shaped by us. Although strictly speaking, some antecedents may be found in Helmholtz (whom, in turn, follows Kant; cf. Swanson, 2016), strong cognitive proposals are being made in contemporary cognitive neuroscience that overtly reject a passive notion of cognition, that is, a notion where the relevant sensory information is mainly received in a passive manner. Opposed to it, generative models propose active perception, where the apprehension of external stimuli is determined by inferentially articulated anticipatory processes. On simpler terms, cognition is seen, not as passively receiving packages of information from the world, but as contrasting (predicting) what the world would be like from within the cognitive apparatus (body perceptions, not just the brain).

There is a fine line that is oftentimes blurred by misunderstandings: qualia and sensory inputs are not to be understood as the same. This critical differentiation that has been developed on behalf of private language arguments–specially by Wittgenstein (2009, §293)–has different types of nuances to address their differences. First, one may say that the difference is ontological; that is, qualia understood as a metaphysical property whilst sensory inputs as physical. But this differentiation is precisely what leads to the myth of the given on the first place. Second, one may regard the difference on behalf of the reference of the term. Thus, qualia are rejected as a nonsensical term whereas sensory input refers to some state of affairs. But the evidence to what this state of affairs are said to correspond is difficult to establish. A third way corresponds to the pragmatic conception of each concept: if a non-passive functional operation is proposed as

framework, both terms end up functionally describing one and the same thing; mainly, the relevant perceived stimuli[7].

As sharing a pragmatic significance for the term, one should ask whether both notions should be maintained, or one must be dismissed. The basic idea that there's a special thing that is given to us through our senses must be followed (at least formally) by the idea that there's an emerging property of state of affairs (of matter for all it amounts to) that should separate the two functionally similar terms. Then, if the pragmatic clarification is attended, the maintained emergence should be dismissed: on what grounds could be maintained that something emerges from another? What must be relevant to a theory of cognitive political action is then how certain things are perceived through shared structural cognitive capacities; i.e. Functionally similar organs. This is not to say, then, that everybody should perceive equal but that the relevant state of affairs that are contrasted against the generated models are not variable: the conditions of possibility of our apprehension of the world are similar among different persons. This creates the possible conditions for objectivity of a world of unknown causes that are educed by cognitive agents.

This last assertion should be closely regarded. If not, one may think that there is an implicit dichotomy between two stances towards the relevant cognitive information: either one proposes the myth of the given, or the whole weight is discharged upon the agent's capability to generate the world. The latter thus represents an actual description of the classical rationalism (in its most radical variant). But the generating model's advocates (specially pp) attempt precisely a middle way between the two radical stances by giving a 'control' role to the perceived stimuli. Therefore– if the notions are on the right track–the pruning of the non-relevant generated models is set about by the contrasting of such models against the actual perceptions (process known as prediction error minimization). If there's no way of contrasting stimuli, the agent is just imagining or dreaming (both processes that have other relevant purposes in the pruning of the generative models; cf. Clark, 2016, pp. 84-108).

[7] These three proposed ways are not exhaustive. The third option is selected for argumentation purposes and its choice can only be strengthen by the development of the proposal.

Besides the advantage of a compatibilist stance between what we perceive and how we perceive it, the benefits of choosing a generative model are manifold. But three are of great importance to what follows: 1) the compatibilist stance allows a clear description of the relation between self-experience and objective experience. 2) the generative model framework is inferential, that is, deeply interconnected and context sensible. This has great implications in embodied environment and cultural practices. And 3) such proposal discredits the distinction between model-free (habit) and model-based (reason) approaches, moving towards a more efficient model that proposes a continuous process where both habit and reason have their roles in perceiving and acting.

First, there should be of great interest how, even though each model is elaborated individually (each person perceives individually), coherent views of state of affairs can be achieved. And two reasons may be given for that matter: a) the relevant sensory inputs that are used to minimize prediction error are, in an important sense, homogeneous among cognitive subjects. And, perhaps more important, b) the generated models are complexly formed. They are not brought about from pure imagination (echoing the famous Hellenic maxim: nothing comes out of nothing); instead, they are determined by physiologic, genetic, epigenetic, and even cultural and educational frameworks. Thus, they might be 'individually' construed but brought about with shared (even communally) cognitive tools.

Second, for a model to be generated and thus predict a sea of multimodal sensory inputs, inferential associations are to be apprehended or deployed as how the different modes of perception inferentially relate to others (in terms of probabilistic distributions). For that reason, context sensitivity is a crucial element in a generative model: a slight change in one specific input might be considered as irrelevant or might require a complete change of the generated prediction[8].

Finally, the last benefit of the generative models is somewhat a more specific one but with great implications. It is, again, a middle way between what is known as model-free and model-

[8] Think of a strange sound that is heard in plain night at home to another strange sound heard at night while camping in the forest. Although the same source might educe the noise, the context might lead to different predictions about the dangers of the situation.

based choice and decision making (cf. Clark, 2015, p. 13). Model-free approaches are often associated with habitual responses whereas model-based with strategic reasoning. The idea, says Clark (2015) following Daw et al. (2011), is that "different brain areas most commonly associated with model-based and model-free learning (pre-frontal cortex and dorsolateral striatum, respectively) each trade in both model-free and model-based modes of evaluations" (p. 14). A hierarchical generative model has the benefit that combines

> The two modes within an overarching model-based economy, inferential machinery can, by and large, identify the appropriate contexts in which to deploy the model-free ("habitual") schemes. "model-based" and "model-free" modes of valuation and response, if this is correct, name extremes along a single continuum, and may appear in many mixtures and combinations determined by the task at hand (Clark, 2015, p. 14).

In order to grasp the full importance of the generative model one has to dwell on the hierarchical structure that it has in order to structure apt habitual-rational schemes of decision making. As for the pertinence of the generative models, it should be concluded that the pertinent question is not *if the brain's model of the world is true* but whether *it works or not*, that is, if it helps us act in the world (Frith, 2007, p. 136).

§2. In order to assert if a generated model works one have to broach the different functions or processes that bring about such model. Some of those functions have been "hard-wired to the brain through millions of years of evolution" (Frith, 2007, p. 128); which are deeply related to evolutionary mechanism and environmental determination such as the light of the sun coming from above as forming our conception of concave objects (Frith, 2007, p.128); some bring about what are known as embodied inferences (cf. Frinston, Kilner & Harrison, 2006; Clark, 2016). Others are deeply related to a probabilistic distribution of distal causes, which will be developed in the next section. The last process relevant to describe a rather well covered spectrum is learning. This involves not just basic scholar learning but learning as extracting relevant information from the circumstances as well. In this sense, basic habitual practices give proper preparation to engage in relatively novel activities: "learning delivers a grip on how to sample the environment in task-specific ways that yield high quality sensory information" (Clark, 2016, p. 69).

Whether the information comes from evolutionary processes or is learnt along the way, when it becomes relevant for predicting purposes is said to constitute a prior, a sensible information that is highly regarded for predicting similar states of affair. Again, these priors are inferentially articulated and hierarchically ordered. The ordering is set forth as a top-down and lateral flow of information. The top layers describe the more abstract zones; as in the visual cortex, v2 would present prediction streams of information to v1 and so on along higher levels (cf. Rao & Ballard, 1999; Clark, 2016).

Along this basic ordering, a more complex one is set forth as to which state of the world is the most likely. Therefore, not just the generation of the inputs is hierarchically ordered but their ordering has as well a particular scaffolding. As an example, a set of choices at the base of which one may act. As one can only select one possible chain of actions, this unimodal decision must be compared to a desired outcome as preferred beliefs. Clark (2016) finds them of great importance because

> The use of such a representational form would amount to the deployment of an implicit formal hyperprior (formal because it concerns the form of the probabilistic representation itself) to the effect that our uncertainty can be described using such a unimodal probability distribution. (Clark, 2016, p. 188).

The formality of such hierarchy is, in a crucial sense, compared to that of Kant's notion of 'forms of appearances' (cf. Swanson, 2016). Kant maintains the idea that everything that can be cognoscible we cognize it as an appearance (that is, objects are given to us by sensations as intuition) (Kant, *KrV* B33) and that the inner anticipation of the sensation is a category of the pure understanding (Kant, *KrV* B238 ff.)–the formal aspect of the way we understand the world. The comparison is deeply revealing–having in mind that Kant anticipates pp on some important respects (cf. Swanson, 2016)–because the notion of a formality clarifies what the relation between the experienced and the generated model is to be understood.

Both the Kantian and the pp conceptions understand the set of incoming perceptions as 'disordered' (the manifold of the appearance in Kant's terms; cf. *KrV* B34). And thus, the relevant aspect of the generative models in their ordering. As long as it is supposed to be apart from what is 'actually' perceived, the generation is called formal. But this is not to be misunderstood as purely transcendental (another important Kantian concept). For priors are, on some important aspects, empiric, that is, are brought about from relevant past experiences. Nonetheless the probabilistic applicability of priors that helps us learn faster is set in a middle way between pure forms of understanding and pure sensations. This is the compatible force that is subjacent throughout all the first *critique* (the balance between the generated concepts and sensed intuitions).

The Kantian compatibilist aim is coherent with pp's basic account: that relevant stimuli are actually predicted from previous relevant experiences within similar situations. This rather dangerous simplistic way of describing pp processing aims more to support its philosophical relevance rather than try to explain the full consequences of its scientific program. But there are many other relevant political consequences that should be taken in consideration. Those will be developed throughout this second chapter. But just before dwelling upon them, a short but necessary description of the actual conceptual bases is pertinent.

There are some problems though: being pp a relatively novel theoretical proposal within the cognitive science, there is still no full consensus about its complete description (one may as well controvert its possibility). Alongside this, there are many crucial concepts and conceptual tools that are shared with other proposals. For example, generative models through a top-down flow of information are not exclusive of pp's advocates[9] (cf. Hinton & Salakhutdinov 2006; Hinton et al. 2006). There is however one excellent effort to compilate the fundamental notions on which –if not all–most of pp's adherents must coincide developed by Wiese & Metzinger (2017). They propose a 'semantic cluster' with seven core features: 1) top-down processing; 2) statistical estimation; 3) hierarchical processing; 4) prediction; 5) prediction error minimization; 6) Bayesian inference; and 7) predictive control (pp. 3-4).

[9] Clark (2015, p. 5-6) has clearly alert of other possible architectural descriptions of how to structure top-down predictions with bottom-up sensory information.

Some of these features are deeply technical while other mathematical. But they serve for a general notion of the theory in order to clarify some further discussions on their political consequences (of not all of them but a few). The first feature corresponds to the first step we have made towards a pertinent notion of cognition, that is, the idea that a generative model structured by priors is crucial to understand how we perceive the world. The second feature, the statistical estimation, relate to the former; on which these priors are selected to guide the relevant generated model depending on the probability that is estimated as carrying less prediction error. This is a basic notion of representation and is deeply related to Bayesian models of inference. The profound philosophical and political implications of such notion of representations are to be presented in the next section.

Third, something has already been said about the notion of hierarchy that its deployed by pp. It might appear later on, with some slight variations, but for now, what has been said will suffice. Prediction, the fourth feature, is presented as the operative process by which the brain uses the proper estimations within the hierarchy to antecede the incoming sensory stream. *Prediction error minimization* is the actual comparison between the incoming sensory (that goes up-wards) and the predicted one (that goes down-wards). The idea is that the brain is constantly trying to minimize their difference (i.e. What we feel and what we expected) in order to be more efficient at producing reliable images of the worldly 'hidden' causes. Sixth comes the Bayesian inferences that describe a mathematical model of how such error minimization can be achieved. The seventh term, perhaps the most important one, underlines the importance of action to understand perception. This key insight is a milestone of pp and scaffolds all the relevant consequences of cognition for political action presented in this work. It may be premature to understand the full consequences of it, but the idea is that perception is not properly understood unless it is analyzed through the lens of the possible set of actions (as choices, preferences or expectations).

§3. The brief description made of pp gives an idea on how cognition as a whole might work. And even thought is difficult to fully discriminate between a complete notion and some one of its components in isolation, one should try to grasp the most of what should be understood as the relevant political cognitive processes. It should be clear that, from this perspective, there is no such thing as political cognition: the brain doesn't switch from one state to another in order to enter in

a political mode. What is to be understood then as politically relevant cognitive processes should be those which are directly implied in the choices we make under the political game, that is, the social practices that constitute our political institutions.

A question might be posed here. What should be taken to come first: the relevant processes or the practices on which they take part? But this question aims to establish how a certain practice was originated. More than this, what is of great importance for the moment is to describe, not the particular origin of a practice but a *minimum set of basic processes* that intervene in almost all relevant political practices. This list may not be exhaustive nor completely non-arbitrary, but its pertinence should be examined by the aptness of the results. The relevant processes, then, that I wish to describe are representing, believing, learning, and, clustering all, acting.

In a way, representing is the most basic of all. In order to form a belief, to learn from some situation, to establish what to expect, and to bring about a desired state of affairs, it should be known first what sort of state is present. In other words, the world must be sampled in order to be discriminated and acted upon. In the philosophical tradition there are two important ways to understand 'representing'. The first, more basic way, as forming expectations of possible outcomes. The second, as forming a net of beliefs of oneself and others; where 'represents' amounts to expressing commitments about states of affairs. The idea that I will maintain is that they are not only non-exclusive, but deeply related, forming a double layered concept: one layer describing an operative process, the other describing its social aggregation.

The basic layer of the concept describes what Colombo (2014) calls 'neural code': "the neural code specifies functional relationships between properties of neural activity and properties of internal or external variables. […] neural representations can be said the constituents of the neural code" (p. 223). It is evident that this is a computational approach to representation. This leads Colombo (2014) to state that "neural representations can be individuated by encoding and decoding mappings between two alphabets constituting the neural code" (p. 223). More that 'reducing' representation, this approach has great advantages. For instance, this notion leads to a description of social norms that help to minimize uncertainty of other's behavior. Furthermore, as Clark (2016) suggests, "social norms, Colombo argues, are entropy-minimizing devices,

represented as probability distributions, that serve to make social behavior predictable. Expectations about our own behavior are thus simultaneously descriptive and prescriptive in nature" (p. 286). That such expectations are prescriptive and descriptive amounts to the idea that the computational aspect of representation is not a reduced sense data, but that "internal representations at issue function *within* us and are not encountered *by* us" (Clark, 2016, p. 195).

This presents a basic notion of representation that is not just computational, but in an important sense, pragmatic as well (cf. Clark, 2016, p. 184): it has profound practical effects for the actions that individuals go on to make. The internal aspect thus amounts to the operative physiological process that gives form to the neural aspect of representation. To understand it as the only valid form of representation is an absurd reduction that would turn back to the given as for how would the relevant processes to be distinguished or discriminated? Herein is where the relevant connection between both layers of the concept must be found emerging from the realization of the mistake we make when we

> Conceive of inference-based routes to adaptive response as introducing a kind of representational veil between agent and world. Instead, it is only the structured probabilistic know-how distilled from prediction-driven learning that enables us to *see through the veil of surface statistics* to the world of distal interacting causes itself (Clark, 2016, p. 170).

At first glance, the reflexivity–that is, that one 'agrees' or 'shares' with others these inferential rules–of such process seems to present a circularity problem: inferences are validated by the world which is in turn validated from inferences. But if one considers it as a long evolutionary process that exhibits the brain's social aptness, the paradox turns to an efficiency requirement lead by evolutionary processes; not a circle but a spiral (which seems like a circle looked from upfront). I would like to emphasize this reflexivity for it's the bridge between layers. The relevant cognitive processes of representation are inferenced-based routes to adaptive response. This determines the relevant actions-perceptions not only for us but towards others as well. Thus, with the same model one predicts the best actions to perform oneself in a certain situation just like when others would perform them. This inferential model grants access to the representations of others' actions. What is socially relevant then is the coherence of this reflexive inferential models.

The social complexity that is scaffolded by this basic level is of great importance and to be developed later on. For linguistic practices are needed to understand the aggregation of this basic prediction of other's behavior.

§4. There's another relevant notion to understand how cognition intervenes in political actions. And, analogously with the notion of representation, this notion has two different levels. I am referring to consciousness. And its relevant levels can be described based on two types of propositions about consciousness: 1) one may speak of being conscious as describing some basic physical state of basic responses or processes. It is a basic sense where we say that someone is conscious if, for example, knows her name and date, as well as her successful performance on some testing on the cranial nerves. Even, for the polemical notion of pain, one simple test may be pinching someone. 2) but there's another relevant type of proposition about consciousness that mostly relates to voluntary actions; as in 'she is conscious of what she has caused'. Note that the importance of this use is shown in electoral times with sentences like 'conscience vote', 'vote consciously' and so on.

But precisely a great problem with those type of sentences is that it's usually unclear what is meant by 'conscious' in them. This might not be greatly surprising as philosophy of mind (supported by psychology, cognitive and computational sciences, and, sometimes, philosophy of science and physics as well) is still struggling to shed some light into the notion. The notions of 'hard problem' (Nagel, 1974; Levine, 1983; Chalmers, 1996), 'meta-problem' (Chalmers, manuscript), 'meta-hard problem' (Clark, 2001), 'illusion meta-problem' (Kammerer, 2018), and so on arise thus from that struggle. As for the framework of the struggle is mainly phenomenological, most of those proposals will be of no relevance in here[10]. Nonetheless, some words are dued on how 'conscious' should be understood here.

As with the notion of representation, the basic level of conscious would pertain to a pragmatic functional level whereas the higher level would to a linguistically mediated –socially

[10] This is not the only reason. Apart from it, I would like to say that this is not a work on consciousness but a work on political theory. And so, I should abandon an extensive examination of some crucial cognitive notions.

complex– practice. In this part of the investigation I will focus on the former. And, even though the pragmatic notion is, in some sense, independent of the phenomenological, it is worth for argumentative purposes a brief presentation of the hard problem and the meta-problem.

The hard problem may be simply put as the problem that arises from the idea that there is something like to be us (that is, to be human). This problem is hard because there are no possible physical answers to it (cf. Nagel, 1974; Jackson, 1982). There are only some processes that are said to arise the hard problem. Basic cognitive processes as hearing a noise or balancing on a skateboard are known as soft problems. These latter problems differ from the harder ones in that they can be solved by empirical studies. But processes as abstract introspection and complete awareness of our own states are not –supposedly– completely reduced to physical states and thus cannot be explain only in terms of cognitive or computational sciences.

Deeply related to the hard problem, the meta-problem asks whether there is a problem of consciousness. And according to Chalmers (manuscript) this is done by explaining our problem intuitions in topic-neutral terms (p. 11). Problem intuitions are functional states as dispositions to make phenomenal (or quasi-phenomenal) reports as being in pain and so on (Chalmers, manuscript, p. 11). One of the main arguments in favor of the idea that one should maintain a strong[11] conception of consciousness is beholden to the capacity of introspection. The idea is that there's something special about feeling red or pain *as we feel them*. So, even though they might be described as purely functional, that special 'to be us felling like that' educes a special phenomenal status to that experience. And it is that special thing that separates us from zombies: automatons, person-like beings that although resemble us even in some relevant functional cognitive processes are unaware in the sense that they do not feel phenomena *like us*.

It is really difficult to compose a solid argument on such topics without, in some important way, begging the question. This may be so because, as for language[12], one may fall here on a

[11] That is, non-reduced to physical state of affairs

[12] How is one to determine the limits of language from within language itself? If one establishes an Archimedean point outside language (possibly with a meta-language) the limitation problem, then, moves from the language to the metalanguage. And there might also be said that the election of the meta-language in its connection to the basic language begs the principle. Although with some other implications that we would not endorse, one might say with Wittgenstein (1984) that the limits of our language are the limits of *my* world (5.62).

limitation problem: how can one establish aptly what is consciousness from what is not if we have only experience conscious states? In other words, part of the discrepancy on the already given topic neutral explanations are not neutral at all for they presuppose in some sense the idea that one has about what is to be conscious. That's why the phenomenological approach has not been able to move away from the conscious plateau.

If one moves away from the question 'what is consciousness and what makes us conscious?' to 'what practical effects our notions of consciousness has?' one may find that there are not so many mysterious things at all. A pragmatic answer of the sort must not be evaluated in the light of how things 'really are' but how pertinent or action enhancing they might be. And the proposed answer that I would like to endorse implies again some sort of reflexivity. The idea that phenomenal intuitions are functional still holds, but their importance is not phenomenological itself but linguistical. It is precisely because they allow intuition reports that they are said to be significant. Reflexivity pertains herein to the capacity of attributing to others consciousness in the two relevant types of proposition that were described at the beginning of this section.

Then, what seems special about the relevant states that phenomenology praise is not that we are able to acquaint them by introspection but that we infer their role within us from the attribution that we make of it on others. This is a new strong-illusionist approach (as Chalmers calls it) to the problem of consciousness that supports greatly on linguistic practices. Thus, the illusion that arises from conscious experience is not to be solved by thinking on an isolated individual but by focusing greatly in the social practices that constitute our notion itself.

As we have seen, some basic cognitive notions that must be understood in order to present a theory of political action require some pragmatic notions of language. Then, after this basic level presentation, follows a higher, socially-complex level that instantiates the political use of the concepts and its relevance on the public reason.

2.2. Sampling states of affairs

§5. In order to understand properly how political expectations and preferences, as well as considered convictions are formed, one must not only regard the basic notion of representation–that is, how the worldly causes are coded by our cognitive processes–but also the socially complex notion which involves the reflexivity of attributional stances: attributing to someone claims about the world which are coherent with our own. I have noted that this reflexive capacity bridges the two layers so there's no gap between them. But what is to be understood as the top-level (socially complex) capacity? What type (or types) of political practices are involved in such complex notion?

A full description of such linguistic practice is exhaustively developed by Brandom (1994). The author deploys there a pragmatic and semantic argumentation that ends up in a–nearly–complete system about how language 'works'[13]. Any attempt to describe such system on a couple pages would carry some major risks. But that system is fundamental for the argument that will be presented here. I will carry on to such attempt then by noting first that many crucial aspects of that system are left out for the sake of the extension of the present work. Some of them may arise along the discussion of further topics. But, for the moment being, the concepts that are greatly related to political cognition will be the ones described on what follows.

Representing, under such system, might be described as discriminating and aptly responding to the committed propositions and actions of others; what is known as discursive commitment. This practical capacity is supported by a stance of deontic scorekeeping: keeping track of one another's assertions in order to evaluate the aptness of their commitments and actions. In the terms developed here, a formal description of the cognitive capacity of grasping significance and predicting action of others in a socially mediated manner. One should remember that under generative models, learned priors help one antecede or predict forthcoming behavior. On Brandom's formal (semantic) proposal, the role of anticipation or prediction is understood there as forming the relevant implicit practices (that is, practices that one can deploy) that scaffold explicit social norms (that is, obvert linguistic descriptions that confirm and justify what one is doing or saying).

[13] Which is not to say that the system presented is true or undeniable.

Linguistically speaking, there is a semantical differentiation that is crucial to the scorekeeping: the propositional attributions of 'de dicto' and 'de re' contents. These contents differentiate what a) is acknowledged by or attributed to someone as merely assumed and b) that which she holds as being true. The idea is that, while learning language, we learn to distinguish (in some cases more aptly than others) these two types of attributions[14]: what we think about things and what we do not doubt about them. While keeping score, this differentiation would look like: "anna thinks of the united nations that it has no real authority". There, one aspect of the representations of anna of a commonly acknowledge institution is judged by me in the light of what I hold or acknowledge of the same represented object. Thus, the social complexity can be best regarded if the scorekeeping is extended along with john's claim: "anna thinks of the un as comprising only the general assembly and forgets about the security council". John's claim evaluates the representation of anna as mistaken because of his own acknowledgements and commitments to the representation he has of the united nations. This nuances between what someone holds as being correct and what another one evaluates is the deontic scorekeeping practice from which a constructive notion of objectivity can be built; that on attendance of the common acknowledgements and shared representations (think of the 'universality' of human rights as an acknowledgment of the sort; at least in a broad margin of western communities).

It is important to note that there haven't been many attempts to cohere these formal proposals of the deontic scorekeeping (ds) with any systematic account of cognitive science. So, the correspondence–if it exists–between the formality of that practice and the basic cognitive processes that bring it about is not properly addressed. Here, it might be proposed that the generated model that one learns from others could have this implicit structure. I think as far as the argumentation of the scorekeeping is concerned, the correspondence might exist. Still if it does not, other descriptions of the practice may be given that formally correspond to the reflexivity of the basic cognitive processes.

[14] They are discriminated by 'that' clause in the case of 'de dicto' and 'of' or 'about' clauses in 'de re'. For a full description of the relation between representation and propositional attributions, see (Brandom, 1994, pp. 495-613; as well as Sosa, 1970; Lewis, 1979; & McDowell, 1984).

This reflexivity is formally described as a double-perspective process on which one takes into consideration not only what one holds as true but also what others hold as true and hold that one holds as true (as in the latter case of the un). This complex process assures that the validity of individual claims is not exclusively dependent on what one takes to be true (as seen with anna). It is the communally construed conceptions that (inter-subjectively) constitute the validity of an assertion or an act. That's why a complex notion of representation is mainly social. A valid representation of certain state of affairs is deeply related to what different individuals (and to some extent, a certain community) hold as valid thus assuring that the cognitive coding that might fall under perceptual illusions is compensated by verbal confirmations that might reshape the generated model towards minimization of prediction error[15].

The priority of verbal confirmations or corrections helps to understand the abidingness of some social norms; one might say, specifically, moral imperatives. These norms do not pertain directly to worldly causes but aim to solve coordination problems between agents. Linguistic practices, herein, are necessary in the formation, maintenance and modification of those processes. That's why the scorekeeping is not empirical but deontic. But that doesn't mean that empirical information is irrelevant. To the contrary, without different but reflexive empirical information no claim can be made about the validity of the norm's application (that is, the aptness of the practice). For a notion of representation, it follows–in the multilayered fashion–that is both empirical and normative (being the latter the most socially complex aspect of the term).

As for the normative aspect of it, the system deployed in *making it explicit* proposes that there are two basic *deontic statuses* (that is, two main stances on which an individual is judged to be): as a) committed or b) entitled to what she's claiming or doing. Alongside the *deontic statuses*, *deontic attitudes* are proposed (that is, how one modifies the relevant deontic statuses): by *assuming* and *attributing* or acknowledging. An exhaustive correspondence of these concepts on cognitive termini would not be attempted here, for one might argue that they do not hold. But it is nonetheless considered that one might still maintain the empirical-normative spectrum without them. The only notion that is of great importance and that will be defended is the notion of

[15] In this respect, this proposal must not be completely equated to political communitarianism; although it certainly shares some basic assumptions. This is so because of the great influence exerted by Rorty (1989) on the latter.

commitment[16]. This is so because it brings about the abidingness of the social norms and thus, constitutes the relevant notion of rationality.

In the pragmatic framework that goes throughout all this work, commitments are a matter of attribution[17]. They are reflexively regarded at other's behavior and assertions as well as one's own. The practical outcomes of any relevant actions or assertions are what pertain in the domain of what a person is committed to. Thus, is not about trying to read someone's mind but to judge her actions or assertions. Then, representation spans between what relevant empirical cues the other is supposed to encounter and what apt actions or assertions she should perform. On this view, representing is to be understood as complexly expecting the other's behavior so one could act according to it (as complementing, correcting or contesting it).

This is a first approximation on how relevant cognitive processes take part on more complexly political actions. The multi-layered notion of representation aggregates simple perceptive stances to more complexly binding structures in the form of social norms. The importance of those norms bootstraps the idea that we have evolved into necessary social configurations, not as pure automatic perceivers. The necessity of our social character is not limited to how we represent our political environment but also the awareness we have of it. Then, as for the notion of representation, consciousness is to be set with an empirical-normative spectrum.

§6. Akin to representation, the socially complex notion of conscience involves a linguistic practice of commitment (thence a deontic scorekeeping). And one might say that even though much more problematic, a lot richer for political theory than its cognitive correspondent. The preponderance of this intesional sense in the Marxist tradition speaks in favor of this richness. And, although not sufficiently similar, conscience of class can be said to go on the same path that the notion that will be developed here.

[16] From here on, commitment would always amount to discursive commitment.
[17] As the notions of representation and consciousness do. This shows how coherent this description may be. But this coherence is not a matter of strong fidelity to reality. It is to be understood simply as functional coherence.

Elster (1986) synthesizes the aim of the concept as follows: “explaining class consciousness amounts to explaining why members of a class choose the cooperative strategy in their prisoner's dilemma” (p. 130). The prisoner’s dilemma is a common *topos* in game-theory literature where individuals –when there’s a better outcome if they end up working together– are not inclined to do so in attendance of each own’s interest. Then, a–possible–better outcome is disregarded for a more ‘secure’ one. That’s why the Marxist approach suggests a cooperative challenge.

Further from such approach, the articulation of the two main levels of consciousness should amount to surpass the prisoner’s dilemma and, with it, the dissonance between individualistic strategic reasoning and habitual normative reasoning.

Before even trying to describe the socially complex intension of consciousness, the false dichotomy of strategic vs. Habitual reasoning must be pointed out. In the cognitive base, the generative model eludes the dichotomy by presenting the differentiation in terms of efficiency: the most efficient way to solve a relevant process to bring about the desired outcome will determine whether habit or reasoning would be prioritized (pp. 17-18 above). Note also that the predictive priors and hyperpriors would also determine on which cases one or the other would carry more prediction error. In the cognitive base, therefore, the strict differentiation does not hold.

The complexity of the multilayered proposal makes it impossible for the basic disregard of the dichotomy to suffice for the higher levels. A close examination on the reflexivity of the concept could help iterate the argument. We have said that such process on behalf of consciousness corresponds to the attribution of two types of propositions: one about physical states and the other about normative guides or constraints (p. 23 above). The second type is deeply related to the committed representations. But they differ in a relevant aspect: for an attribution of consciousness to be apt, it should be about an instance of a representational commitment. In simpler words, when an actual represented commitment is brought about, one might attribute conscience on behave of the fulfillment of the commitment. It is hard to present a proper example for it varies a lot between different political actors: a state could be treated as indirectly conscious of human rights when its functionaries respect and support them. A person could be treated as directly conscious about

human rights when she claims for a political arrangement that ensures them. This conscience is represented morally in terms of responsibility.

The instance of a representation as the realization of a conscient commitment underpins the normative use of which social norms are an outcome, an expression; and with which, thereafter, morality is construed. The constraint on behavior of social and moral norms comes from the linguistic practice that constitute the commitments on the first place. In the cognitive base, the generated model serves as a continuous feedback that assures that the desired outcome is being achieved. Then, by reflecting the commitment and the fulfillment of it, one might establish the practical effects of the socially complex notion of consciousness. Deontic scorekeeping is the source of the moral principles that are communally addressed, and which determine the normativity of the evaluation of rule regulated behavior. If reasons can be asked for some representation, then such conscious acknowledgement might be morally questionable in the light of the moral principles that come out of the deontic scorekeeping.

It follows from this description that the full concept of consciousness is the relevant attribution of the instances of apt representation; that is, the responsibility each agent has –directly or indirectly– of his representations (how she treats as correct or mistaken, as true or false, as obtainable or not some state of affairs). The whole spectrum is determined by a practical attribution of certain state of affairs that is intersubjectively judged (thus communally evaluated). Hence the possibility of the communal notion of consciousness that is exploited by the Marxist's line of argumentation. The problem with such line is that it does not emphasize properly in the linguistic practice that underpins the normative constraints that the attributions of social conscience permits. Thusly put, the teleological and reductionist problems it has.

The idea of reflexivity in the constraints imposed by the normative notion of consciousness, disregarded by Marxism (broadly speaking), puts the prisoner's dilemma in a new perspective: one cannot say that a group of prisoners form a community in a relevant sense[18]. That is, there is no certainty in the instantiation of the constraints of the other members. Thus, what may seem as good for all might not be plausible enough. Trust as a liable commitment does not hold in the case

[18] The fact that sometimes they do, as gang members, show how the prisoner's dilemma is already solved in practice.

of such a corrupted form of community. So, without a minimum trust in a possible norm (in terms of a communal principle that can be appealed to), it is not surprising that the prisoners opt for an individualistic reasoning (a certain but rather slightly inconvenient outcome is more rational than an uncertain one).

Furthermore, the constraints imposed by the commitments of communities in the relevant sense might deepen the analysis. As for the case that is presented may be a case of extreme need. When contrasted to a lexicographical order of the norms of a community, individual benefits[19] may be of less importance compared to social ones. This allows to understand the strength of the commitment of certain communities to their political projects. In the specific case, then, of the prison, the impossibility of the reflexive normative identification of solid principles (that constrain each member of the community) leads to a prioritization of individualistic benefits over more beneficial social ones.

The idea that this ordering is even compelling should be regarded in contrast of the way we learn to perform the relevant linguistic practices. That is to say, social commitments are as binding as they might because of the way we come to achieve the linguistic practical competence. So, to complete the argument, a description of the acquiring of the linguistic competence is crucial.

§7. The difference between formal linguistic capacities (as described along the ds) and actual acquisition of the linguistic skills highlights the socially complex ordering of the capacities (from reporting to asking for reasons) that is based in the process with which they come about (how do we get to report and give reasons in the first place). That's why the learning of a language take a major part on this argumentation, for it is the process of acquiring those basic skills that allow us to deploy social complex practices of giving and asking for reasons (justifying).

One might start by saying that "children do not learn that books exist, that armchairs exist, etc. Etc., –they learn to fetch books, sit in armchairs, etc. Etc." (Wittgenstein, 1969, §476). By

[19] I am not saying here that benefits are the only thing that count, but that they help to address the issue here. Otherwise, the argumentation would reduce to an utilitarist approach of a principle of benefit that falls far from the ideas that I would endorse.

saying that they exist, one can be speaking of conscious awareness or conceptual grasping. But be as it may, the idea is that before any of those processes could be said to take place (if they do at all) there is a basic training in a practice: to drink, to sit, to read, etc. Thus, the competence that allows to speak of the validity of commitments (in attributional terms) and the constrains that one comes to recognize as a responsibility for them (in normative terms) is founded in learning processes; on practices we were taught to do.

For this argument to be pragmatic, should be based on *rule obeying behavior* (cf. Sellars, 1949, 1954). Herein, one must differentiate between *mere pattern govern* and *rule obeying behavior* (Sellars, 1954, p. 209). The former amounts to habitual behavior; one that might be performed inferentially but without the conscious aspect of it–that is, the commitment to the bringing about of the desired outcome. The latter is normative and deontological. Rules are a particular form of inferential coordination that has the constraints imposed by conceptual (practical) commitments. Thence, rules are "embodied generalizations" (Sellars, 1949, p. 123). Obeying, therefore, implies the recognition as acceptance or violation of a constraint (Sellars, 1949, p. 134); the responsibility for the acknowledgement of some act.

In such discrimination of behavior, there is two important ways to understand 'rule'. It can be a) what we are supposed to do as the required action; or b) what we go on and do, and so, that which we are committing ourselves to. The former must be understood then as the norm of the behavior and the latter, the rule we follow. Both concepts are involved when one is said to act in a 'rule obeying behavior' manner. But the two different notions differentiate the point of perspective of the person that evaluates from the one that commits to her action. Then, the notion of responsibility and, thereafter, morality is based upon norms but judged on rules.

Much more can be said about rules and their practical importance[20]. Some of which is developed elsewhere (Santamaria & Ruiz, forthcoming). Instead, I will like to address the cognitive procedure involved in rule obeying behavior. That way, a possible connection between

[20] For example, Brandom (1994, pp. 3-66) for an extensive analysis of the pragmatic importance of rules and norms. There are also really important aspects of this learning process of rules in Wittgenstein (2009) and Davidson (2001, p. 117) among others.

the two can be established. By cognitive procedure I am not referring to the actual neuronal procedure (to which one should regard Cabeza & Nyberg, 2000). I am more interested in the philosophical implications of such procedure, especially in connection with the notion of pp that has been developed throughout this whole chapter.

These implications arise, not from learning as training for rule obeying behavior, but from simple tasks on which one must sample and be able to grasp relevant cues from the world. As Clark (2016) puts it:

> What matters about such tasks [boil a kettle, walk a dog, etc.] […] is that they provide full, rich set of sensory cues that we have come (during learning) to expect in those specific situations. This matter, since it allows task-specific knowledge to play a much more important role […] and opening the door to many other forms of active intervention whose common purpose is to yield better information just-in-time to guide relevant action (p. 66).

The outcome of this process is a notion of learning as delivering "a grip on how to sample the environment in task-specific ways that yield high quality sensory information" (Clark, 2016, p. 69). This environmental sensitivity that Clark presents is what Sellars called the embodiment of the generalizations. One should not be misled of their being called 'generalizations'. It is a whole process of entropy minimizing mechanisms that help more efficient manners to understand the world in order to act on it. While making emphasis on the action, the term leads to an interesting balance between habitual responses and relevant novel nuances in those tasks that lead to acting improvisation towards the achievement of desired states. Practically, that means novel situations can be overcame using what we have learned in previous instances. And so, that's how a norm can become a rule to be followed.

Context sensitivity is a structural aspect of the pp proposal:

> [the] pp account also delivers fluent and rapid learning about new situations when those situations are built from known elements and structures. That means that we can rapidly become 'expert observers' of (modestly) brand new scenes. For example, when watching

> a theatre play, we rapidly get to grips with the novel arrangements of people and objects on stage, learning what is plot-salient and thus where (and when) we most need to reduce uncertainty, pro-actively allocating gaze and attention accordingly (Clark, 2016, p. 69).

The expertise that Clark talks about stands not only for basic tasks but also for commitments as well. It is how the notion of rule is said to be dynamic: the continuous application of the same principle[21] or norm in novel situations. And so, the generative model becomes the base of the content of a rule. It is the same capacity of anticipation and prediction represented in different levels of abstraction. Practical learning is the complex social process of generating an apt model for predicting one's alongside other's behaviors. And for the matter being, is the complex social process of moving from norms to rules; that is, taking responsibilities for the norms we make explicit in the rules we acknowledge.

In order to end with the basic training, specially to close a possible gap between this dynamic of the cognitive model and the practical behavior, I would like to present a final discussion on how this battery of tools might be acquired. This question is important because the gap would arise simply by wondering about *how* and, even more importantly, *when* a child, whose generated model is–if not greatly deficient–vacuous, can get to grips novel situations. In the case of evolutionary priors–as the fear of drowning–one might be sufficed by what has already been discussed in section §2. But that does not stand for the complex capacities of commitment that a relevant political agent should have.

To articulate the possible evolutionary, the cognitively (as in cognitive development) and socially acquired priors, the concept of *mirror neurons* must be introduced. There have been studies that show proof of some relevant set of neurons that fire (that is, show relevant electrical activity) not only when performing a certain activity, but while watching it being performed by someone else[22]. The limits of this similarity may vary but the function of such neurons still holds. And so, a possible explanation of where these neurons come from is that "mirror neurons are an adaptation—a characteristic that evolved to fulfil a particular function. An alternative possibility,

[21] Principle in the normative sense. Cf. Alexy (2002).
[22] For a relevant broach of those studies, see (Heyes, 2010).

which has received relatively little attention, is that mirror neurons are a product of associative learning" (Heyes, 2010, p. 576).

The relevant aspect for learning and training for rule-obeying behavior is that in the development, children acquire much of the relevant information based on *imitation information* (cf. Tomasello, 1999); that is, information that is grasped by imitating another that would give base to the priors that end up constituting the apt hierarchical models: "the hierarchical aspect is important because it allows the brain to learn its own priors and, implicitly, the intrinsic causal structure generating sensory data" (Frinston et al., 2006, p. 70). To assure that process, the correction of both the relevant role model and the world itself, would create a notion of error prediction that would be eliminated by the entropy processes of the brain, thus determining a notion of minimization that "leads naturally to perceptual inference about the world, encoding of perceptual context (i.e., attention), perceptual learning about the causal structure of the environment and, finally, a principled exchange with, or sampling of, that environment" (Frinston et al., 2006, p. 71). Social norms are the best political example of such sampling process, and the ruled responsibility is nothing but the practical application of the particularity of the environmentally sensitive model.

§8. It is important to always consider cognition as deeply related to an environmental context. This consideration shapes the possible realm of choices that different agents have on each relevant occasion, turning norms to rules and giving rise to responsibility. Relational possibilities of this kind of choices emphasize the dependency of the cognitive agents on their world (and its 'hidden' causes). The dependency that its implied by that encounter is, in a relevant sense, a determination: the dynamical requirements that the environment pose to an organism end up structuring the organism itself towards a better homeostatic (one might say, even thermodynamic) balance. Frinston et al. (2006) present this shaping by saying that

> Sustained exposure to environmental inputs causes the internal structure of the brain to recapitulate the causal structure of those inputs. In turn, this enables efficient perceptual inference. This formulation provides a transparent account of perceptual learning and

> categorization, which enables the system to remember associations and contingencies among causal states and context (Frinston et al., 2006, p. 77).

The relevant conclusion is that cognition, understood as a process of sampling the environment, is highly context dependent: "biological systems sample their environment to fulfil expectations that are generated by the model implicit in their structure. The likelihood part of its model is learnt on exposure to the environment. However, its priors may be inherited" (Frinston et al., 2006, p. 78). In biological systems as human ones, the inheritance that the authors consider relevant can be said to constitute a dual inheritance model, where the relevant heir comes from both biological and cultural environments (Tomasello, 1999, p.14).

Even though some biological aspects are greatly relevant in political instances, the cultural environment is determinant of the institutions we have ended up shaping: "human beings possess a biologically inherited capacity for living culturally. This capacity—which I have characterized as the capacity to understand conspecifics as intentional/mental agents like the self—begins to become a reality at around nine months of age" (Tomasello, 1999, p. 53). Language and mathematics are the best examples of the tools that arise from the capacity that Tomasello describes, both achieving great levels of abstraction and cultural importance.

The cultural inheritance poses, as well, a refinement of the tools achieved. So, the declaration of human rights is an aggregated process that has its earlier echoes in the different normative guidance of primitive tribes (and some intermediate echoes in, the Cristian commandments, for an instance). Such refinement, as a modification of an artifact through time is called the ratchet effect (cf. Tomasello, 1999, p. 37 ff.). The full account of the culturally mediated process is that

> Sociogenesis and cultural learning enable human beings to produce material and symbolic artifacts that build upon one another, and so accumulate modifications through historical time (the ratchet effect), so that human children's cognitive development takes place in the context of something resembling the entire cultural history of their social group (Tomasello, 1999, p. 54).

The process then is pragmatic. The transmission of relevant information from generation to generation depends on the relevant training of the child in culturally mediated practices in which the use of the cognitive-cultural tools take place. The political culture of a place is thus determined by the different set of constitutive practices that shape the institutions of such community. As a result, the cultural aspect of cognition corresponds to the capabilities that agents can acquire to engage in the relevant practices.

The relevance of the political culture as one of the causes of failure of some current states–as it is sometimes presented–shows both the importance that cognitive processes in relation to practices should have as well as the oblivion of this relation in the presentation of the problem. That's why it's usually regarded as a mystery or a force of habit and nature that lead to most of the approaches that focus on political culture to a form of naturalistic fallacy.

For this argumentation to surpass that recurrent mistake, the full picture that has been developed in this subchapter must be considered. But now, it would be considered retrospectively: there is a relevant cultural set of cognitive processes, deeply related to relevant practices that assure the proper inheritance and the refinement of cultural tools. Among those tools are the norms that serve as a base for rule obeying expressions of responsibility. This process of teaching takes place within a particular normative community and allows the training and inheriting of some relevant priors (that constitute the relevant rules of conduct). This linguistically-mediated training in the relevant practical instances frames the set of commitments that constitute the relevant practical reasoning towards which representation is to be understood.

The picture thus presents the continuum between the more basic forms of cognition that correspond to the sampling and encoding of the relevant worldly causes and the more complex socially-mediated forms of cognition that bootstrap most of our political practices. Therefore, one might state as a conclusion, that

> At the core lie multi-scale processes of self-organization. Prediction error minimization provides a plausible and powerful mechanism for self-organization–a mechanism capable

> of yielding nested dynamical regimes of great complexity. But that complexity, in the rather social case of human agents, now involves a potent and labile sociocultural envelope. We humans–uniquely in the terrestrial natural order–build, and repeatedly rebuild, the social, linguistic, and technological worlds whose regularities then become reflected in the generative models making the predictions. It is because the brain itself is such a potent organ of unsupervised self-organization that our sociocultural immersions can be as efficacious as they are. But it is only in the many complex and ill-understood interaction between these two fundamental forces (between complex self-organizing neural dynamics and the evolving swirl of social and material influence) that minds like ours emerge from the material flux (Clark, 2016, pp. 269-270).

Even though it seems apparently complete, the picture deployed so far lacks the most important element of all: action. Its importance has come out while explaining certain concepts as representation. But the full set of consequences lie unexplored and will be the main concern of the next chapter. As a fundamental and articulating concept, the notion of action permits a sufficiently complete description of the politically relevant cognitive processes.

2.3. Perceiving as acting

§9. Part of the importance of understanding complex cognitive processes as socially aggregated and linguistically articulated–under the notion of commitment–is that the importance of action (and action evaluation) is highlighted all along the whole description. In order to put the description in an action dependent manner, commitment must be understood hereon as a normative license to act. This normative component constitutes, as we saw, both representation and reasonability in a relevant sense. Furthermore, this type of license to act can be divided into two types of commitments (which is not of course an exhaustive differentiation but an argumentative one): linguistic and practical commitments. This differentiation brackets the idea that linguistic events are a special form of action that help the bringing about of some relevant states of affair (such as any other action do) but through a multimodal cognitive way–in the basic level–as well as a normative way (when rule obeying)–in a socially complex level.

This particularity is nothing but the milestone of the pragmatic tradition: what is important with language is the way we use it (cf. Wittgenstein, 2009); that we commit to a normative stance where we ask and give reasons of ours' and other's behaviors (cf. Sellars, 1956); that we use it to refer to the world (cf. Quine, 1960); and so, we end up doing things with words (cf. Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). It's a particularity that expresses itself in the complex scaffolding of cognitive processes. So, what exactly would 'acting' entail that serves both to understand basic practical commitments as well as complex linguistic (or discursive) ones?

Being the latter or the former, acting would always amount to the voluntary bringing about of desired stated. Later on (in sections §§10-11) I will try to clarify the notions of voluntary and desire. But for the moment I would like to center the discussion in the relation between acting and interacting, that is, acting and acting for and with others. This will help to argument in favor of why a socially complex level of cognitive processes should be acknowledge at all.

Part of the answer to that question has been developed alongside the concept of cultural environments and the inheritance of social practices (section §8). The ontogenetic processes described–following Tomasello (1999)–lead to a notion of cognitive training and inherited capacities that shaped the relevant priors and social rules to form apt cognitive subjects and rational political agents. This genetic description, though, is not sufficient to understand the full set of consequences of the socially complex level of cognition: what matters is not just how do our training of basic instances comes about but also how those capacities and practices are deployed in social practices of justification (i.e. Giving and asking for reasons). In other words, it will not suffice to say that we are able to acquire some practical abilities relevant to political practices, how they are to be understood and evaluated matters a lot too. Practically, that would mean that we would fall into an impasse: only norms would be available to us, and there would be no way of relating them to actual effective actions.

So, the first relevant differentiation one could make is that between action and interaction. As we have emphatically repeated, acting is the voluntary bringing about of some desire state of affairs. But some of those state of affairs implies other's responses as well. That means that some processes of bringing about are greatly more dynamic for they involve not just one relevant agent

but two and even more. This, again, does not pose a dichotomy. It is the multilayered structure that acquires complexity when confronted with more apt or capable persons. For instance, one might think of oneself as scratching one's itching arm (in a basic level as action); the walking of a dog– in which one needs to expect certain responses from another individual– (as a middle level); and debating a global political issue on a general assembly of the united nations (as an extremely complex level). In this hyperbolic last example, the expectations of the participants depend not only of each other but on a complex institution as well as many other indirect participants.

For the moment, as institutions have not been addressed, a simple conversation can be regarded in order to understand the operativity of the interactive processes. Following Quadt (2017) interaction entails two aspects: 'embodied social inferences' as an antecedent and proper 'interactive inferences'. An embodied social inference "emphasizes that the physiology of an organism constrains the kinds of social interactions it can engage in" (Quadt, 2017, p. 11). This is not too hard to concede. We have developed (so to speak) vocal, auditory and interoceptive apparatuses that are mostly aimed at understanding each other, whom must be similar enough to us and have similar capacities.

Two exemplars are given by Quadt (2017) to argument in favor of 1) embodied social inferences and 2) of interactive inferences: first, one might relate embodied social inferences to the existence of mirror neurons (p.12). As we have seen (with Heyes, 2010), mirror neurons are especially complex in human beings. They constitute a crucial part in the cultural inheritance process and the recognition of someone as a similar (to acknowledge some to be 'like me'). The other exemplar is the free energy principle. Quadt (2017, p. 10) uses it to argument in favor, not of the interaction, but for action; and, specifically, inferential action. Following Clark's (2015) reading of Frinston et al (2006), she argues–rightly as far as I'm concerned–that the predictive processes that the brain implements to minimize are inferentially articulated and directed towards relevant action. But I think that principle might be related as well (at least hypothetically) to the relevant social processes that help the brain to build 'social shortcuts' as labor division within a community and so on. Free energy minimization (as task optimization), cultural inheritance and social (interactive) inferences are all part of the environmental print in human organisms. Although it cannot be maintained that the environment determines our behavior (for that would be a

naturalistic fallacy), it can be said that it determines the realm of *bodily possible* actions and interactions.

For the second aspect, Quadt (2017) considers that there are mainly two types of interactive inferences: replicative and complementary. Replicative inferences aim at replicating or imitating the other's relevant states; putting oneself in the other's shoes. This type of inference helps us to understand, therefore, not just the actual states of the other persons but also the possible ways which led them there, the possible actions they might perform, the justification they might have and so on. The relation between emotion and rationality is better understood in replicative terms: rationality as apt and reliable response according to practical commitments implies the recognition (in both of the double-perspective stances of the deontic scorekeeping) of the relevant emotional state of others, which is achieved through interoceptive stimuli as a form of replicative inferences. Thus, the difference is not between emotional and rational individuals but between not sufficiently similar ones (at least, similar to me as a person, to us as a community). The replication is not limited to interoceptive stimuli. It covers external stimuli as the different moves of body parts and might be even replicating yawning. So, the repertoire that aids in the reconnaissance of the other as sufficiently similar for me to give or ask her reasons is based partly on how I might replicate her behavior; how might I account for it.

Now, complementary inferences refer to the coordination reliability of the actions performed in cooperation. In this set of inferences pertain, again, both internal states as well as external expressions of action. As the importance of the emotion in reasoning can be iterated from the previous type of interactive inference, I will focus on the obvert type of complementation. In that complex form, the inferential process can be really akin to the one proposed by Grice (1975) in which an apt participant of a conversation understands the role she has to maintain it. Complementary inferences are the base of deontic scorekeeping in the sense that the relevant expected behavior is contrasted to the whole spectrum of error minimization. If the error is to great one might try to nuance one's behavior. But if the error is due to an incongruity with a social rule of behavior, then the response would be a correction and not a nuance. This difference is a first approximation to what might be described as an institutional mediation of a cognitive process, that is, the way we use institutions as well as cognitive shortcuts to minimize the uncertainty of other's

actions. When corrected, we are adapting the rules others have acknowledge and committed themselves to, to the norm that constitutes the institution we share. In a relevant sense, there should be then a continuum between the reconnaissance of someone and the assigning of his role in the conversation. Furthermore, in relevant political instances, there should be no conversation but a justificatory practice: the responsibility for some state of affairs (failed if I am not able to predict the outcome) of an institutional actor follows the norms established by the roles that had been assigned by complementary interactive inferences; then allowing me to ask for reasons of this undesired outcome.

It should be evident by now that this way of understanding social cognition centers on interacting as a way of forming apt predictions (as expectations) of others' behaviors, thus forming 'social priors'. Thus, the relevance of action as perception for political instances must not be overlooked. A commitment could be biding just in the light of the relevant actions it that has as antecedents, as well as the ones that it's aiming to achieve. Then, there are some great disadvantages to propose a political theory that does not understands this relevance. But such relevance could not be completed until a description of how others' minds are read is addressed (and that amounts to understand that there's no reading at all, only committing to *our* norms). And for it to be completely addressed, intentionality must be described.

§10. *Intentionality and intensionality*. The Latin origin of the term intentionality, intentio, ended up developing two different conceptions of intentional. One that implies the direction of the attention, whit greater psychological connotation (intention); another that opposed to the notion of extension (intension). At first glance, the difference may seem superficial. But it constitutes the two extreme poles of the current conception of intentionality. And being the latter less usual than the former, I will concede it more space before engaging any relevant discussion between both of them.

Frege (1892) defines *intensionality* as the *sense* a term has. That is, the different conceptual aspects of a thought that might accompany the same external referent: think again in the un; the intension of someone might be that *it* in a failed international organization while other might think *it* to be a first step towards a more apt form of international governance. The same object has, thus,

two different intension that are held by different persons. The contrast, then, to extension is that the notion pertains not the object but its conception. The importance of this notion lies, not in the possible phenomenological aspect that it might arise from, but of the practical implication of it. That is, one cannot commit to the extension of an object (for it is, in a Kantian sense, inaccessible) but to its intensions. How we conceive an object to be is then a matter of a linguistic commitment that is left to evaluation by relevant scorekeepers

Pragmatically speaking, an intension can be only reported through an assertion; as in the Fregean case, stating 'the morning star is the evening star' is a content giving act to the relevant intension that should be evaluated. Thus, intension only pertain to the complex level of cognition. Thus, the concept avoids the requirement of relevant qualia (as it is mostly criticized by some authors; cf. Sanchez, 2017) and only needs some practical dispositions to be validated. In this practical (he might say functional) sense, Dennett (1998) understands that intensions have a close relation with adscriptions *de re* and *de dicto*; understanding them as "two different styles or modes of belief attribution" rather than "two different sorts of mental phenomena" (Dennett, 1998, p. 176). This reduces the use of intensional to a mere operational process.

Relating it to the first the notion, intention would amount to a *stance* rather than a psychological state. This Dennettian description leaves the notion of intentionality to a pure pragmatic domain. Fortunately, this realm does not require a comprehensive ontology but rather a set of basic practices to understand that intention is not a constitutive concept but an attributional one. This relation seems to lead to a reduction: intension and intention are sufficiently similar so, they might be reduced to one of them. But the reduction misses the content of the concepts: intension amounts mostly to the different cognitive processes that bring about the relevant commitment, whereas intention amounts to the attributional stance of that particular commitment. The former asserts acknowledgement of a commitment and the other attributes responsibility of it.

What emerges from the previous precision is that they correspond to the two relevant perspectives in the deontic scorekeeping system. I would add nonetheless that the intentional stance presents a greater scope and can cover up intensionality. The idea is that the notion of intension is conceptually dependent of the intentional stance as being a subcontent of it. This way

of understanding the related concepts present a reformulated the relation where they are not understood as different points of view, but as pragmatically dependent: the relevant abilities one should exhibit as committing to a particular intension depend on the practice of attributing intentional stances.

How this might work in the linguistic practice is shown by Brandom (1994). There, the author proposes that intentionality should be understood in two ways. First, as the acknowledging of a practical commitment: "this first form on intentional explanation […] yields a specification under which the performance being explained is taken by the scorekeeper to be intentional" (Brandom, 1994, p. 522). This type of explanation is described in *de dicto* mode, as that is the mode of describing the acknowledged practical commitment that lead someone's action.

For the second type, Brandom argues that "an intentional explanation whose point is to show why the action turned out as it did […] is provided from the point of view of the ascriber" (Brandom, 1994, p. 523). This practical perspective of the attributed intentionality corresponds to the intentional stance that was proposed as the covering concept. And it relates to the modes of belief as well by centering in *de re* mode of attribution: "intentional explanations of this sort employ ascriptions that express the contents of the attributed commitments in the *de re* style" (Brandom, 1994, p. 523)[23]. Then, the two types of intention correspond to the two types of mode of attribution. Thus, intentionality is to be understood in relation to the deontic scorekeeping system that was suggested earlier.

There is a great achievement that comes along this description: the opacity of the will is surpassed because what matters now is the validation of both what the subject intended (by a *de dicto* ascription) and how the ascriber evaluates it's goals (in a *de re* mode). The example that Brandom (1994) presents could help to understand the difference better: Nicole in a hunting instance, intended to shoot a deer. She encountered one in front of her and shoots it down. But john, who was with her, noticed that in fact, there were no deer: it was a cow all along. Then, while she might have intended to shoot a deer and actually shot something, the success of her action its

[23] There is an important similarity between Brandom's proposal and Sosa's (2011) epistemology of Virtues that nonetheless would not be addressed here.

owed to what she actually shot (a cow and not a deer). *De dicto* she was committed to shoot a deer and thought that shot one. If we were not to focus on the linguistic practice, her intention would have sufficed. But a properly pragmatic intention needs the linguistic practice. So, when john evaluated her behavior, there aroused a discrepancy (which must have been corrected) that was made explicit by two possible explanation modes: what she thought she did *de dicto* and what she actually achieved *de re*. This has profound implications for the normativity of our practices: the evaluation is supported by the norms that should be taken *de re* and the committed behaviors of a political agent are correspondent with a rule obeying (might be violating) behavior; which are *de dicto* in turn.

Recapitulating, we have defined action as the voluntary bringing about of desired stated. Thus, from what we have said about intentionality, 'voluntary' and 'desired' can be clarified. When acting towards the fulfillment of certain goal, an event can be said to be voluntary. That is, the practical or linguistic commitment to a particular outcome determines an event that we can call 'action'. Thereof, every type of committed movement or assertion must be understood as an action; or, in an inverse way, an action is a certain movement that is determined by a commitment. But if there is a particular outcome that one wants to bring about, that intentional stance amounts to a desire: the success of the intended. What is to be desired then is the success of the commitment. 'voluntary' and 'desired' amount, then, to the two different notions of intentionality that we have described earlier in this paragraph.

§11. *Intentionality and mind readers*. There's still another important discussion relating intentionality. It is the relation it has with the idea that there is some relation (as correspondence, emergence, reduction, etc.) Between such concept and that of 'mind'. Although it seems to be more important for a discussion in philosophy of mind and science than for political theory, the way we talk of the intentionality of other agents seems to amount to the capacity that we have to read their minds. Hence, we might be able to know (more or less) the expectations or preferences of a voter, the motivations of a political agent, her affinity towards a particular political program, and so on.

The discussion of the role of the mind in political decisions can be summed up by appealing to the relation it has with a particular notion of conscience: being politically conscious means that one has in mind the relevant consequences of different political instances (as decisions or events). Then, if consciousness and mindfulness are closely related, the fact that there are some special phenomena that pertains to the concept of mindfulness should lead to the idea that the concept of mind is of great relevance to a political theory of action.

I beg pardon to the reader because all that has been said at the beginning of this paragraph is nothing but misleading. But that's the main problem with the discussion of mind-related issues. It is really easy to feel compelled by the 'mysterious' digressions of mindfulness but there's not much profit from it. What I want to try, then, in the rest of this paragraph is an argumentation of why political agents that do not have mind in a deep phenomenological sense are not to be understood as zombies at all, but as practically committed individuals that work cooperatively towards common political goals (achieved through their exercise of public reason as giving and asking for a justification about relevant affairs). In order to do so, I propose the following argumentation: a) why there's supposed to be a difference between conscience and mind; b) how is a zombie to be understood on relation to that difference; c) how a pragmatist approach might surpass the zombie discussion with the notion of mind altogether; and d) how mind-reading abilities should be understood under such framework.

a) The difference between conscience and mind

A rather different approach to the one that was developed in section §4 is that consciousness is defined by a particular phenomenal experience that constitute the intuition problems, i.e. That there are some relevant empirical processes that constitute what can be said 'it is like to be us' (cf. Chalmers, manuscript). This proposal is really closed to the idea that the notion qualia has sense and consciousness in misunderstood without it. The relevance of those canonical experiences is not to be reduced to mere physical (neuroanatomical) properties as those experiences surpass simple neuronal processes: what we experience when we have a red object in front cannot possibly be reduced to the stimulation of the visual cortex. That is not to say that conscience has a proper ontology, that a phantasmagoric realm should be elicited to support those processes (for there are

some that think consciousness and mindfulness arise from quantic relations; cf. Chalmers, manuscript, p. 9). What is important is that conscious as well as mental phenomena emerge from physical processes, and so, cannot be reduced to it (this the recurrent argument that an object's relevance or consequences amount to more that the mere sum of its parts).

Mindfulness, as a phenomenon of its own, emerges not from cognitive processes but from conscious processes as well. This emergency is characterized by relevant mind states (compare this with the intentional stances) that are made explicit by the use of verbs such as 'belief', 'desire', expect, and the like. Then, what we said to be a two layered structure can be describe here as a three layered one: basic cognitive processes, conscious phenomena and mindful phenomena. The latter corresponding to the more complex and socially mediated layer.

The possible connection with this structure and political cognition is clearer: what a political agent believes, desires or expects depends on the socially mediated mind phenomena. That's why political analysts can be able to describe in the proper cases the tendencies of political behavior: they reach to those aspects common in all of us that are in the collective mind's repository (as there is 'something like to be us' that is educed from 'what is like to be us' in community).

b) The zombie problem and the mind

What follows from mind related phenomena and its importance for political cognition is a contra-hypothesis against those who present as irrelevant the phenomenalist approach. From that point of view, one might say: if you think that there is no problem in abandoning the notion of phenomenal conscience, then imagine a world where there are actually non-conscient individuals of the sort you propose. Those beings walk and talk like us but there is no relevant sense in which they are said to have consciousness. The outcome of this modal scenario is that there should be great opacity between the possible inner states of one's conscious being and the zombies. The possible correspondence, then, of our own behavior and the zombies' is just mere coincidence.

There are some major considerations if this modal situation is to be pertinent: first, one should speak of a phenomenal zombie[24] rather that a psychological one. Second, being the other's mind inaccessible as it is our own by introspective processes (that is, privileged access), there is no possible way of knowing the actual plausibility, thus, its logical possibility.

The conclusions of the zombie experiment are, for me, that even though it seems logically coherent, its awkwardness might speak in favor of the idea that consciousness and mindfulness is pertinent and necessary after all. Even though there are other mind experiments, zombies are the most popular one. Specifically, on relation to the mind, the zombie problem would lead to the impossibility of reading other's minds aptly. Then, if zombies were to exist, the logical (almost Humean) disconnection between causal behavior and its predictability would lead to the impossibility of any sound theory of political action.

c) A sound problem with great impertinence

There is some soundness in the phenomenological proposal. What arguments can be given, then, in favor of the description that was proposed earlier (§4)? As it has been said there, the pertinence of any description should be analyzed in terms of its practical consequences. That's why I called the view deployed there 'pragmatist'. Where does the impertinence lie in the phenomenological approach? Cannot be that it is at the same time pragmatic and phenomenological? These questions are of great importance and it is hardly possible to give a definite answer. That may be so because there are no ultimate arguments in favor or against qualia as such (I think there are some arguments against, and I like to think those make the most pertinent answer). So, even though I would speak in favor of the pragmatist approach, this response is not definitive nor exhaustive.

Now, I would like to star with what I would like to call 'the functional-pragmatic Ockham's razor' (POR for short). This in appeal to the classical idea that beings shouldn't be multiplied without need of it. The POR deals not with beings but with processes, uses and functions. The idea then is that the simpler, the merrier: if the structure has coherence and soundness with two distinct

[24] For a proper clarification on a phenomenal zombie and some other interesting ones, cf. Chalmers, 1996, pp. 94 and ff.

layers, then its pertinence would be greater than another bigger one. If the description that was proposed earlier is sufficiently simple, clear and coherent, and it has practical relevance to understand a particular practical problem, then, it is supposed to have more pragmatic pertinence.

I think the POR has sense. But it is evident that it is not really strong against embedded phenomenological conceptions. And that's why I would like to propose a second argument that pertains to conceptual coherence. What amounts to mind corresponds to one perspective of the deontic scorekeeping. What seems as an important introspective advantage on my beliefs to that of others is nothing but the illusion of a complex social practice in which I realize my role as an apt player: to commit and acknowledge commitments while evaluating others. One may opt for two options. Or describing mind as corresponding to either one perspective or double perspective practice as a whole; or abandon the concept of mind altogether. I think that if the whole set of linguistic practices described is on the right track, there's no need to maintain the concept and one might appeal to the POR to show its irrelevance. But in order to grasp the feasibility of that abandonment, the next chapter–where the linguistic practices are described–is necessary. I would nonetheless stand aside from a full argumentation towards one option or another mainly because it leads to thorny paths that might lead to digressions to far from the relevant topic of this research.

On a similar fashion, one might disregard phenomenal conscience with the priority of qualia. I think this permits more clarity because the lack of privileged access to our inner selves implies that we understand each other as linguistic practitioners that have (enough) similar cognitive abilities thus allowing the elaboration of apt individual and social generated models in order to predict (and give norm to) actions.

d) There are no mind-readers

Linguistic practices must suffice to describe what we do when trying to predict one's own as well as other's behavior. And, in a socially complex stance, they should suffice to account for what we do when acting as rule obeying beings in a juridical domain of choice. If what we're proposing is right, then there should be no mind reading at all. Just competent speakers as reasonable political agents. And even irrationality, or the incorrection of a behavior in contrast to a norm (or a law) is

to be understood against the backdrop of the juridical domain (that is, the institutional normative environment).

The most important outcome of abandoning the idea of mind-readers is that a crucial relation between evaluative norms and rule obeying behavior arises. If one envisages an incoherent behavior, such would pertain not to a bad mind-reader but a person's incorrect acknowledgement of a norm. Then, the relevant notions of authority, legitimacy and justice are to be understood from such evaluative stance and not from an epistemical opaque process. These three notions, as the three basic justifiable relations are to be basic in a theory of political action and would be described in the final chapter. But in order to described them, the agents must not be mindful but normatively bounded.

3. Modal politics: modality, morality and rationality

The first task of this chapter is to articulate the pragmatic definition of cognition that was presented in the previous one with a broader notion of linguistic practices. Thus, the first thing that is presented is a description of how one can understand possibilities in terms of probabilities (§12); foremost introducing the conception of modality. Iterating the Kantian idea of the inseparability of the conceptual and the empiric, a content relation between probability and possibility is elaborated in §13. Then, in §14, the idea that modality and normative reasoning are deeply related is presented following the 'Kant-Sellars' thesis' as it's presented by Brandom (2008), so that rule-regulated behavior corresponds to the inferential processes–both basic and socially-complex–that were presented at the beginning. To make this transit smoother, Höffe's reading of Kant's 'hope' is presented (§15) as a way of dealing with expectations and preferences that go far beyond individual agency without losing the connection between 'acting subject' and 'world to act upon'.

All those ideas are finely elaborated using muds that follow the analytic-pragmatic project that Brandom (2008) proposed (§16). The different implications of such conception of modality and linguistic practices are described and further elaborated (§17) to present a different articulation between basic cognitive practices, modality, justification and objectivity. The outcome of the latter being a better understanding of how a rule should be understood (§18). From that new understanding, a new notion of community–aggregated and dynamically modified–is elaborated and from it, a deflated notion of objectivity that serve the purpose of a pluralistic political community (without losing the normative abidingness that it has achieved, for instance, in the scientific practice).

In §19, a normative spectrum is introduced regarding the advanced conception or rules and the dynamic conception of objectivity. The full consequences of the Kant-Sellars' thesis is presented in respect of a particular definition of normativity which end up in the following summarization: 1) action is said to have priority in any human aspect whatsoever; 2) causal explanations aim at allowing or justifying certain types of action; 3) in that sense, we are responsible for our causal explanations; and 4) causal explanations are correspondent with moral

explications so the responsibility is articulated by a modal notion of the possible (thus allowing for the condition of possibility of a norm).

Paragraphs §§20, 21, answer two questions that help to clarify some important aspects in order to elaborate a better conception of the relation between morality and political action. These are: 1) how is moral reasoning to be understood against 'strategic' or 'egoist' reasoning. And 2) how a moral set of principles is to be described in order to achieve consistency. The first answer is a response against the strategic-reasoning tradition. The second is a critique of Barcan's though that helps to propose a new way to understand the Kantian categorial imperative (which would not be done until the next chapter).

3.1. From probabilities to possibilities

§12. We have seen (in section §2) that one core feature of the cognitive proposal we have described was a Bayesian inference process. This amounts to the process of obtaining and sorting relevant cognitive information towards predicting further incoming signals. What we have not emphasized well enough though is the relevance of such inferential process. One core feature of the way we end up structuring the world, –our conceptual scheme on a traditional philosophic way–is the inferential connection of different sort of propositions. The idea is that different collateral propositions (as practical or doxastic commitments) form a weave that hold different images of the world (Weltbild) in Wittgenstein's (cf. 1969, §94) sense; communal normative (i.e. Juridical) sets in our description. But as we shall see throughout this chapter, this is possible in part because of the cognitive configuration with which we apprehend the world.

The importance of the inferential process is, thus, that it articulates the way we cognize the world with how we conceptualize it. Although there's no strict discrimination of the cognitive and the conceptual–but another intricate multilayered structure–, there might be, however, some distinctive aspects that describe on one hand the inferential operations set about in cognitive processes, and on the other the inferences that take place in the conceptual 'realm'. The former would amount to the inferential computation of probabilistic data and the latter the possible (modal) connection of state of affairs and discursive commitments. This distinction and its

articulation would help to understand better how political institutions shape political agent's conduct and determine the relevant domain of action in the public sphere.

Before describing the relevant notion of probability, a duly precision: cognitive approaches to modality (such as Nuyts, 2001; and Aijmer, 2015) understand probability assertions as a particular type of modal auxiliar; specifically, one that expresses highly probable assumptions. Whether it comes out as an adverb ("I will probably have a beer") or as an adjective ("it is probable that it'll rain later") the probabilistic expression amounts to different sorts of validational assertions. That is, a discursive collateral commitment is proposed by supporting our own judgement in other discursive universes (such as an appeal to physics in the sight of clouds and rain). This type of probability can be examined by propositional attitudes as the relevant assertions have evident *de re* and *de dicto* stances. What should be noted, therein, is that probability does not equate to statistics. The domain of probabilistic assertions lies in the conceptual space and not in the basic cognitive one (we must remember that the conceptual space is in itself cognitive but highly socially-complex articulated). All this means that treating probability as a type of assertion would mix things up. We end up equating things that should be addressed, if not separately, in an interdependent manner, not a subsidiary one.

Returning to the relevant notion of probability that is at stake in basic cognitive processes and that is inferentially articulated, it should be foremost noted that such is not causal but statistical (Clark, 2017, p.1). Thus, one can speak of a Markov blanket of blankets as Clark (2017) does to deepen the idea that the informatic process is closely tied to a free energy principle (see, §9 above). A Markov blanket is a mathematical system in which the values of one node can be predicted given the values of the nodes on which it acts, as well as those which it is acted upon (as parents and children nodes respectively). What comes out from the discussion of blanket bounds that Clark (2017) sets about against Hohwy (2017) is that the idea of a dynamic and malleable set of Markov blankets is coherent with a predictive processing account and a free energy principle. And that thought could be extended to another level of organizational information. This abstract idea could be explained in terms of biology: there are different types of races. But races are agglomerated to form species. Then, the informational inferences that one could make within a particular race are framed by the informational inferences that are agglomerated by the species. This informational

sorting is important because it assures the possibility of different levels of abstraction. (a proper political example is the cognitive capacity to trace down indirect responsibility; that is, holding something as responsible by deriving the responsibility from another actor's doings. E.g. Blaming a country for the doings of his president.)

This is relevant for the following reason: the information networks that the blanket forms are inferentially articulated and thus can be said[25] to describe a predictive operativity. As described by the earlier presentation of pp–bearing in mind that organisms are shaped by and actively reshape the environment in order to reduce entropy–the accent of the description falls heavily on action. Therefore, the probability density functions that the informational systems of an organism use to preserve itself only make sense if they present relevant actions (in a very broad sense that might include epigenetics, as seen with Tomaselo, 1999) for the bringing about of certain desired states. In the case of humans, the relevant intentional practices and stances which help us constitute governments and political parties.

The idea of a weave of blankets that Clark (2017) presents support the notion that the relevant cognitive processes that intervene in those relevant actions exceed the bounds of skull and flesh. Such theory, known as extended cognition, proposes that agents can use the environment to functionally concede cognitive operations to objects that are outside the brain. The most typical case is the notebook of Otto (cf. Clark and Chalmers, 1998), who is a person who suffers from Alzheimer and has to rely on his notebook to remember things as directions and such. In that description, Otto's notebook is part of the cognitive functionality as well as cultural processes are part of its development (as in the case of the ratchet effect; cf. Tomasello, 1999). On a high level of complexity, a constitutional bill of rights can be seen as a mechanism of cognitive prediction that should help citizens to lessen uncertainty about other people's behavior.

[25] One important aspect of the predictive processing description here is that is mainly hypothetical. Thus, one cannot say that Markov blankets imply predictive processing nor vice versa. In a relevant sense, predictive processing is only one *possible* (as in conceptual) way in which the full story can be told. The relevance of this description has to do more with the results and practical achievements than the empirical verifiability of it. And this is why this whole proposal is mainly pragmatic.

Such claim is not extremely radical if one does not endorse the strongest conclusion of the proposal, that is, that the mind is extended as well, and that Otto's beliefs lie in part in the notebook (or that in the spirit of the constitution lie the will of all the people). One can still maintain the former without addressing the latter; and that could be even more fruitful because laws can be partly understood as having cognitive functions: they serve to minimize the uncertainty about other's behavior. Then, the relevant weave of blankets that one can describe might have a higher level as agents that form governments. The informational cascade that this level provides drags statistical information that are not necessarily conceptual in the sense that they are mainly operative. Within this domain there are the number of habitants, geographic information, the price of a currency and so on. This information articulates inferentially both with other statistical information and the conceptual inferential commitments (as in a country more committed to unregulated market).

The outcome of such a complex weave is an imbricate set of variables that can be quantified in order to foresee some possible state of affairs: in other words, the statistical components can be inferentially articulated as to constitute a certain form of justification to relevant actions that might serve to bring about desired states or, on the other stance, to ask for a justification of some relevant affair. This is how the use of modal auxiliaries is to be understood. But that understanding educe another important aspect of the connection between possibility and probability: the difference and importance of what is a state of affair and what one commits to which is 'logical' or 'conceptual'.

§13. There is an old saying in philosophy: "thoughts without content are empty; intuitions without concepts are blind"[26] (Kant, *KrV* B75). This is contrasted by the previous (oftentimes forgotten) definitions:

> Let us give *sensibility* to our minds *receptivity*, [i.e. To its ability] to receive [empfangen] presentation insofar as it is affected in some manner. *Understanding*, on the other hand, is our ability to produce presentations ourselves, i.e., our *spontaneity* of cognition. Our *intuition*, by our very nature, can never be other than *sensible* intuition; i.e., it contains only

[26] This is Werner Pluhar's translation. It should be remarked that I am not completely satisfied with it but being the most common one, it will serve its purpose with few terminological clarifications.

> the way in which we are affected by objects. *Understanding*, on the other hand, is our ability to *think* the object of sensible intuition. Neither of these properties is to be preferred to the other. Without sensibility no object would be given to us; and without understanding no object would be thought (Kant, *KrV* B75).

What Kant is aiming to show is not how we should discriminate between what is not us and what is us, as external objects; that is, his main motivation is not ontological. Instead, he is trying to argument in favor of an inextricable relation between the basic cognitive processes[27] and the socially complex articulation of it.

An extrapolation, then, of Kant's idea can be attempted to understand better the articulation of probability and possibility. First, one might say that the inferential statistical network is more akin to the sensibility that Kant binds to the perception of objects. Thus, the signal as relevant information is 'computed' and that's what constitute the receptivity (that such information enters through a generated model (§1) shouldn't be missed of sight). In a narrow sense, one can say that that such process is not intentional as far as one just 'merely' receives information. But on a broader sense, the active inferential process that the brain engages in can be said to be intentional in a purely cognitive way (one might say intensional or categorial).

Second, the conceptual structuration of that information pertains to the Kantian notion of understanding: it is the ability to form judgements from what we perceive that end up constituting an evaluative set of norms into which the practices of legitimation, justice claiming, and authority can be deployed. Furthermore, rationality may be defined as the apt commitment to the bringing about of possible state of affairs (cf. Barcan, 1983), definition that will be further developed later on. But serves the purpose here to say that understanding is the socially complex level of sensibility. This proposal, coherent with that which was developed all throughout the first chapter, correlates to the idea that probability is the content of possibility just as basic cognitive processes

[27] This is not particularly accurate. Kant's aim wasn't cognitive but epistemological and there's an important difference in that. Nonetheless, as I have asserted, this is not a monographic about Kant, and his ideas only serve insofar as assimilated to my own. I beg the Kantian reader to pardon such loose license.

grasp the basic statistical material in virtue of which one can deploy more abstract discursive practices of committing.

This is not to say that there's a univocal correspondence between statistical information and modal statements. What the contenfulness of the modality in virtue of probability makes explicit is the conditions of possibility of the formulations of judgments about causality, entailment and sequentially[28]. 'conditions' should be understood in a pragmatic fashion in order to avoid an existential gap: it is not that statistics are things in themselves that we apprehend and convert into judgements about possibilities; instead, the fact that we apprehend things in certain fashion allow us to use such information in order to act upon that world and achieve some relevant goals (the most important of them being our own preservation by minimizing entropy).

It should be made perfectly clear that this proposal exceeds the limitations of a single individual. This is the profound sense of the transcendentalism of the Kantian subject: the conditions of possibility do not pertain to particular instances but are the basic conditions on which anything can be said to (or can count as) committing to possible states of affair (and hence being called rational). Transcendent is, thus, another way to call the pragmatic conception of the human life.

Possibility amounts here to a practical stance. It is part of the normativity of the practices of a community that deals with objectivity pretensions (on how such pretension should be understood, I will dwell on section 3.2). The role of statistics is important if the foundations of such normativity are looked for. Whether I was raised catholic, my native language is Spanish and being born in Medellín, the probability of the sun getting out every morning should affect equally my possible further commitments to it being a new day (but possibly not their justification). This is what the inferential tradition calls material inferentiality (cf. Sellars, 1954; Brandom, 1994): the expressive power of logic lies in the material validity of certain claims; such as 'two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time'.

[28] Another possible domain which is possible in virtue of probability is the identity, in a broad sense (cf. Barcan, 1961).

Material inferences are, in a very important sense, prior to formal ones. A formal inference is said to be independent of any empirical fact (which are often called analytic ones). That means, that formal inferences are senseless without material ones. This is really important if we are to focus on political practices: there are some material facts that one cannot deny such as the cruciality of water to a human life, the repercussions of extreme poverty in nutrition and so on as the more basic ones. But from such basic material facts, other more complex ones can be elaborated as the connection between the statistical information and commitment to possible state of affairs gets more complex: whether certain public policy ends up helping a few in expense of the instability of the many, if there should be an international law against water pollution, or if there is something wrong with an institution if it allows people to die from malnourishment (cf. Nagel, 2008)

If the description of how we acquire the bases for certain commitments is right, then moving from probabilities to possibilities should amount to give a pertinent description of what counts as modal logic (or modal vocabularies as will be called here). This is to be achieved by fully grasping that possibilities without probabilities are empty, but also that statistical facts without discursive commitment are blind. This second and crucial part of the story requires a definition of what counts as justifying and committing, and so, a full description of our linguistic practices. But the notion that will be deploy in what follows would miss the whole point if it is not to be understood within the framework that has been elaborated of the basic cognitive practices.

The linguistic practices and political institutions that would broach the next following chapters are nothing but the complex and malleable expressions of a weave of Markov blankets, elaborated by complex subjects that just want to minimize entropy and predict each other's behavior to act more aptly in their world and so bring about desired state of affairs.

§14. Speaking of that which is possible, impossible or necessary is traditionally called modality. Deeply connected to out judgements, as we saw, modal vocabulary involves committing to the bringing of some state of affairs, or for *hoping* (in a Kantian sense) that it should be achieved. It can be defined as follows:

> The modality of judgements is a very special function of them. What distinguishes this function is the fact that it contributes nothing to the judgement's content (for besides quantity [Größe], quality and relation there is nothing else to constitute a judgement's content). Rather, modality concerns only the value that the copula has in reference to thought as such (Kant, *KrV* B99-100).

That is, the relation that the judgement has with other judgements that we hold as being true (while committing to them). The Kantian formulation has a similar approach to the one that is being developed. This is supported by the differentiation that Kant does between the logical possibility and actual possibility of a judgement (*KrV* B100-101) (and later on, of a category, *KrV* B106). What is novel in the proposal that has been developed is the cognitive bases of linguistic practices (which may be, in turn, not too far from Kantian thought; cf. Swanson, 2016). But Kant's proposal understands, as many of contemporary logicians tends to forget, that material inferences are basic to any understanding of logic. What is of great importance of the conception of modality that Kant develops is that a purely formal modal logic just makes no sense at all. If we need to speak of what is possible, first we must apprehend what it is actual.

I think Sellars (1949; 1954), Barcan (1961) and Brandom (2008) follow the same path. For them, formal logic is at service of a more common pragmatic conception of reality. This conception that would allow a pragmatic description of modality locates the possibility assertions in the domain of habit and action. Then, as cognition was described as meaningful only in terms of action, modality should be understood under the same parameters:

> From all these sophisms we shall be perfectly safe so long as we reflect that the whole function of thought is to produce habits of action; […]. To develop its meaning, we have, therefore, simply to determine what habits it produces, for what a thing means is simply what habits it involves. Now, the identity of a habit depends on how it might lead us to act, not merely under such circumstances as are likely to arise, but under such as *might possibly occur*, no matter *how improbable they may be*. What the habit is depends on when and how it causes us to act. As for the when, *every stimulus to action is derived from perception*; as for the how, every purpose of action is to *produce some sensible result*. Thus, we come

> down to *what is tangible and conceivably practical, as the root of every real distinction of thought*, no matter how subtle it may be; and there is no distinction of meaning so fine as *to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice* (Peirce, w3:264)[29].

This extensive quote is the pragmatic force needed to precise even more the Kantian definition of modality that we have given. Together, Kant and Peirce, constitute the perfect background into which one can understand the proposal of Sellars, Barcan and Brandom. But it is specially Brandom's (2008) work that would give the best account of a modal pragmatic proposal and to whom I owe the term 'modal vocabulary'. From his proposal, an outline of the bases for a modal conception of politics would be attempted. But this idea carries three precisions:

First, what should be attempted is in no way a formal modal logic. The arithmetic of the different expressions of modal logic serve more to the purposes of semantic clarity of a language and are not directly aimed at understanding the pragmatic importance of modality. There are nonetheless some important aspects that might be of relevance and that will come out during the exposition. If it is argued that what is going to be elaborated in what follows is not modal logic at all, I would be more than glad to agree. That's why the term modal vocabulary is happier that modal logic. What suffices in order to tie modality and politics up is to describe a linguistic practice that makes explicit some (linguistic) habits that might lead us to act in certain forms (i.e., forming certain types of government, obeying certain laws and so on). This pragmatic vocabulary is modal insofar as it is interested in what is hold as possible.

Second, the modal reasoning that is instantiated in a community give rise to a modal conception of rationality. As we have seen with Barcan (1983), there is a particular way of defining rationality in modal terms: one should always believe in possible state of affairs to be taken as rational. This particular conception is nuanced by the fact that there seems to be two different orders, one pertaining actual events and the judgement and stance we take towards it (cf. Barcan, 1980). This is correspondent to the evaluation of the facts and our hopes and commitments towards them. A rationality that is described in this fashion is likely to be context dependent and embedded in linguistic practices (and if it involves practices of justifying, then we can speak of full

[29] I added the emphasis.

reasonability). This is the main reason why such description should be basic in a modal description of modality, where universality is just a normative pretension. But such pretension is not a banality. It is the base into which one might form pacts and covenants as the contractualist tradition has already defended. I think a weaker version of contractualism, a consensualism, might be more appealing. This consensualist, weaker, variant is not really novel. Habermas (1984) and heath (2001) have proposed a consensualist theory of action where rationality is directly linked to a pragmatic conception of language. But the nuance of modality is a novelty that might succeed where the latter fall short: in the abstractness and disconnection between the universal and the contextual.

And third, the modal perspective that the author develops could be used as a direct link between the cognitive aspects and moral (normative) ones, hence, serving properly to articulate a political theory that has strong cognitive bases. Following Sellars (1949), Brandom (2008) would state the Kant-Sellars thesis as follows: "language of modality is a 'transposed' language of norms" (p. 132). What are the full implications and consequences of this thesis is something that will be elaborated at large in section 3.2. Suffice at the moment to note the articulation between empirical reports (as explicit statements of what we perceive), modal vocabulary and normative vocabulary (as action guiding).

Alongside this thesis, Barcan (1980) would present a link between the particular modal assertions that one can make about a state of affairs and the consistency of the relevant set of moral principles that should guide the conduct at times of dilemma. With these two theses, one can proceed to develop a description of a coherent theory of action that departs from basic (cognitive) abilities towards a coherent set of moral principles that guide action in relevant political circumstances. It should be noted that the proper distinction (if it could be achieved) between morality and politics has not been done. This would be taken care of at the end of the next chapter.

Bottommost, the modal vocabulary that would be presented should aim, not to constitute a vicious form of behaviorism, but to help to discriminate the relevant rules followed and norms evaluated that institute political instances and, evidently, constitute the domain of political action. Although the latter seems like a trivial statement, it helps to understand that the definition of the

political is not done by ontological proceedings but is extracted from the basic practices that a community engages, regarding three basic justificatory relations: authority, legitimation, and justice. But more on this later; for the definition of modal vocabulary under cognitive bases requires a definition of expectations and preferences.

§15. We saw in the previous chapter that intentionality is the voluntary bringing about of a desired state of affairs. But what happens when such bringing about is out of the reach of our will? One cannot directly act upon certain things but can certainly commit to some desired state of affairs. In a daily use, hope describes that sort of expectations and preferences that one desires to become true. Thus, hope could be described as the complement of intention in one's commitment to some possible state of affairs.

But the concept has more to it, as it involves three particular implications to the possible state of affairs and social interaction. Those are: 1) a purely pragmatic midterm stance between normative rationality and sensitive affectivity. 2) a particular epistemic level that is located between opining and knowing, thus involving the formation of certainty and elaborating the conditions of possibility of knowledge. And 3) the articulation of subjective experiences and objective linguistic practices; such as intentionality mediates between cognitive bases and socially-complex practices.

Before developing them, it should be duly noted that I am taking them from Höffe's (2010) reading of Kant (which are not necessarily, Kant's own). Hope is one of the crucial points in the developments of practical reason as is expressed in the last relevant query of the cannon: what may I hope? (Kant, *KrV* B833). The interesting aspect of Kant's broach on hope is that is deeply connected to theological thinking. Thus, the idea of god and the immortality of the soul are key pieces on the practical role of the concept. The question is then, should one stick to the theological justification in order to maintain such an enriching notion of hope? I think that it is possible but at the sake of lessening the systematic coherence that Kant achieved and leaving the concept with a weaker description. The benefits of such sacrifice are greater than the expenses, but one should know that such conception of hope cannot be properly called Kantian.

A secular description of hope needs, thus, to begin with the hypothetical character in which it is best situated: "Kant claims the a priori not for experience, but for the presuppositions of experience, so that his argumentation assumes a hypothetical character: if there is experience, then it necessarily has this or that specific presupposition" (Höffe, 2010, p. 343). This hypothetical serves as a base, not only to understand hope but the role it has in morals as a basic sub-moral hypothetical imperative (cf. Höffe, 2010, p. 350). This type of imperative constructs the bases into which autonomic normativity can be deployed (fully elaborated in the categorical imperative; which would be addressed in section 4.1). The idea of god and immortality of the soul serve as primer bases for the abidingness of a theological and moral project that end up constituting a comprehensive conception of practical rationality. Without such concepts, the idea only loses comprehensiveness. But for the purpose of a plural political constitution this in nothing but good news.

Thereof, hope is not rigidly embedded in a certain expectation of god but weakly articulated with communal notions of public reason and kindness. This weaker articulation still maintains the practical relevance of the concept because still maintains itself as a middle point between subjective/affective stances and social/rational practices. On what pertains possible action (more than speculative uses of reason), a secular hope serves in the dissolving of the false dichotomy of emotion/rationality that is supposed to split our possible choices for action (and commitment to possible state of affairs). As we shall see later on, this has great implications in what counts as fully rational (that is, reasonable) and the consistency of set of moral principles.

Having said not enough, but the minimum in favor of a secular notion of hope, the three relevant notions can be developed (against what Kant would like to):

1) the practical importance of hope is expressed in the way it serves as a middle ground between rational normativity and sensitive affectivity. If one remembers the pragmatic maxim as the consideration of the practical effects of certain object of thought, then, the practical effects of hope are the generation of commitments to possible state of affairs from interoceptive cognitive signals (such as empathy and the like) as well as probable worldly causes that validate propositional assertions on intentionality (in terms of deontic scorekeeping of reported behavior). Thus, the false

dichotomy that all choices are to be done either rationally or emotionally, is replaced by a compatibilist notion of hope that involves both thinking 'rationally' and attending to emotions.

2) this compatibilist notion constitutes a third level that should be located between opining and knowing in the sense that it helps to achieve objectivity through the consolidation of certainty. This level is described by Kant himself as '*Glaube*' that can be translated as belief. Thus, hope implies believing in the sense that one commits to certain stances that do not depend on their will. This is perfectly articulated in a linguistic practice of deontic scorekeeping because the relevant commitments that are to be evaluated are not just the ones in which one has full control. Believing in a certain form of government has some great implications even though one is not 'fully responsible' (at least in a direct sense) for the doings of their officials or representatives. Thus, the *de dicto* types of attribution heavily depend on hope and give the conditions to communally construct objective statements of *de re* (when, for example, communally hoping for the same thing). This construction of certainty is deeply related to Wittgenstein's ideas, where the notion is articulated exclusively by practices and not by sole propositions (cf. Wittgenstein, 1969)[30].

3) this point stands on the idea that an iteration of the argument of intentionality as practically mediating between basic cognitive abilities (that might be called subjective) and socially-complex practices to achieve representational objectivity. Analogue to this argument, hope serve as well when the will is not binding, that is, when the choices to be made do not affect directly the outcome. I think the argument could be easily replicated and hope can be understood as mediating between personal generated models of the world (and others) and possible state of affairs that might come and to which one end up committing. The deontic scorekeeping that was held as crucial there serves as well here as we have saw earlier in this paragraph and constitute the basic practice in which the stance of 'hope' can be evaluated overtly as a linguistic practice.

This whole description of hope comprehends the basic and commonly used concepts of expectations and preferences. The difference can be made in that the former involves hoping to

[30] Wittgenstein's conception is closer to that of objectivity, but the notion of hope is a condition of possibility as a practice to the achievement of the latter. I think it is precisely the possibility of practical hope that could constitute the image of the world into which Wittgenstein constitutes certainty. But more on this in section 3.2.

that which is actual to come, that is, an actual state of affairs that is to be brought about. The latter, in turn, pertains to the hope of possible state of affairs that might come from some relevant actions that might be performed by someone else. This distinction, although particularly exploitable, can be further developed in line with what has been said so far. In order to avoid unnecessary digressions, such deepening is to be conceded to the reader. As for the present purposes, the notion of objectivity is highly pressing.

3.2 possible causes: world and action

§16. Returning to the idea of modality, what I would like to do first is to explain the full set of consequences of 'Kant-Sellars thesis' from the synthetic diagram in which Brandom (2008) summarizes it all:

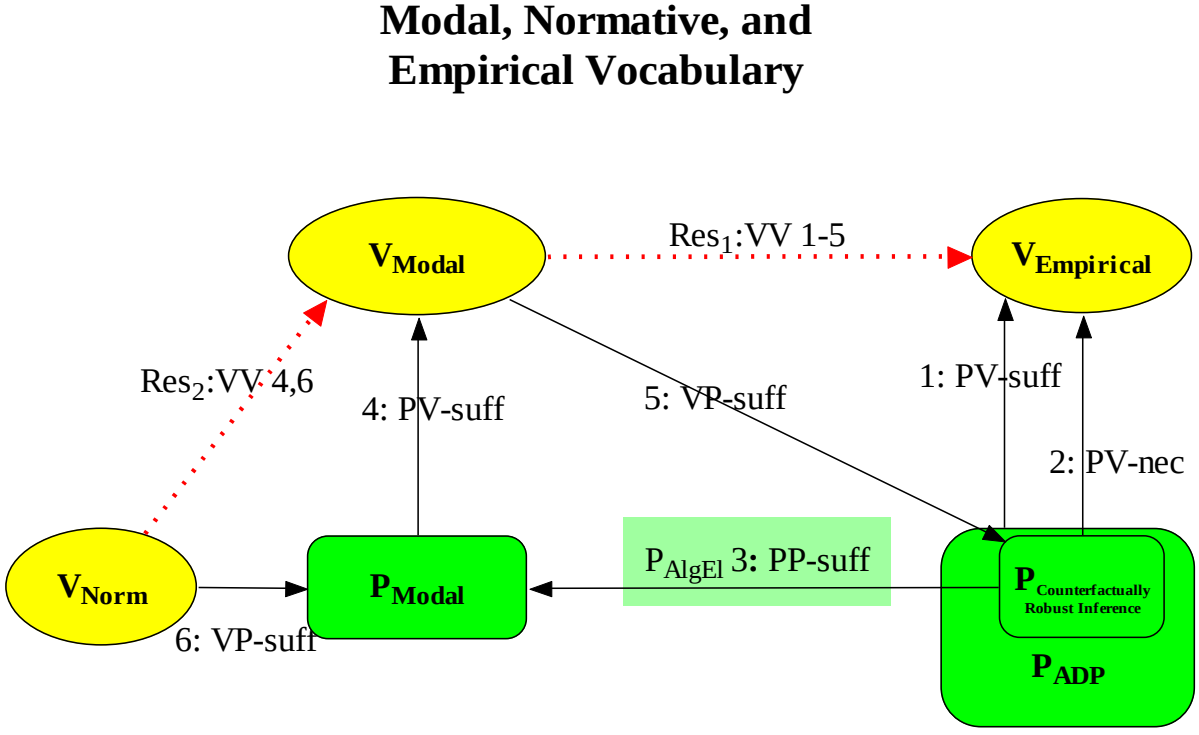

Figure 1. Mud 1. Source: Brandom (2008, p. 103)

As its title suggests, this diagram presents the articulation between modal, normative and empirical vocabulary. The fact that they could be articulated at all is, on itself, a strong assertion. But before even explaining the proposed articulation, the basic sense of the diagram (its arrows and components) has to be explained–or, at least, contextualized.

Brandom (2008) proposes this as a meaning-use diagram (mud). He claims that the classical project of philosophical analysis–i.e., the priority of meaning over all other discursive practices–can be extended (I would say reformulated) by adding to it the pragmatic elaborations of use–i.e., how words are meaningful if and only if they are used at all in an instance of a particular linguistic practice. The results, then, are meaning-use relations (MUR), relations between what a term means and how it is used that are pragmatically mediated. This amounts to say that we make explicit as vocabularies what we already do implicit in practices. This type of implicit-explicit relation can be as powerful and rich as 'lx', that is, elaborating explicating. In such relation, a basic practice, that give rise to any other set of practices that end up constituting a particular vocabulary, can be bootstrapped in a way that such vocabulary could aptly describe the basic set of abilities from which it was elaborated. That type of relation is shown in the diagram by the MUR 5: the modal vocabulary is sufficient to explain the basic practice or ability of discriminating counterfactually robust inferences.

This concept is one of the most outstanding points of Brandom's argumentation. Following Ryle (1950), hypothetical statements are taken as 'inference tickets or licenses' (Brandom, 2008, p. 104). Such use of the conditionals is closely tied with the material content one gives them. In other words,

> The fact that we cannot intelligibly describe someone as deploying a concept unless he makes some distinction between materially good and bad inferences involving it has the consequence that we also cannot understand the practitioner as deploying the concept unless he treats the material inferences, he takes to be good as having certain range of counterfactual robustness (Brandom, 2008, p. 104)

Material inferences–and the range into which they apply– arise from the relevant generated models that set the probability of the Markov blankets of causal inputs. Therefore, the basic cognitive practices that 'map worldly causes' fill with content the relevant range of explicit discursive predictions (in the form of modal statements) that we socially articulate as 'committive'.

Therein counterfactual robustness is the socially complex aggregation of probable signals that we use in the generated models that let us act, that is, bring about desired outcomes. The type of action-based prediction that this notion allows is, in a plain sense, *the normative expression of the intentional domain of rule-based action*. The regularity of which is shown in the meta-vocabulary that Brandom uses while speaking of necessary and sufficient connections for a practice to be deployed (note the great influence of Kant's conditions of possibility).

The conditions of the relations, then, bound practices and vocabularies in the four possible permutations. Pp relations (that is, the relation between two practices) amount to the pragmatic bootstrapping that allows an 'algorithmic composition of an ability'. That is, how can one simpler ability establish some practical bases in order to deploy a more complex one. Brandom (2008, p. 26) presents as a basic example of an algorithmic elaboration of an ability, the capacity to do long divisions by multiplying and subtracting. This serves not only to describe elaborated abilities but also to described algorithmically decomposable abilities. That is, to take some complex explicit vocabularies and describe them in the basic practices that serve as conditions of possibility.

In terms of such conditions, the causal modal connection arises from the beginning. For there are some conditions that are merely sufficient, and others that are, in a very important sense, necessary. Thereof, deployed from these practical relations (that can be both sufficient or necessary), there are the explicit descriptions of such practices in form of vocabularies (PV) and vocabularies that describe de implicit practices that brings them about (VP). The manifold of which constitute the pallet a political theory of action can be painted with. A possible way of painting it is described in the mud presented at the beginning of this paragraph. The relevant conditions of possibility and pragmatic mediations is show there as to articulate all those philosophically

relevant vocabularies from some practices and an important basic vocabulary: the vocabulary of norms.

This priority can be supported by the description of cognition that was developed in the first chapter. The idea that inferential practices are the base of cognition is, in a relevant sense, the idea that what we do, from the beginning, is to follow patterns that can be algorithmically elaborated as the obeying of social rules. This is why inferential practices are not only sufficient for any vocabulary, they are necessary: "according to this way of thinking, *inferential* practices are pp-necessary components of every autonomous discursive practice, hence PV-necessary for the deployment of every autonomous vocabulary, hence PV-necessary for the deployment of every vocabulary whatsoever. They are *universally* PV-necessary" (Brandom, 2008, p. 43). Although it may seem as a trivial precision, it is important to emphasize that this necessity is purely practical. It is not an ontological one. The fact that basic inferential cognitive processes function as they do–that is, by the generation of relevant models–is a practical necessity to elaborate further abilities.

Thereof, the basic generative models that are algorithmically elaborated serve as base to deploy socially complex practices of judging and acting:

> *Judgement* and *agency* are implicitly normative phenomena because they consist in the application of concepts, and applying concept is undertaking commitments and responsibilities whose *content* is articulated by those concepts. (for Kant, specifically *moral* normative vocabulary makes explicit commitments and that are already implicit in the practical use of concepts to endorse maxims, ends, and plans.) (Brandom, 2008, p. 110).

As we will see, the fact that these practices are based in giving and asking for reasons (as the prior inferentially-conceptual practice) has profound political implications such as the construction of public reason. But the whole argument of the fourth chapter–which will deal with the definition of political practices themselves–needs a precise definition of socially constructed objectivity.

One might wonder, however, if this story is on the right track. This is a valid question if one does not presuppose that any description of a vocabulary must be 'right' in the sense that it

has to be absolute and universally necessary (apodictic as Kant would say). Being this proposal purely pragmatic, one should understand that 'right' as politically enhancing; that is, as favoring the understanding of those activities that are politically relevant. Thus, in order to address the pertinence, validity or rightness of this proposal, one should wait to see what practical effects it has on our 'political conduct'.

§17. To continue with the same methodology, the following mud (figure 2) serves as a visual guide on how objectivity is to be understood within the analytic-pragmatist framework.

The first set of practices (algorithmically speaking) that needs to be considered is the basic cognitive practices (BCP) that were describe as the minimum bases to be able to act, and so, to deploy any socially complex practice whatsoever. Those practices involved generative models that sample the environment throughout a multilayer of structures in order to predict and minimize free energy, thus constructing a complex Markov blanket of blankets: a structure that binds probabilistic inferences that the brain do implicitly with obvert explicit discursive commitments in the form of robust counterfactual inferences as possibilities. This is how modal vocabulary is deployed from the basic cognitive practices. The relation that can be established between them is one of sufficiency.

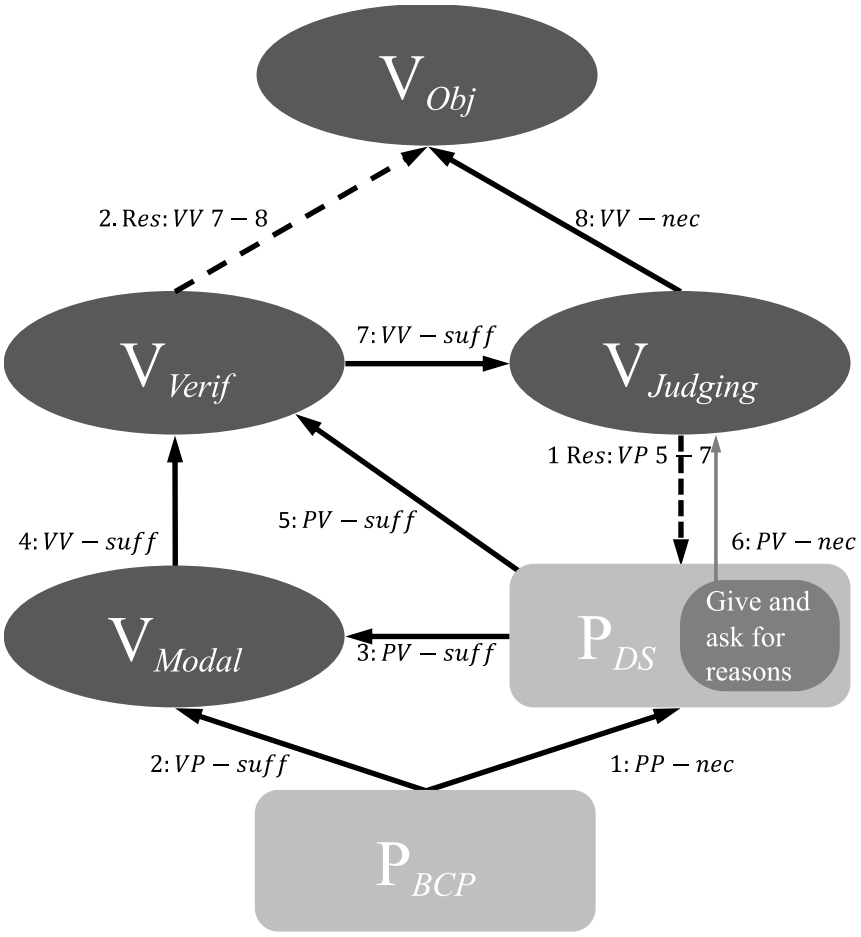

Figure 2. Mud 2. Source: own elaboration

Some necessary relations can be established but not with the whole set of BCP but from strict ones as the generated models. Those probabilistic samplings of the world that are the outcome of such models (whether complexly cultural or 'merely' perceptual) are necessary in order to grasp counterfactual possibilities. This is so because part of the error minimization process that reduces free energy undergo relevant scenarios and others that are not. Thus, the range of the counterfactual is precisely the pruning of generated models in the form of fine-grained predicted causes. Here is important to note that both the implicit practice of predictive processing and the explicit practice of committing to possible situations serve to nothing but action: they are relevant insofar as they allow a more precise domain of choice to an agent between agents.

BCP are also necessary to deploy a practice of deontic scorekeeping (ds). In the previous chapter, a relevant distinction between two types of attribution, *de dicto* and *de re*, was described as a basic component of a DS practice to understand discursive commitment and intentionality (as well as consciousness). Such distinction considered the difference of stance towards the content of an assertion. But that amounts to the difference between what one takes to be a fact against what another person holds. Such practice is in strong need of a cognitive base into which state of affairs are 'apprehended' (actively of course). Then to deploy a DS practice is needed a basic set of cognitive practices as the one described in the diagram: inside the ds, lies the practice of giving and asking for reasons. That practice is universal in the sense that it is necessary to deploy any contentful vocabulary (cf. Brandom, 2008, p. 43), as it is the basic inferential practice: in order to give or ask for a reason one should understand what serves as a premise, a conclusion and a proper set of material inferences that holds them together.

So, even though the explicit vocabulary of justification is in a lx relation to ds, it is only possible in virtue of a necessary relation between giving and asking for reasons and justifying. This 'paradoxical' relation shows the perspective character and the communal functionality of ds itself. Nonetheless, I think the latter is not necessary to deploy a modal practice of counterfactual inferences–though it is, evidently, sufficient. (this is so because it suffices to acknowledge the range of counterfactuals in order to deploy it, but a generative model–in the form of a Markov weave–is needed so that content could be given to it.) Therein should be noted that modal vocabulary needs giving and asking for reasons (being that evidently coherent with the idea that such practice serves as the base of any vocabulary whatsoever) and that would lead to a biconditional relation that differs from the one presented in MUR 2. I think such multiplicity of ways of understanding the necessary relation between modality and ds is not problematic if one realizes that practices and vocabularies relate to each other in a manifold of ways. One should remember that, *as multiple as the uses of the tools in a toolbox are the uses of language* (Wittgenstein, 2009, §11), so are many the relations between the implicit practices that support them.

To continue, mud 2 is supposed to introduce a vocabulary that wasn't addressed at all so far: the vocabulary of verification. But this is to be understood as empirical vocabulary. More

precisely, verification vocabulary is a subvocabulary (of a nested vocabulary), that is, a vocabulary that is, in some way subsidiary from that in which it is contained. The idea of prioritizing verification is that it is stricter that empirical vocabulary. There are some parts of empirical vocabulary that are deeply related with normative vocabulary as it is shown in the idea of quine (1953) that the minimum particle of sense is the theory on itself (cf. Brandom, 2008, p. 95). Verification vocabulary, then, amounts to the mere observational sentences that serve as reports. I think that Brandom's conception of empirical vocabulary is closely related to that which I am here calling verification. But the name suggests more, or so I think, when speaking strictly of the way we verify 'worldly facts'.

Another important aspect of the latter mud is justifying vocabulary which is described as the explicit expression of ds. Thus, if objectivity is an elaborated vocabulary, then it has to be in a necessary relation to justifying. This is so because what is taken as 'objective' comes out from what is 'universally justifiable'. Universality, herein, pertains to the relevant communal practices that exhaust the competent practitioners. Such problematic statement has to be nuanced by the fact that justifying as an explicit expression of giving and asking for reasons is an autonomous discursive vocabulary (that is, one vocabulary one could play, though one could play in no other). Then, any vocabulary that is autonomous has to exhaust all the relevant practices of giving and asking for reasons; which, in practice, amounts to a dynamical adding of new forms of justification. This normative exhaustion is the sense in which 'universal' should be understood. The outcome of which is that any practice that can be called 'linguistic' in the relevant sense has the bases to deploy a justification and, in turn, to deploy an objective vocabulary (if and only if it has the sufficient condition of verifying).

It is this strict set of observational assertions and the justifying vocabulary that allow for the constitution of objectivity. And this is really important because objectivity is a vocabulary that comes out directly of vocabularies and not of practices. That is, BCP and giving and asking for reasons are practices that are presupposed in *any* objective vocabulary, but they are not directly linked to it but in a subsidiary way. Note that I have added an emphasis in 'any'. The reason for it is the priority of the practices in the whole analytic-pragmatist's framework. If objective vocabulary is constituted from practices that involve common rules, that is, from regulated

interactive practices between competent agents (players) there is no reason to suppose that there is a magic way to constitute an absolute objective vocabulary–apart from its implausibility.

§18. How is linguistic competence to be understood as to be framed into the objectivity proposal that has just been presented? First, a skillful training is due in the appropriate rule-obeying behavior. Part of the importance of the ratchet effect described following Tomasello (1999) concerned with that type of practice and rule obeying can be described both for the learning of infants and the acquiring and development of a regular practice of any adult. To understand properly the skillfulness involved in normative bindigness, how is a rule to be understood or taken should be closely regarded.

Following a classical description given by the game theory (Neumann and Morgenstern, 1953), they can be understood as (either) constitutive or strategic. The former amounts to the type of rules that describe the operativity of the practice (what I have been calling a norm) and the latter a type that allows movement within the *space of rule inference* (what I have been calling a rule). There are two ways one can discriminate between the two: in practice and verbally. Practically, one can address the different rules precisely by applying them aptly. A paradox or vicious cycle could be ad porta: do rules constitute practices or practices constitute rules. Although it seems trivial, the appearance of the paradox helps to get to an important way of defining it: rules and practices are just two faces of the same coin. What a described rule states or make explicit is a particular behavior (which must be, evidently, recurrent).

If such definition is clear, then there is no way one can fall into dilemmas such as infinite nomological regress or gerrymandering. But they are not fully relegated. Someone could still ask if the 'perception of the behavior' is not subject as well of a description. And that should constitute a language about languages that should be of interest only if it helps to achieve better strategies. Then strategic reasoning requires this metalevel of norms to have sense at all. Authors like Brandom (1994) call this level, the level of norms to aptly distinguish it from the mere rule-regulated behavior–or patterned governed as Sellars (1954) calls it. There has been plenty of literature that has dealt with the issue of how one can stop there and not, at least logically, suppose that another level could be constructed. But nearly all the proposals embark themselves into strange

cavillations that miss the pragmatic point altogether: another level could be constructed insofar it is action enhancing. Subsidiarity in governments are one way of perceiving these rules that apply to rules that apply to daily, behavioral rules (think of constitutional sentences as commandments about rules). But the point is not the plausibility of such complex aggregation but their social (practical) effects[31]. This simple way doesn't have to be incontrovertible, it just has to make pragmatic sense.

And such sense is precisely what is taken into account while regarding rules in living behavior (Sellars, 1949, p. 134). To look here for a rigid definition of sense is, again, anti-pragmatic. The practice of sense attribution is precisely the linguistic practice (vocabulary) of correction and objectivity that we are looking for. And, as we have seen, such vocabulary comes out from justifying and, indirectly from deontic scorekeeping in a dynamic fashion (malleable in time). So, the relevant sense of a behavior should be left to a scorekeeper. The fact that this way doesn't lead to relativism determines precisely how a community is constituted. For the term 'community' is way more elusive than 'individual'.

Hereof, the following process is of great help to understand such constitution: the minimum amount of persons to engage in a practice is two, especially if it has to do with judging or acting (as justifying). Then, the relevant instance of a practice starts from an I-thou relation (cf. Brandom, 1994). In such instances, the application of constitutive and strategic rules is evaluated. The interesting fact is that we cannot evaluate rules themselves, but just their application. Rules are now not of the players themselves but of the practice (as norms). They are still, however only double-perspectively encountered, so they could be speaking of two different set of rules and doing something similar but not engaging in the same practice (as the commitments are different). That is, a norm can be happily applied as different types of commitment. That because of the range of counterfactual robustness modality involves.

It is easy to argue that any community needs, at least, three individuals. This interesting number assures a type of triangulation that allows objectivity in the following manner: by iterating

[31] Brandom (1994) has, nonetheless, given an extensive argumentation on how regulism and gerrymandering are not the case from a logical and practical perspective.

Davidson's (2001) argument, one can say that if three persons engage in what is supposed to be the same practice, there are always two points of view that can constitute a proper range into which something can be said 'appropriate'. This argument has been used as well by Dretske (1981) and Brandom (1994) in both informational and semantic (conceptual) ways, respectively. But the practical outcomes are greater: every communal practice that can be said to a) elaborate verification vocabulary (if it has the conditions) and b) can make judgements as to justify; needs, at least, three individuals.

The triangular notion of objectivity considers then that all relevant participants in a practice establish the range of modal counterfactual inferences as to constitute practical and doxastic (verbal) commitments to a particular behavior. Thusly put, objectivity is 'reduced' into justifiability. I think that's not a strong claim to make, but an emphasis on verification has to be added again. Sellars (1954) says on the matter that

> In other words, instead of justifying nomologicals by an appeal to observation statements the predicates of which would have conceptual meaning independently of any commitment to laws, the problem is rather that of deciding *which* conceptual meaning our observation vocabulary is to have, our aim being so to manipulate the three basic components of a world picture, (a) observed objects and events, (b) unobserved objects and events and (c) nomological connections, so as to achieve a world picture with a maximum of "explanatory coherence." In this reshuffle, no item is sacred. On the other hand, it is obviously reasonable to preserve the achievement status of as many observation claims as possible, for the more we preserve, the more the world picture we select is "based on observational evidence" (p. 226).

There is an upside and a downside of Sellars' statement. The upside is that a world related objectivity vocabulary can still be construed, as it is one of the aspects of the world view that a community constructs in its linguistic practices. But the downside is that it seems that relativism is just moved from individuals to communities. Two points can be brought as to help to solve the conundrum: 1) there is not one, but many and multiple communities that establish their counterfactual ranges from statistical Markov blanket of blankets. Then, no absolute universal

community can be construed, and so, no universally mistaken or relativist community can be described. Think, for example, in the ranges that different individual perspective establishes on a particular practice. This could be the case as well for world views as participants of each practice can, in turn, be part of other word views. Then it is precisely plurality and not homogeneity that allows a proper and dynamic notion of objectivity that can be constantly revised, enhanced, precised, etc. The political implications of this necessary pluralism for objectivity has its limits. Not all word views are equally comprehensive nor opened to modifications. But that doesn't mean that we must eradicate plurality and with it objectivity; instead we should work towards the constructions of more open societies as popper (2013) would suggest.

Also, 2) historically we move towards more refined ways of objectivity. The advance in science, specially its discursive practices, show that physical objectivity can have many forms: electrons, genes, quantum particles, waves, chemical component, microorganisms, and so on (hopefully, one day, human rights). And political conformations have shown that there are many ways to structure a word view (some more dangerous to us as a species than others). But, as time moves forward, new ways to understand objectivity are achieved, structured, revised, precised and so on[32].

The conclusion is that communal objectivity also implies dynamic objectivity. The anxiety to achieve a stable and immutable objective standpoint should have died with the implausibility of the platonic realm of pure ideas. Not only for the sake of scientific enterprises as Kuhn (2016) have shown, but for the sake of human practices whatsoever. The fact that objectivity could be explicitly recognized as dynamic should help to refine justifying vocabularies that still have to open up. Thus, what is important from an objective definition is the link we must (normatively speaking) elaborate between responsibility, moral practices and it. Perhaps this is the true objective vocabulary, one that should be prioritized and maintain over all the others.

[32] Wittgenstein (1969) has described this process in a metaphoric way: he understands objective vocabularies as a sort of mythology. He says, "The propositions describing this world-picture might be part of a kind of mythology. And their role is like that of rules of a game; and the game can be learned purely practically, without learning any explicit rules. It might be imagined that some propositions, of the form of empirical propositions, were hardened and functioned as channels for such empirical propositions as were not hardened but fluid; and that this relation altered with time, in that fluid propositions hardened, and hard ones became fluid. The mythology may change back into a state of flux, river-bed of thoughts may shift. But I distinguish between movement of the waters on the river-bed and the shift of the itself; though there is not a sharp division of the one from other" (§§ 95-97).

3.3. Committing to causes

§19. A dynamic conception of objectivity implies a dynamic conception of causality. This can be supported by the mud presented in figure 1. The VP-relation that is sufficient for modal vocabulary to describe the practice of giving and asking for reasons can be elaborated with the PV necessary relation of such practice to deploy empirical (and so, objective) vocabulary, to a lx relation where objective vocabulary can describe some parts of modality. That is, empirical vocabulary (that is closer to norms) enclosed by the objective practice (in the form of observational sentences that Sellars described as a part of the world view) can describe some relevant aspect of the modal vocabulary (the talk of possibilities): causality and entailment.

Therefore, causality is both communal and dynamic. Wittgenstein's (1969) idea of the fluidity of objective practices goes down, precisely, this way (cf. Note 10). Such notion, 'anticipating' Sellars' world view, described this objective weave as an 'image of the world', where a particular description of a causal connection serves as evidence for a certainty. In a way that's akin to quine (1953), the sense of the whole view is to be evaluated only systematically, that is, in virtue of the whole argumentation system (Wittgenstein, 1969, §105). But causal expressions have a special role within the argumentation system: they are not merely collateral expressions that may serve as premises, but they are fundamental in the sense that they make explicit a commitment to inferential licenses or rules about the objective vocabulary.

That means the lx relation that causality establishes with modality has the outcome of constituting inferential rules for the objective vocabulary; i.e., what follows from what in an objective justification. At this point, it should be clear that the content of this regularity is only possible in virtue of basic cognitive practices of perceiving similarly the world (agents perceiving agents without minds). And the main argument of the previous chapter was that action has priority in any cognitive practice whatsoever. If that argument was on the right track, then causal expressions have sense only in virtue of the relevant actions and practices they allow.

This conclusion seems counterintuitive, especially against the backdrop of traditional philosophy: how can action as the realm of the voluntary determine or shape the objective realm? The question, so stated, misses the point. For the objective and the voluntary are not substantial realms but vocabularies describing actions and practices. There might be things in the world, but they are not things in themselves. Instead, they serve as tools perceived to determine or act upon the world (of action). As far as that conclusion goes, it amounts to what Sellars (cf. Sicha, 2005) understood as *pure pragmatics*.

To clarify this pure pragmatic stance, and as in other stages of this argumentation, an appellation to the Kantian thought serves my purpose[33]:

> *Practical* is everything that it is possible through freedom. But if the conditions to exercise our power of choice [Willkür] are empirical, then reason can have in this exercise non but a regulative use and can serve only to bring about the unity of empirical laws. […] consequently, reason can here supply non but *pragmatic* laws of free conduct that is aimed at attaining the purposes commended to us by our senses, and hence can supply no laws that are pure, i.e., determined completely a priori. By contrast, pure practical laws, the purpose of which is given completely a priori by reason and which command not in an empirically condition but in an absolute way would be products of pure reason (*KrV* B828).

He claims the latter rules to be, then, moral rules. And what it should be extracted is not that morality is the foundation of causality. Rather, using the expressions we have been using so far, causality is a matter of commitment, of responsibility; the ultimate expression of which are moral laws. That's why the 'unity of empirical laws' regarding the conditions of 'our empirical power of choice' should be understood as practical, although not yet moral. For something to be moral in a Kantian sense, it has to be considered only in regard of freedom, hence, unconditioned by any empirical matter. In the description that has been presented here, morality is a matter, not of effective acts, but commitments to it. Thus, the relation between causality and evaluative norms

[33] This is not to say that Kant understood himself as a pure pragmatist. It's not even to say that he would accept this description of action as it is proposed here. It only means that, broadly read, Kantian thought might be coherent in some respects to this proposal.

could be stated as follows: causal laws are one limit of the spectrum where bodily behavior is not allowed, whereas moral laws are at the other extreme, determining what are the limits of our responsibility on our actions. They are, at the end, two extremes of reasonable commitment. In a sense, although morality could not be conditioned by the empirical, it is on some way correspondent to it. (as intending to establish a frame for conduct that should go from top down; that is, abstract maxims to basic cognitive practices). Incompatibility of moral principles applied in everyday circumstances arise by such relation between both extremes (as we will see with Barcan, 1980).

An aggregated conception of conduct, the bottommost expression of which is moral laws, is expressed by Kant and shows how relevant causal explanations are as well a matter of responsibility: by selecting and establishing a particular set of objective justifications, the rules of which we understand as causal expressions, we commit to the implications such set has for relevant action. This thought is nuanced by the modal vocabularies and its influence on the objective. They pose normative constrains as inferential licenses that are mainly hypothetical. On behalf of conduct, hypothetical imperatives are set to be bound by causes and effects; and serve as base to understand the conduct that is evaluated only in terms of pure will, which would be categorical imperatives (Kant, *KpV* 5:20). Both categorical and hypothetical are bounded by norms. The difference lies in the modal explanation: when there's pure intentionality, then the possibility of moral explanation is agency at is fullest. When no agency could be possibly involved, there's pure causality. But, as far as the commitment to the explanation lies the same, they both serve as the extreme poles of the same attributional practice: giving and asking for reasons. They mark a continuum rather than a dichotomy, where the accent marks how big is the attribution of the commitment to socially complex intentionality.

The fact that such attribution is bound by rules suffice to support the claim that both external causality and internal moral agency are a practical matter in the Kantian sense:

> Now, this principle of morality, precisely on account of the universality of the legislation that makes it the formal supreme determining basis of the will regardless of all subjective differences of the will [among individuals], is declared by reason at the same time to be a

> law for all rational beings insofar as they have a will at all, i.e., a power to determine their causality by the presentation of rules, hence insofar as they are capable of [performing] actions according to principles and consequently also according to practical a priori principles (for these alone have that necessity which reason demands for a principle) (Kant, *KpV* 5:32).

The universality of moral principles–and its relation to external causal constraints–cannot be understood unless one regards it against the backdrop of modality and communal objectivity. It stands, not as a conception of factual universality (as: 'it is always be the case that…'), but the applicability (as normative possibility: 'it should always be possible that such is the case') of judging criteria. The 'power to determine their causality by the presentation of rules' is the justifying practice that gives sense to all, and that allows the differentiation between causality and moral agency as two poles of a linguistic practice of evaluation of commitments (justifying). The link of which can be called responsibility: the acknowledgment of our actions in regard of causal and moral norms; for we are responsible both of the causal explanations we give as well as the intentional actions to which we practically commit.

A brief summary might aid to precise the argument here: 1) action is said to have priority in any human aspect whatsoever; 2) causal explanations aim at allowing or justifying certain types of action; 3) in that sense, we are responsible for our causal explanations; and 4) causal explanations are one type of normative explications: one extreme of an explanantis continuum, the other extreme of which is pure spontaneity (morality at its fullest).

§20. Now, regarding morality, there are basically two crucial aspects that should be taken into consideration: 1) how is moral reasoning to be understood against 'strategic' or 'egoist' reasoning. And 2) how a moral set of principles is to be described in order to achieve consistency. In this paragraph I would focus on the former, whilst in the following, the latter would be addressed.

The differentiation between strategic reasoning as developed within the framework of decision theory, and a communicative normative based choice has been extensively developed from both sides. Some differentiations pertain just strategic reasoning and subconscious processes or

emotions (cf. Elster, 2007). Others (as Searle, 1969) broach only through communicative practices. Habermas (1984) has attempted one particular description of the both, stating that they are the two elementary forms of action. Following his reading, heath (2001) has extended, elaborated and precised the discussion. None of them, however, deals with cognitive practices, modal vocabularies and normative commitments. Therefore, another descriptive way would be attempted, one closer to the argumentation that has been developed so far.

The description starts with the 'lazy predictive brain'–as it is called by Clark (2016, p. 243 and ff.)–. Lazy, for its constant attempt of minimizing free energy. In everyday terms, the outcome is a brain that maintains itself in 'automatic pilot'. That is, it uses all the information it has and uses the minimum of processes when prediction error is sufficiently low. In that picture, attention occurs when a novel situational information stream exceeds the generated model and so, the brain has to come up with a new one, minimizing once again prediction error. In such framework, strategic reasoning could be understood as the practical expression of the model. But it is deeply misleading, and for that, the term itself is hugely problematic: how can an agent discriminate between the 'automatic pilot' and full attention mode? And the problem aggravates when realizing that neurochemical levels in the brain affect the magnitude and relevance of the switch.

The regular approach to the matter made by strategical thinkers (one that its highly marked by sociological and physiological influences) seems to require a 'ceteris paribus' on the possible scenarios that could represent such 'way of thinking', giving the whole idea of decision theory, although appealing, a high grade of artificiality. This is evidenced by the close range of experiments, where there's a significant amount of variation and restrictions to the verification of the model. In this sense, one could agree with Elster (2007) by saying that is highly implausible to find a law of gravitation for the social sciences. But that doesn't necessarily mean that there is no relevance on trying to describe what we do 'strategically'. What the ceteris paribus clause shows is that the way choice is understood is not pertinent. Remember here that there is a deep connection between the probabilistic informational data constructed by Markov blankets and socially constructed norms. Then, what was understood as strategic reasoning must be understood not as one form of action but the basic ability that one must have in order to deploy more socially complex behavior (exhibited in rule-obeying behavior).

One might lose the matrixes, but the notion of game still holds. And perhaps full behavioral prediction wouldn't be possible, but the evaluation of the responsibility about a behavior would be more relevant than ever. This broader notion of game would lose its ballasts and be more broadly applicable. As an example, games wouldn't be reduced to confrontation of two agents but cooperation within multilevels, multiple goals and simultaneous plays. At the end, relevance would be regarded in terms of evaluation of skillfulness (as apt commitment to hold as true or make true) and not of how well the model predicted behavior.

This broadening of games highlights, as well, the most important part of every human action implication: rule obeying behavior. Then, the difference is not between strategic or norm-based reasoning but between causal evaluation and moral constraints in an important Kantian sense. Therefore, the line between describing and evaluating behavior loses its grip when realizing that describing a behavior is evaluating it against a communal set of rules (even if that community is a scientific one). The social relevance moves, thereof, from behaviorism to practices of justifying. And justifications can only take place within a particular image of the world (Wittgenstein, 1969, §§95, 192 and 204). Then, what is left is the understanding that in the beginning was the deed (Wittgenstein, 1969, §402; cf. Williams, 2007); and that there are no strategic or norm-based action but causal or moral evaluations possible of actions (therefore, the adscription of responsibility for them). Hence, even though behavior can be evaluated in a person's behavior in 'isolation' no evaluation has subjective value; that is, every behavior (even 'purely individualistic') has sense only in social terms. Then, it follows that

> All socialization is moral socialization, because all social interaction is governed by norms that function as deontic constraints. This means that acquiring the competences required to manage routine social interactions amounts to acquiring the dispositions and personality structures that we understand to be the essential elements of moral agency. Thus, morality is not optional for us, simply because socialization is not optional for us. Socialization involves acquisition of a set of core human competencies that no one would ever choose to do without. Since many of these competencies are constitutive of our capacity for rational

> thought and critical self-examination, there is something incoherent about the very idea of choosing not to be moral (heath, 2001, p. 8).

I think heath (2001) misses an important point that would be developed in the next paragraph following Barcan (1980): that morality deals with set of principles and thereof arises what seems as a two-order description. That's why it is important to read 'normative' when he types 'moral'. For the difference must be maintained between the different types of commitment one could endorse. But the point is rather compelling as it is stated. And more than a justification of morality, what the quote presents is a particular definition of the normativity of our actions; mainly a pragmatic one. And if it is so, it must be communal and fluid. Therein, morality is not about exhaustiveness but of pertinence towards a set of principles that establishes the conditions of possibilities for the evaluation of rule obeying behavior regarding a persons' voluntary actions. Moral reasoning, then is the explicit outcome of an evidenced behavior as a rule that is correspondent and coherent with the prioritized set of normative principles that the community holds as binding.

§21. Being moral reasoning the evaluation of a complex set of principles, deeply entrenched in social and political action, there's the question whether one of them can suffice to a whole community. This question could be understood either in terms of comprehensiveness or consistency. If one were to argument in favor of comprehensiveness, the whole point of the communal dynamic description of objectivity would be lost and plurality would be relegated for the logical comprehensiveness of a moral set of principles. Comprehensiveness and plural political theories do not go well together as it is indirectly shown by Pogge (2012). So, I would argue in favor of consistency, which involves applicability of principles rather than exhaustion of them. Herein, the dynamicity of word views and images of the world is preserved while giving them some logical coherence.

Following Barcan (1980), a set of rules would be defined as consistent

> If there is some possible world in which they are all obeyable in all circumstances in that world. (note that I have said "obeyable" rather than "obeyed" for I want to allow for the

> partition of cases where a rule-governed action fails to be done between those cases where the failure is a personal failure of the agent-an imperfect will in Kant's terms-and those cases where "external" circumstances prevent the agent from meeting conflicting obligation (p. 128).

As it has been argued, modality is a crucial component in moral principles. Barcan points there to another approach to describe its participation. As was described, this modality is deeply related to normative vocabulary and rule obeying behavior. And the differentiation she makes accords with the evaluative component of the vocabularies: that's why 'obeyable' is preferred to 'obeyed', for it must serve as a rule to be evaluated and not simply a description that is made; the latter would amount to a substantial universality of a sort that is incompatible with the pragmatist approach that it has been developed so far. It would be added, nonetheless, that this application pertains to a relevant counterfactual range where both moral and material inferences stand. The relevance of this precision lies in Barcan's insistence in separating a real level where moral dilemmas arise, and a normative level, where principles are coherent, thus there must be no dilemmas at all.

Barcan's normative level can guide action in a logical necessary way, that is, a moral set of principles is applicable in all cases whatsoever. This is precisely what makes it consistent. But in practice, such moral sets only serve to guide action, and it's application might not be as smooth. What are, then, the sufficient conditions for the set is a question that should be answered regarding action: "presumably, moral principles have some ground; we adopt principles when we have reasons to believe that they serve to guide us in right action" (Barcan, 1980, p. 130)

Therefore, Barcan is arguing in favor of a two-level analysis: the reality of moral dilemmas and the consistency of a normative set of principles. The idea is that this helps to maintain the pragmatic relevance of dilemmas as "to be taken into account in the future conduct of our lives. If we are to avoid dilemmas we must be motivated to do so" (Barcan, 1980, p. 131). What she's trying to rescue is the material relevance of dilemmas and the material implausibility of the 'one principle' solutions which leads logically to a paradox. 'one principle' solutions amount to the idea that there is a governing order in which moral principles should be established. As a proper example, Rawls' (1999) lexical order instantiates a proper 'one principle solution'. Kant's

categorical imperative can be seen–very plausibly at least– as another form of such (cf. Barcan, 1980, p. 125). A way to save Kant's imperative is to understand it as that special rule about rules about rules. That is, the categorical imperative can be understood not pertaining conduct directly but the constitution of set of principles. Thus, what it should restrict is any set of principles that could not be universally applicable, in which someone is not treated as an end, and so on.

The possibility of that meta-status of the imperative is important to understand juridical personality; a matter on which I would return later on. But it is also relevant to understand judgement's applicability on such sets. That is, if there were no stand point into which one could compare two set of principles, there would be no reason to prioritize one over the other. This is not to say that universality is to be achieved but that it should be remained at least possible. If not, there would be no point in trying to solve dilemmas that arise from different, even incompatible world views.

From that priority, Barcan's account can be redescribed, not as standing on reality but on evaluation and justification. The outcome is still coherent with Barcan's aim, as

> The analysis of consistency and dilemmas advanced in this paper suggests a second-order principle which relates 'ought' and 'can' and which provides a plausible gloss of the Kantian principle "act so that thou canst will thy maxim to become a universal law of nature" (p. 134).

Thence, consistency is to be understood as the possibility of such becoming universal. Her words are wise when recognizing that what fails for such achieving of universality is precisely the contingencies of this world (Barcan, 1980, p. 135); the causal limitations to our conducts that normatively constrain our moral responsibility. But if one remembers the cruciality of the question 'what may I hope?' (Kant, *KrV* B823), the normative aspect of hope articulates the contingencies of this world and the domain of human action. It is through the lens of hope that the imperative can become a norm for set of principles that could assure plurality and dynamicity but maintaining the possibility of universality. And morality could be regarded as the pertinent adscription of responsibility about the binging about of voluntary state of affairs.

To close this chapter, I would like to end with a short recapitulation. Moving from probabilities to possibilities aids in the understanding of the relevance of basic cognitive processes in more elaborated communitarian modal reasoning. Such relevance was extended in the form of a mud that placed justification as a crucial part, supporting every practice in the ability to give and ask for reasons. Both of them, served to explain causality and agency as two extremes of one normative continuum rather than a dichotomy; both in a dynamic and aggregated process that allowed more pluralism. This helped to understand that morality, being the capacity of according to norms of personal conduct, have to do with the responsibility for the voluntary bringing about of desired states of affairs. At the end, a new way to understand the categorical imperative was left open regarding such dynamicity and pragmatic thrust. And with that shall this investigation continue.

4. Determining the domain of political action

Starting from where last chapter ended, the relation between moral responsibility and political action is foremost addressed. First, by presenting it alongside a Kantian conception of right (§22), specially the one of *the metaphysics of morals* (*MS*). This is done with the help of two expert readers of Kant: Bernd Ludwig (2015) and Thomas Pogge (2012). Additional complements to those readings are proposed with Sellars (1949) in order to nuance a more pragmatic conception of Kant's practical insights–where the relevant notion to such addition is the notion of rule. Thereof, a pragmatic conception of the categorial imperative is presented (§23) so that it could be articulated with basic cognitive practices and modal second-order evaluations.

This addition takes Kant's discussion into a linguistic background where communitarian practices are fundamental. Thence, the dynamics of those practices are described in §24 as the practical background that Rawls finds fundamental in his moral constructivism (and, he believes, shares with Kant) that helps to constitute, validate and justify particular political arrangements. §25 reconstructs the idea of impartiality that is fundamental in Rawls definition of background and the justifying practices it involves (in his case, especially for the reflexive equilibrium, to achieve justice).

The second section of this fourth chapter broadens the notion of background justice to three different justificatory practices. Broadening that is supported by the idea that there's more to it than simply expecting justice (as in the purely recipient-oriented approaches) (§26). The first of those three is authority. To define it, a classic Weberian conception was analyzed and described anew to fit into the pragmatic framework that has being elaborated (§27). Then, being closely related to authority, legitimacy is presented as the second practice along the lines of Williams' (2007) definition of it (§28), that is, as a linguistic practice of sense making. The convenience of his proposal is that it's already permeated by a 'cognitive' conception of authority, hence the simplicity in the articulation of it with the ideas presented in the second chapter of the present work.

Last, but not least, is Rawls own conception (§29). His idea of justice is still maintained as the distribution of primary objective social goods, but the implications this idea has are different from his institutional, purely recipient-oriented presentation. Here, claims of justice pertain to a rational evaluation of the second-order type in Barcan's modal conception. Therefore, the evaluation of justice is presented as more complex than the other two; being it closer to rationality (as opposed to authority–which is closer to 'pure action'). The idea that there should always remain some parts of such practices untouched and the appearance they have on electoral events, along the former claim of their standing in certain point on an action-rationality spectrum, represent some further commentaries to those justificatory practices that are consigned in §30. The last paragraph, §31, summarizes the idea of three justifying practices that are analytically relevant to determine the domain of political action.

4.1. Morality and political action.

§22. The discussion in the previous chapter ended up in a conception of morality as a practical stance of responsibility adscription of one's actions under a communally established set of normative principles. The question that comes right away is "where does political action stand?". To answer it, it would be important to address one of the best articulations of a political and a moral theory within a practical framework; i.e. That of Kant, specially, the ideas developed in the *metaphysics of morals* (*MS*). It is in that particular work where a mature Kant deployed at best some of his political ideas, so the presentation of them could be of great help as it would pave the way for the argument. While doing so, it will be shown that–contrary to what is commonly believed–Kant's ideas developed and changed throughout his work (cf. Ludwig, 2015). The best instance of which is the articulation of the morality and political practice in relation to its epistemological (here, we would be after what can be addressed as cognitive) character. But even under the same work (i.e. MS), the readings of how Kant understood such relation vary substantially. Some concise elements are the most pertinent, and to extract them, it would be best to regard, alongside Kant's own text, two very rigorous readers and their insights of it.

A) the first one, whom I have barely mentioned in the past chapter, is Thomas Pogge (2012). He understands MS as presenting a *freestanding conception* of political action. And he does so by

presenting a description of it that implies the possibility of Kant's broader system (but, more importantly perhaps, not the other way around, cf. Pogge, 2012, p. 135). The outcome is the idea that Kant's political conception does not presuppose his moral theory nor his transcendental idealism. It should be rightly stated though that Pogge explicitly declares that Kant himself holds that his moral theory *must* presuppose his political one. But he aims to show that operatively speaking, this could not be the case.

To do so, he proceeds by, first, presenting the division that Kant establishes between two different types of personality: moral and 'juridical'. Moral personality pertains actions performed only in regard to (transcendental) freedom. Juridical personality pertains actions in their external aspect; as conforming to an imperative whether or not this is thought to be a duty. There are two ways to understand the relation between both types: juridical personality can be a reflexive or a complementary aspect of moral personality; that is, either juridical is the same moral personality but regarded in others or juridical is that which is not moral personality. This 'ambiguity' is supported by the specific definition that is presented in MS:

> A person is a subject whose actions can be imputed to him. *Moral* personality is therefore nothing other than the freedom of a rational being under moral laws (whereas psychological personality is merely the capacity for being conscious of one's identity in different conditions of one's existence). From this it follows that a person is subject to no other laws than those he gives to himself (either alone or at least along with others) (Kant, MS 8:223).

There's no explicit allusion in the passage of a juridical personality. Kant expresses a broad notion of what a person *must be taken to be* (externally) and a definition of what a moral person *is supposed to do* (internally). He then opposes such definition to that of a psychological personality: a subject who's capable of basic responses, and thus, subject to the attribution of the basic level of consciousness. Then, where is the definition of juridical personality to be found? Pogge (2012) suggests that a previous passage might be of help (MS 8:214). There Kant describes moral laws as opposed to natural laws (i.e. Those which are given by pure theoretical reason); and their external aspect, he calls juridical. So juridical personality can be thus described as a moral person taken

from an external point of view; favoring the reflexive reading of norms that allow for the evaluation of rule obeying behavior as responsibility adscription.

This is of great importance because, for Kant, any political action whatsoever has to do in respect of a particular duty: whether permitted or restricted by it, a political action is an action performed under a particular set of rules which are said to institute a civil constitution (a political state in Kant's terms). The permission or restriction for one's behavior is then is based upon the notion of duty, ultimately defined as "that action to which someone is bound" (MS 8:222) and is thus "the matter of obligation" (MS 8:222)[34]. Correspondingly, "obligation is the necessity [nothwendigkeit] of a free action under a categorical imperative of reason" (MS 8:222).

Note that the order of the concepts is as follow: freedom, obligation, duty, person, imputation, right. This is of great importance because it helps to understand that Kant departs from practical instances, from events where agents are capable of performing deeds, or political/moral actions. But there's more to it, as Pogge (2012) would like to show: the sequence of Kant's argument is elaborated as to help us understand what an agent must do in order to be taken as a subject of right; i.e. As a person, as one of us. Therefore, the author focuses on the repercussions of what can be called the 'coordination problem': how can persons coordinate their external uses of freedom. Such a task is way easier and more urgent that hoping for their having internal freedom (the evaluation of their moral personality)[35].

From that perspective, Pogge's reading of the definition of right seems rather obviously consequent: "*recht* is a property of a world of persons capable of obstructing one another's actions– or capable of constraining one another's external freedom" (Pogge, 2012, p. 139). And he continues to say that right "is instantiated in such world if and only if this world is so structured that the external freedom of persons is, in accordance with a universal law, constrained in such a way that each person's constrained external freedom is secure" (Pogge, 2012, p. 139); not being, nonetheless, clear enough (as he is, for example, in Pogge, 1988), about such universal law.

[34] It is important to note the reflexivity of the conception of duty and right. Rights can be said to make sense as duties one has towards others.
[35] Although both have a deep and important relation on Kant's systematic view

Because what is at stake is not a particular law but an instance of a particular configuration of right as a coherent system of law. Thus, what must be universal (in the weaker sense as he calls it) is the possibility of the instance of a system of law, a particular political arrangement.

What's left in his reading is to present a fine tuning of right, for he sees that Kant misses one point: it is not just solving a coordination problem, but which solution is to be preferred (as in 'why is democracy preferable over a dictatorship')[36]. So, Pogge's reading can be summed up as an attempt to present MS (specially, the doctrine of right, rechtslehre or RL) as a practical guide on why and how a civil constitution must be reasonably instantiated.

B) from another perspective, Bernd Ludwig (2015) offers an approach based on the imputation itself rather than the communal output of engaging in 'recht' (i.e. An instantiation of a particular system of law). There, the categorical imperative (ci) is presupposed as the sole rule on which one could stand in order to impute a deed whatsoever. But the whole description starts, not by the imperative itself but from the, yet here unexplained, first concept of the dictionary of the *philosophia practica universalis* (MS 8:221-229): freedom.

In MS, the concept of freedom continues as the only transcendental principle which practically shows its positive reality. Hence, from it, unconditional practical laws arise, giving birth to what morality is. But acting upon unconditional laws should be understood from a double perspective: first, I should stand from a first person's perspective and 'recognize' whether I'm acting in accordance to a moral law, and ultimately, upon a system of laws which is *logically*[37] compatible with ci[38]. Second, I should stand from a second person stance, where I might treat another as acting in accordance to and ultimately compatible with ci.

[36] That, he understands as a problem about rigid and generative rules; problem that might be well addressed in a pragmatic-modal fashion. But more on that later.
[37] In the previous chapter, logical consistency of a set of principles was addressed. Although Barcan differed, I think CI can be regarded as an operative tool to achieve logical consistency in a political set of principles.
[38] Pogge (2012) makes, nonetheless, a significant point: CI is only but one particular instance of a universal law to regulate external freedom (cf. pp. 141-142). This is why he claims that CI is not that important in CI, and as far as I could see, this is a solid point. I thank professor Antonio Davila for pointing out to me this important precision.

These two-stance practical actions give rise to two different aspects of freedom: a negative conception which could only understand others as if they were acting under unconditional practical laws. And a positive conception which pertains my own actions, so that I could judge my own acts, were they performed or not regarding ci. As Ludwig (2015) correctly emphasizes, both the negative and the positive aspect of freedom are not two different kinds but two different ways to talk about "*one and the same kind* of freedom" (p. 27).

There is no theoretical way to know for certain whether someone is acting according to ci. The only way is through a practical use of reason. And such reason is tied with the realm of choice (Willkür) one has while acting. Then, the purest practical way of understanding an action as a deed (that is, as compelled by an obligation according to Kant's dictionary) is through a practical examination of the causal events. That's why *absolute spontaneity* is so important in the whole system (Ludwig, 2015, p. 30). Freedom thusly described can be understood as the practical attribution of (moral) responsibility; the capacity of leading a causal chain to a stop in an agent that is taken as capable of an intended act (in relation to means and ends).

Although not completely Ludwig's, I think that way of describing Kant's MS is not just coherent but deeply enriching as well. And the conclusion that Ludwig (2015) presents supports my insight:

> There is no Kantian sympathy for the devil(s)[39], to be sure. But since we do not know whether in fact there are (Kantian) devils in human disguise among us, and if there are, *who* they are, every human government is obliged to treat every rational animal, that is all humans, *as though* they are *persons*, having *duties* and thus *rights*, that is, to treat them according to the universal principle of right–at least as long as they claim to be free (p. 44).

Uncertainty in the other's capabilities of moral constrains in theory could only be surpassed by a practical stance of treating them *as if* they would have them. So, ci is needed as an attributional license to lessen uncertainty of other's behavior. In the terms that have been developed, prediction error is thus minimize in a causal chain thanks to the possibility of imputation. And through the

[39] In ZeF (8:366), Kant explicitly argues in favor of the idea that if there were a nation of devils, if they were capable of understanding, they too would prefer to abandon state of nature towards a state of right.

normative range of modal conterfactuals, what is to be attributed to the person as his responsibility must correspond to what normatively occurs (what can we commit to in the causal and moral explanations of some state of affairs).

There is still one aspect I would like to endorse before departing from Kant's MS. And it arises from someone's claim of having freedom. I have said above that the negative aspect of freedom is determined by a second person stance. But, as the majority of the philosophical tradition does, why couldn't it be understood as a third person? This, although seemingly trivial, is of great importance. Assuming a third person stance means to give reports: to speak in third person means to tell someone what someone else is doing. But judging means not simply describing someone's behavior but subsuming it to a norm as a rule; to its correspondence or incompatibility with it. What the second person emphasizes is a practical stance of keeping score of someone's commitments (obligations as duties) and entitlements (as licenses of right). Although not explicitly stated, Kant's ideas are deeply coherent with the deontic scorekeeping that Brandom (1994) has developed and that has been used here to understand socially complex practices of giving and asking for reasons.

Seen in the light of the double perspective structure of the deontic scorekeeping practice, both proposals (Page's and Ludwig's) are not quite opposite because their aim and scope are different. As a matter of fact, both could stand together in a pragmatic description[40]: Pogge's proposal of the fine-tuning might be seen as the attributional perspective; as the communitarian construction of the relevant set of rules that institute a practice. Such construction could only go through a I-thou practice of giving and asking for reasons based on the attribution of certain intentional stance, hence, conscience. The grade of conscience achieved can define the personality: a full, socially complex attribution of consciousness (in terms of obvert intentionality under communitarian norms as moral laws).

This integration of the proposals might lose all fine-grained discussions, but it will show how Kant's theory could cope with both immoral humans as well as internal conception of freedom and the categorical imperative. This is to be supported by the idea that autonomy is more than an

[40] What is not to say, evidently, that the authors would maintain such interpretation of their readings.

educational value but a necessary political practice. (thus, defining civil constitution of a community and giving sense to recht)[41].

§23. The obvert, communitarian problem of selecting one instance of right that was described by Pogge (2012) as a necessary fine-tuning of Kant's political proposal was presented as a problem of selecting between different set of rules than could be both rigid and generative. This distinction of rules is one of the many: constitutive vs. Strategic rules (von Neumann & Morgenstern), regulative vs. Constitutive (Searle 1969), rule vs. norm (Brandom, 1994), rule vs. Interpretation of a rule (Wittgenstein, 2009), etc. Each with its particular nuance, they all try to show different practical aspects of our endorsement of practical commitments that is to be evaluated by a fellow citizen (in the case of political action).

To clarify the matter, I follow one of the best descriptions of a rule; i.e. That of Sellars (LRB). He departs, not from two different roles of rules but from what a rule actually is: an obvert behavior. As in Kant, Sellars understands that a rule couldn't be something one has in mind but something one has to prove in a practical stance; thereof his idea that "a rule is lived, not described" (p. 134). This differentiation makes explicit the role of the theory in respect of practice. What the description of a rule makes explicit, in terms of an ought, is a practical commitment to bring about some desired state of affairs. To see this more closely, let us recall a passage of MS:

> An imperative is a rule the representation of which *makes* necessary an action that is subjectively contingent and thus represents the subject as one that must be *constrained* (necessitated) to conform with the rule [the norm, in the language used here]. […] the ground of the possibility of categorical imperatives [!] Is this: that they refer to no other property of choice [Willkür] (by which some purpose can be ascribed to it) than simply to its *freedom* (MS 8:222).

As I would like to read it, this passage states that the ought of any imperative whatsoever presents what should be achieved necessarily by an agent for her to be considered as a person, that is, as

[41] It should be remarked that, according to Pogge (2012), CI should not be taken as so important in MS. I thank professor Antonio Davila for pointing this to me. Cf. note 38 above.

someone capable of imputation[42]. The fact that the realm of choice (Willkür) is mentioned emphasizes that it is not a causal description of some sort of events, but the intentional description of someone's behavior that gives a moral (unconditional practical) law sense, and, hence, determining the ought to be imputed. Thus, what Kant is saying is not that only the agent who always act in such manner is a person in the relevant moral sense (in the form of responsibility), but that a moral law should be the explicit norm into which obvert *rule obeying behavior* of agents should be evaluated were they to be considered persons (defining an important differentiation between rule-lived evaluated and explicit normative stances).

Therefore, ci is a rule of rules in terms of a practical guide to correctly evaluate some agent's conduct in terms of its morality. Hereof, Kant's insistence on the importance of the imperative is not to be seen as a false imagination of a theoretical man who sees humans as angels, but the thoughtful conception of a man that knows human flaws and who thinks that has found a practical guide to augment humans' capacity for perfecting ourselves.

Then, should ci be understood as a special type of rule; whether constitutive, rigid or as a norm? As Ludwig has proposed, ci helps to lessen uncertainty in others behavior. Also, it has to do not just with a specific law but the consistency of the whole system of laws. But it doesn't say anything, as Pogge (2012) had rightly pointed out, about which system should we choose. Then, something more has to be said apart from the insight that rules are lived and the ought to help to evaluate their obligatoriness.

The thing is that ci, as it has been described, only presents tools to make consistent a single set of principles. Therefore, it cannot do with communal practices and interrelations between different levels and frames of practices. This is so because there is no single set of principles to be maintained in the political action realm: I think of the local government which might be incompatible with a nation policy which can be incompatible with a cosmopolitan duty. This requirement deepens Pogge's question to not just which instantiation to choose but, if we were to

[42] Different from many traditional interpretations of Kant, Morality, at this passage of MS is not directly subsumed to rationality. Rather, it stands on its own. Singer's (1993, pp. 318 and ff.) critique stands on the former conception while holding a position that is similar to what is maintained here. It differs on the utilitarian approach of the practical stance of Singer. Nonetheless, it serves as a nice contrasting position.

come to different instantiations, how could we make them compatible, and if not, how should we prioritize one over the other? This is one of the main issues with cosmopolitan duties as far as I could see because any prioritization seems as an arbitrary election. Thence, reasons should be given to support such election. But again, what counts as a reason depends on communitarian practices.

The universality[43] and unconditionality of ci is, precisely, a requisite that is posed in order to avoid relativism. But it seems that being reasonability a communitarian practice, there is no way out. I think, as Kant would, that there is some universal sense in which we can call everyone rational. A special type of practice that serves as a base to practically attribute reasonability. This practice is, as it has been said previously, giving and asking for reasons. Although seemingly straightforward, this sort of obvert rational behavior involves more than simply asking questions. Thus, in order to understand how such practice can be deployed regarding the apt prioritization of the instances of civil constitution, the whole apparatus of the previous chapters have to be used here.

The basic cognitive practices that allow us to deploy actions in a world of causes (thus allowing absolute spontaneity) are based on a predictive processing activity of the brain that aims at the voluntary bringing about desire state of affairs and the relevant expectations and preferences when it exceeds our will. To do so, the brain relies on the different ques it has learn from its current environment and past experiences. Take, for example, this paragraph of *on certainty*:

> If I say, "*we assume* that the earth has existed for many years past" (or something similar), then of course it sounds strange that we should *assume* such a thing. But in the entire system of our language-games it belongs to the foundations. The assumption, one might say, forms the basis of action, and therefore, naturally, of thought (Wittgenstein, 1969, §411).

Assumptions, there, are what we have called predictions. Note that the fact we use them to act in the world as well as to speak about it is presented as the process of 'translating' probabilities into

[43] For a contrasting view of the importance of universality for morality, cf. Singer (1993)

possibilities through a Markov blanket of blankets. Then, it seems *necessary* that if I were to speak about archeology, I should *count* on the earth existing many years before me.

And so, modality goes, both in the natural causal chains that we speak of in order to understand worldly causes and in the realm of freedom, as Kant would call the intentional description of the socially complex practices we engage in. The necessity of a free action–that ends up as an obligation–is the human imprint of a tool for prediction minimization. Such a tool is then, ci, in the Kantian system. But expectations form not just from what we understand that we ought to do, but also from what we perceive. Thus, logical modality is formed by some rules that live in behavior plus the counterfactually robust material inferences we extract from the incompatibilities between 'ought' and 'is'.

As Barcan (1980) pointed out, this is precisely the core aspect of normative evaluation of principles. It involves both an ideal representation of all the commitments made explicit as formal rules of conduct that one is supposed to follow, and a level of practical application of them where simultaneity and aggregation might generate material incompatibilities of the formal principles. It should be borne in mind that material incompatibilities of formal principles only arise regarding socially complex practices of intentional (thus conscious) behavior. Hence, they come out in respect of incompatibilities in the voluntary bringing about of different desired states of affairs. That is simply the coordination problem of external freedom.

Seemed from a new perspective, such problem is now posed in terms of a constructive I-thou linguistic practice: a whole community is not needed in order to resolve a problem between two intentional agents. What is still needed though is a communitarian background. The coordination problem is, in this light, not a single time problem: it arises whenever there is incompatibility of two persons' intentions. The solution of which depends on a communitarian background[44] that is in turn dynamically shaped by their engaging. How can such a dynamic process be described?

[44] Such background is determined by the evaluative norms into which responsibility for rule obeying behavior can be attributed.

§24. First things first, the communitarian background definition is duly required. This concept is borrowed from Rawls (1980) and although similar in spirit, it has different implications. The concept is defined as a coherence constrain and follows from the *veil of ignorance*. The latter is the mental experiment Rawls proposes in order to achieve impartiality and fairness in the election of the two principles of justice and its rules of priority (Rawls, 1999, pp. 266-267). Although important, what the two principles are or how they are to be achieved of applied is something that can be obviated here (for that, cf. Rawls, 1999). Now, Rawls' (1980) definition of *background justice* is developed in articulation with the notion of the veil of ignorance as it is shown in the following passage:

> For this stipulation [the coherence with the veil of ignorance] requires the parties to assess alternative conceptions as providing first principles of what we may call *background justice*: it is only if the basic structure satisfies the requirements of background justice that a society treats its members as equal moral persons. Otherwise, its fundamental regulative arrangements do not answer to principles its citizens would adopt when fairly represented solely as such persons (p. 529).

The basic structure represents the institutions that operatively assure the accomplishment of the principles of justice[45]. Thus, what background justice represents are *practices of justice* where persons become moral by exercising two particular powers (which define morality). Leaving the discussion of the two moral powers that Rawls understands as the definition of moral personality[46]

[45] This definition is unfairly short and leaves out some important aspects of the concept for the Theory of Justice that Rawls is defending. Thusly putted might generate a circular argument that it's not so in practice: one should remember here the distance and difference between what things should be and how they are and work.

[46] There is an important difference between the definition of moral personality that Kant gives in RL and the definition Rawls (1980) proposes. Kantian moral persons are those subjects to which imputations of willful acts can be made. On the other hand, Rawls proposes two capacities as the powers which characterize moral personality: "the capacity for an effective sense of justice, that is, to understand, to apply and to act from (and not merely in accordance with) the principles of justice" (p. 525); and "the capacity to form, to revise, and rationally to pursue a conception of the good" (p. 525). These capacities are accompanied by "highest-order interests" (p. 525) as the regulative motivation for them to be fulfilled. Now, Rawls' moral personality is somewhat a reflection of what he understood as the CI. But in Rawls description, it seems not so much as operative but regulative-normative. This is a huge difference because it leads his definition to formal-material discrepancies. In other words, while Kant is presenting the conditions of possibility for a political-moral imputation of personality and thus the adscription of duties and rights, Rawls is presenting a series of descriptors of how a person should behave is she to be considered moral. As will be developed later, this shows the liability of Rawls' theory to a purely recipient-oriented perspective that falls shorts on dealing with aggregated political problems (cf. Pogge, 2004a). This comparative could be further elaborated but that would be left to some other occasion.

aside, *justice practices as background* are said to describe every day actions that serve as the base of the aggregated communitarian principles of justice. This poses a socially-aggregated problem: now, the issue is not so much whether there are formal vs. Material incompatibilities between two persons' commitments. It is about the operative vs. Normative incompatibility of their accordance and the institutions that must assure the coordination of their actions. The outcome is a constructivism of political institutions that I correlate to basic I-thou practices as described by social pragmatism (cf. Brandom, 1994):

> When citizens invoke these principles they speak as members of a political community and appeal to its shared point of view either in their own behalf or in that of others. Thus, the essential agreement in judgements of justice arises not from the recognition of a prior and independent moral order, but from everyone's affirmation of the same authoritative social perspective (Rawls, 1980, p. 571).

The authoritative social perspective takes instance in the shared norms that constitute the possibility of the evaluation. It is relevant to remember that such normativity aspect involves both causality and moral responsibility, all articulated by a modal range. Also, it is easy to be misled by the "essence" of such agreement. Compare Rawls' affirmation to that of Wittgenstein (1969) when he's describing argumentation:

> All testing, all confirmation and disconfirmation of a hypothesis takes place already within a system. And this system is not a more or less arbitrary and doubtful point of departure for all our arguments: no, it belongs to the essence of what we call an argument. The system is not so much the point of departure, as the element in which arguments have their life (§105).

As it is seen clearly in the passage, Wittgenstein is not so much worried about political principles. He rather focuses on the verification of empiric assertions. But once moved from probabilities to possibilities is easy to understand that Wittgenstein is describing, not *scientific* argumentation, but how argumentation could be said to take place in any practice whatsoever. The hypothesis might be that a subject must be capable of imputation and that would make the issue a judgment of justice.

Then, the essence of what both Rawls and Wittgenstein understand as a core of a practice is the same definition of a rule that was given with Sellars: a living rule in conduct. Thence, the insistence of Wittgenstein of the life of the arguments. The living essence of the background justice could be, therefore, nothing more than a linguistic practice of explicit evaluation of the conduct of an apt political agent; where the communitarian practices determine at each point how could aptness must be taken[47]. Such relevance of the community might lead to highly relative instantiations where a community couldn't be taken as erroneous. This insight is partly right, for objectivity is a communitarian matter as it is exemplified by Rawls himself (1980, p. 570). But it does not follow that the community could be in error for the only way to judge it would require a different set of practices and thus a different communitarian background. Such relativist indeterminacy is not so much a challenge but the condition of possibility of the perfectibility of our practices. The focus should then be on what we are moving towards, as which linguistic practices are been taken as relevant or apt. And that's the closest we might get to the impartiality that Rawls intends with his veil of ignorance.

From what has been said, it could be argued that Rawls idea does not hold within this new framework. This is so because it is difficult to maintain the impartiality that he had in mind (which he calls the original position). Instead, of his description, I propose such impartiality to be understood as the mere capacity of basic cognitive practices that give rise to a person capable of giving and asking for reason–which corresponds the Kantian '*as if*' that Ludwig finds as the fundamental aspect of his rechtslehre. Such non-Rawlsian conception still maintains the public importance of the theory that is deployed: "citizens affirm their existing institutions in part because they reasonably believe them to satisfy their public and effective conception of justice" (Rawls, 1980, p. 536). Publicity, as the acknowledgement of everyone's own aptness as a linguistic subject is the only source where cognitive impartiality can be abducted.

[47] Political virtues as the correspondence of moral actions can be easily contrasted with epistemic virtues as the correspondence of perceptions. This has great implications as the continuum between perceiving and acting can be described smoother. Such enterprise would need not to focus in cognition but on epistemology (which might share similarities but couldn't be taken as the same) and that would require much more space than is here allowed. The best and easiest way to do so is through the description of Sosa (2011) of epistemic virtues, system which is highly compatible with Brandom's (1994), as I have suggested elsewhere (Ruiz, 2016, chp. 3).

§25. The fact that impartiality arises from partial perceptions relates to the idea that the communitarian background is dynamically shaped in the engagement of apt subjects in political practical instances. Starting from the base of cognition, interaction between rational agents–i.e. What we do when ascribing responsibility judgements of political adequacy–we engage, as we saw with Quadt (2017) in replicative or complementary interactions. These interactions help to 'be in one another's shoes' as the operative ci would demand. This type of sympathetic behavior is supported by the interoceptive sensations we achieve when replicating the other's gestures when we speak with her (cf. Clark, 2016). This leads to a better prediction of what she might do next thus allowing complementary action; all part of the repertoire of the know-how the ratchet effect has put on us, thus allowing for a better understanding of each other. The interactive inferences we engage in end up in the socially complex practice of giving and asking for reasons only when we fully understand (are able to predict) the actions of others as replicating or complementing one's own. Thence such complex, socially mediated practice of giving and asking for reasons allow political judgements on relevant actions: political actions. Note that in order to avoid a circular definition a negative (externally attributed, allowing absolute spontaneity) conception of freedom is logically and practically necessary.

All these basic elements form an overlapped manifold of Markov blankets structuring politically relevant linguistic practices. The resulting multilayered structure makes the blanket metaphor really misleading. Some layers may not fit to well; some others might end up merging into the same. The metaphor won't do because we are not dealing with solid things that change shapes. We are dealing with human practices, events that take place and end. The closest analogy can be achieved through music. An atomic (single) event might be seen as a sole instrument that must play a particular song. If the song is recognized, the player played aptly. The overlapping of many instruments performing the same song might form a beautiful orchestrated song. There might be many instances of the same song and each of them could be different in many ways. The most important of which is the interpretation itself. Maybe the rules of the interpretation change (in the light of new compositions; variations if one might follow on the musical metaphor); maybe the song to be played changes entirely.

Such as a music presentation is dynamic in the reception and interaction of players, instruments and listeners (even the environmental acoustics of the place); political practices are the same in the sense that they take place in a rule-regulated ambiance where someone judges the aptness of the performing. Obviously, political practices are way more complex but retain the law-abindingness and interaction of the pure practice of music. The relevant outcome of such concurrence of elements is that each instance might be evaluated as more or less apt depending on what is taken to be an apt musical presentation of the desired song; apt political coordination of the relevant agents for the common bringing about of a particular state of affairs.

The desire of a community to achieve some state of affairs is constructed by the different individually desired states for their relevant external (attributed) freedom. Thus, the dynamic interaction (synchronic and anachronic[48]) of politically relevant agents (apt members of a community that could intervene in the bringing about of such state) define both the role they assume which must be evaluated by other members.

Ambiguously, Wittgenstein (1969) defines such dynamics of a community's linguistic practice regarding set of reasons as the bed of a river. What is relevant is the different commitments that each person maintains in respect of her own representation or assumption of the set. Then, the correctness and evaluation shape and modify the pertinent and acceptable commitments throughout time. This is profoundly relevant because what counts as reasonable may change and transform objectivity itself. Therein, objectivity is no longer an apodictic status of an affirmation but an appropriate assimilation of state of affairs. That is why cognitive aspects are so relevant in the social-aggregated structures of rationality and reasonability.

Therefore, impartiality melts with objectivity in a communal aggregation of reasons given and asked: those which don't collide with the image of the world a whole community holds as binding may count as objective and impartial. Wittgenstein describe it as follows:

[48] That means both interpersonal (different people at the same time) and intrapersonal (the same person throughout his lifetime), and in respect of the future generations.

> But I did not get my picture of the world by satisfying myself of its correctness; nor do I have it because I am satisfied of its correctness. No: it is the inherited background against which I distinguish between true and false.
>
> The propositions describing this world-picture might be part of a kind of mythology. And their role is like that of rules of a game; and the game can be learned purely practically, without learning any explicit rules.
>
> It might be imagined that some propositions, of the form of empirical propositions, were hardened and functioned as channels for such empirical propositions as were not hardened but fluid; and that this relation altered with time, in that fluid propositions hardened, and hard ones became fluid.
>
> The mythology may change back into a state of flux, river-bed of thoughts may shift. But I distinguish between movement of the waters on the river-bed and the shift of the itself; though there is not a sharp division of the one from other (Wittgenstein, 1969, §§94-97).

There, freedom is the acceptance of the other's evaluation of one's behavior under a particular, dynamic set of normative reasons. The practical background that allow such evaluation is aggregated from I-thou instances to civil constitutions forming vertical and horizontal interactions of different levels of political relevance[49].

To sum up, impartiality comes out of the reflexive evaluation of socially-mediated cognitive practices of particular instances: political practices. This reflexive evaluation is akin to Rawls idea that there should exist a reflexive equilibrium in the agents' conceptions of justice. This reflexivity is seen here not as a requisite but a natural consequence of an apt instance of a practice–one where the norms (moral and juridical laws) are aptly followed. And it is reflexivity as well the reason of the dynamical aspect of impartiality: communally construed and socially aggregated in a manifold of overlapping political practices.

[49] This might be one of the most important parts of the current debates on global justice issues and cosmopolitan duties, as they involve discrepancies between different levels and commitments through the aggregation of commitments. As an example, human rights might be seen as a commitment a country has signed, but in a particular municipality, there is no relevant practice that would support them in a practical commitment. Also, it could happen (horizontally) that two countries do not accord on how the application of human rights be exerted in a territory.

4.2. Three justifying practices for the domain of political action.

§26. The impartial, dynamic background that was elaborated earlier won't go really far if it sticks to the idea that only claims of justices are relevant for linguistic political practices. Pogge's (2004a) critique of the purely recipient oriented (pro) theory of justice that Rawls defends supports such insight. The idea is that focusing on the recipients of justice is not enough; the structural arrangement that allows the distributions of justice should be taken into serious consideration as well. This amounts to say that a realistic theory of justice should concern both with the iudicanda and the iudicandum of the matter. In simpler terms, a pro proposal would focus exclusively in the one-way conception of justice from institutions to relevant parties; not foreseeing the questionable interaction between different institutional arrangements.

Is not the idea of background justice some form of response to a pro, such that the constructivism saves institutions from discrepancies? Pogge's idea is that it is precisely not much a background but an instantiation, a particular configuration that has to be evaluated in the light of a moral perspective. Thus, what Rawls presents as a mere support of a recipient-oriented theory, Pogge criticizes as a dangerous assumption that doesn't allow the theory to be fully realized. Here, I find crucial the perspective of linguistic practices that neither Rawls nor Pogge engage in: a linguistic background presents not only the tool to make formal institutions coherent with effective practices but the abilities to evaluate and modify them. That's why a such background is dynamic and aggregated. And from the double perspective, comes the transition from morality to political action. The linguistic evaluation is the key to understand that a morally acceptable behavior is the counterpart of an apt political action. And the aggregation of different levels of double-perspective practices helps to understand the different participations in broader political institutions (along with the possibility of their being incompatible).

As already mentioned, and in some respects similar, Pogge's (2004a) critique could be expanded in terms of linguistic practices, which are fundamental for Rawls' entire system[50].

[50] As early as TJ, Rawls constantly references Searle's (1969) theory of speech acts (cf. p. 49, n.2; p. 303, n. 9; §62, pp. 355-358). In Rawls (1980), the definition of objectivity has clear influences of Davidson's (2001). And the definition of public reason that he gives in Rawls (2001a) stands on judgments of justice and reasonability in terms of linguistic aptness.

Regarding authority, the dynamic background could be understood first as a linguistic practice of basic rule obeying behavior. I have presented before the canonical example that Davidson (2001, pp. 117 and ff.) Uses to describe the learning of a child to point at a table. His approach is a sort of behaviorism where stimulus-response actions take place. Further than this, I think the most important part of the mind experiment that Davidson presents is the idea that linguistic practices are supported by an assumption of correctness. In the latter case, the child simply takes the grownups as *teaching* him; that is, introducing him to a particular practice. Once he has dominated such practice, the child can evaluate the pertinence of it. Wittgenstein (1969) explains such learning in terms of belief-forming:

> The child learns by believing the adult. Doubt comes after belief.
> I learned an enormous amount and accepted it on human authority, and then I found some things confirmed or disconfirmed by my own experience.
> In general, I take as true what is found in text-books, of geography for example. Why? I say: all these facts have been confirmed a hundred times over. But how do I know that? What is my evidence for it? I have a world-picture. Is it true or false? Above all it is the substratum of all my enquiring and asserting. The propositions describing it are not all equally subject to testing (§§160-162).

The political consequences of this is the difficulty to question the pertinence of an authority. We are not taught how to construct authority from other practices. Instead, the teaching of a practice is supported in an already existing authority. Thus, the conclusion "the difficulty is to realize the groundlessness of our believing" (Wittgenstein, 1966, §166) translates into political practices as the groundlessness of our accepting of an authority.

As opposed to a pure fear-oriented description–a Hobbesian way–the groundlessness can be understood as an error minimizing devise in terms of basic cognitive practices[51]. Believing in an authority helps to coordinate different activities, so the ratchet effect has already spared us the trouble of taking authoritative figures. So, if there's a proper understanding of the police force as

[51] Somewhat related, Williams' (2007) understanding of Weberian '*Entzauberung*' of authority is akin to this description.

an authority, citizens won't need to concern about their property being stolen or damaged. This minimizing translates as a modal necessity that is assumed as obvious by Rawls' and Pogge's proposals; the truth being that in reality, there are sometimes discrepancies between what people take as an authority and what is formally declared as one–and even worst, when different effective levels of authority are incoherent.

This mere presentation of the influence of linguistic practices would be better contrasted to classical ideas of the definition of both authority and legitimacy (the latter not being addressed so far). I think this serves as a nice way of regarding the malleability of linguistic to fit into already clear descriptions of political practices. The first one, then, to be presented would be authority.

§27. One of the most detailed and rigorous definition of authority was given by Weber (1978) in his posthumous work *economy and society*. His organic view of the concept nuanced by domination serves as a nice comparison to which my own can be contrasted. As a starting point, I would take as right Weber's idea that authority is more suited than power in the understanding of political action. This because of two particular things: the *amorphous* nature of *power* and the idea that *domination* (here understood as authority) could only be understood as a probability. Here are the definitions that Weber makes of both power and domination:

> A. "power" (macht) is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests.
> B. "domination" (Hersch) is the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons. "discipline" is the probability that by virtue of habituation a command will receive prompt and automatic obedience in stereotyped forms, on the part of ii given group of persons (Weber, 1978, §16, p. 53).

Now, what Weber is trying to show is that individual expressions of 'obedience' are highly random and there is no proper way to systematize them. On the other hand, domination implies a structured and repeated happening of commandments structured under a normative institution. Thus, what Weber concerns with is the practice of exercising obligation and not an occurrence of a non-

repeating commandment; practice in the sense that is normative and has many recurrences. Therefore, taking into account such pragmatic interpretation of Weber's concern, a non-Weberian[52] description of such amorphousness could be elaborated:

The amorphousness of power is due to the instantaneity of its binding; that is, power is an expression, and instance of a sort of domination. In the pragmatic terms developed above, power is the instance of a rule, the applied interpretation of a norm in a given behavior. Given the norm α, when a person s_1 applies it as a rule a, she enters into a linguistic practice of giving and asking for reasons for his doing of a. The correctness in the form of deviation from α to a corresponds to the amorphousness Weber concerns of. It is easier to evaluate a rule under the communal norm than the correspondent expressions.

Returning to Weber's own conceptions, it is worth noting that, of the two different types of domination, authority would be of greater importance[53]. Such is defined as "power to command and duty to obey" (Weber, 1978, p. 943). Further on, the author adds that "the latter kind of domination rests upon alleged absolute duty to obey, regardless of personal motives or interests" (Weber, 1979, p. 943). It follows from both excerpts that if authority is defined in terms of power, then it should be understood as the recurrent instances of particular practices of power. In other words, it is in virtue of the particular and repeated instances of power application (which corresponds as duties in the passive role of whom needs to obey certain command) that authority takes place. Therefore, authority could, in fact, be understood as the institutional practice of exercising power legitimately and to obey the legitimate.

The last clause added is the answer to the question 'whose power to command and which duties to obey'. The argumentation that Weber presents is led, then, to the intricate relation between authority and legitimacy that concludes in his regarding of three basic types of legitimacy: charisma, tradition and legality (rationality). This differentiation, although burdened with historical ties, is supported on how authority is self-justified (oftentimes through the ultimate use of physical force). In Weber's words:

[52] Hereon, non-Weberian must be understood as not entirely according to the whole system that Weber presents.
[53] The other one being domination by constellation of interests (Weber, 1978, p. 943).

> Indeed, the continued exercise of every domination (in our technical sense of the word) always has the strongest need of self-justification through appealing to the principles of its legitimation. Of such ultimate principles, there are only three:
>
> The "validity" of a power of command may be expressed, first, in a system of consciously made rational rules (which may be either agreed upon or imposed from above), which meet with obedience as generally binding norms whenever such obedience is claimed by him whom the rule designates. In that case every single bearer of powers of command is legitimated by that system of rational norms, and his power is legitimate insofar as it corresponds with the norm. Obedience is thus given to the norms rather than to the person (Weber, 1979, p. 954).

The other two types of validation[54], which are personal authority (tradition) and charisma (cf. Weber, 1979, p. 954) are not of great importance and could be easily explained away by linguistic practices. But the former is highly close to the operative conception of the Kantian ci, where the abidingness of moral (personal) behavior and the obvert political evaluation is dependent on particular (practically dynamic) set of rules. Therefore, my interest will rest solely on rational validation.

The explanation of Weber's concept of authority (domination) was presented as a probability. Being a type of validated authority, rational legality necessitates the probabilistic fulfilling deployed by basic cognitive practices. Thereof, Markov blankets could be elaborated into modal sets of principles which in turn fulfill rule obeying behavior to be evaluated under a linguistic practice of giving and asking for reasons under the operative form of the ci. Hence, authority is nothing but the pure political form of error-minimizing of the other's behavior. Rationality, as the socially complex practice of predicting intentions and the possibility of the other's freedom is the milestone of modern states insofar as physical use of force could be theoretically obviated.

[54] All three form the 'pure' types of domination which could have taken place in history simultaneously and combined (cf. Weber, 1978, p. 954).

The gap between the normative and the factual could be then understood as closed by the use of force. Kantian perfectibility, which should be practiced through the application of ci, must be complemented by the establishment of a Weberian administrative staff which upholds the monopoly of physical force thusly constituting the definition of contemporary state:

> A "ruling organization" will be called "political" insofar as its existence and order is continuously safeguarded within a given *territorial* area by the threat and application of physical force on the part of the administrative staff. A compulsory political organization with continuous operations (politischer Anstaltsbetrieb) will be called a "state" insofar as its administrative staff successfully upholds the claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force in the enforcement of its order. Social action, especially organized action, will be spoken of as "politically oriented" if it aims at exerting influence on the government of a political organization; especially at the appropriation, expropriation, redistribution or allocation of the powers of government (Weber, 1978, p. 54).

The institutional character of the latter excerpt could be contrasted with both Barcan's description of moral set of principles and complemented by Rawls' reflexive equilibrium in the coherence of the institutional arrangements. First, Barcan's (1980) identification of two different realms–the moral and the factual–express the idea that we are guided by consistent set of norms that could lead, in reality, to paradoxes that have to be surpassed in virtue of priority decisions on the application of the principles as rule obeying behavior. On a political perspective, the law is consistent in a formal aspect, but there are in fact some cases where its application might collide. This would require legitimacy and authority (political second-order principles, alike those for which Barcan would argue in the case of morality) to solve and decide for the priority of their application (which in turn would be double-perspectively evaluated by communitarian claims of justice). What is of importance then in the comparison between Barcan and Weber is the idea that something is needed in reality that helps to surpass possible paradoxes of principles-laws–along the idea that moral responsibility corresponds individually to social practices attributed and evaluated externally.

As a brief example that might aid as clarification, one could regard Barcan's (cf. 1980, p. 131) discussion on abortion: a person should decide between different principles she holds that might, in fact, be of importance at the same time; i.e., preserve her own life or preserve the life of another being. At the same time, this paradox has a political correspondent. The law should apply in such case as providing priority (second order) commands. But in cases where the legal situation is not really clear (as when the abortion is from a violation), there should be an authority or an appeal to legitimacy to aid to clarify which law should or shouldn't apply (that might be a judge of the constitutional court).

Second, Rawls' idea that there exists a reflexive equilibrium between practices and institutional arrangements is complemented by the idea that the deviance from them could be rectified by authorized uses of legal mechanisms (in some cases, the use of force). Thus, the relevant modification of political institutions is the political character of action. There, Rawls would argue, justice claims take place–thus his constructive approach. In turn, Weber would maintain that it is the self-justifying actions of the administrative staff that would concede validity to the authority. This complement would allow not only reflexive equilibrium but mechanisms as well. When authority is not being just, modifications might take place. Where there is no equilibrium between practices and institutions, authority could rectify.

To conclude, rest it to say that the Weberian approach to authority is of great importance to understand political action. But it falls short when delimiting the proper difference between legitimacy and authority. The idea that authority is legitimate in virtue of validity feels vague. Also, its organic presentation leads to inconveniences when authority is not based on an administrative staff but on practices of certitude, as it happens with Nagel's (1995) claim that some personal rights–such as human rights–are self-evident (at least in some parts of the world). This, being a rational behavior, falls neither on charisma nor tradition. A complement that would lead to a clear political background would precise, herein, the non-Weberian pragmatic conception of authority in articulation with a proper pragmatic legitimacy description.

§28. Weber's idea that legitimacy depends on validation could be contrasted to Bernard Williams' (2007) understanding of legitimacy. I would like to present the argument of the latter analytically

and, after each item, proceed to reformulate and expand it in the pragmatic terms that has been developed here[55], so that, at the end, a complement of the Weberian authority could be elaborated. Therefore, three concepts would be of great importance to the development of Williams' argument: 1) the first political question; 2) the basic legitimation demand; and 3) the 'make sense' category.

1) he follows Hobbes (1965) on thinking that the first and most important problem of political action is "the securing of order, protection, safety, trust, and the conditions of cooperation" (Williams, 2007, p. 3); hence, all possible arrangement of institutions that solve such question are *necessarily* legitimate[56]. The emphasis on the modal expression is used by Williams himself to denote his distance from Hobbes. The latter asserts that solving the first political question is both necessary and sufficient for the legitimacy of an arrangement; whereas the former believes it to be a mistake. This is so because adding it as a sufficient condition oversees the possibility of *different types of arrangement fulfilling such condition* (Williams, 2007, p. 3).

1') note that the use of modal vocabulary is perfectly in line with the developments of the previous chapter. So presented, legitimacy could be understood as the collective counterfactual background that is filled by prediction possibilities. The negative counterpart of which translates in everyday life experiences as not being able to predict if I am unsecure in certain street or if my private property could be damaged during a protest. The failing of a prediction is simply the sign of contrafactual instances that are modally questionable, thus changing the whole status of a state of affairs to illegitimate, hence driving one's will to act as to rectify or change the situation towards the establishment of a proper state of affairs. In such terms, legitimacy seems as a validation, but not from a self-evaluated arrangement, but from each I-thou encounter and even each individual subject analyzing causal chains of objective instances (in relation to security, cooperation and so forth).

[55] It is more than fair to say that Williams' argument is pragmatic. But the way it is formulated misses a lot of the modal and cognitive background that was here developed. Nonetheless it wouldn't need a lot of modifications for it is highly compatible with what I am proposing.

[56] Williams is playing a mind experiment of how a legitimate State could be elaborated. I am not so much interested in the origins of a State rather that the uses and applications of such legitimacy achieving processes.

Although seemingly simple, the different levels into which security and cooperation might arise make the situation really complex: it is radically different, both from the evaluation of relevant actors and the proceedings each state of affairs might require when the situation is an unsecure street in a rather safe city as opposed to the tension between two big countries. They both could be presented as security problems, but the magnitudes differ greatly; as do the relevant actions. Furthermore, there might be different levels where simultaneous problems of insecurity might arise; and even incompatible instances (as when the security of an area could be the threat of another bigger level).

The evaluation of legitimacy is not to be understood then as a matter of basic checking of a state of affairs in various discrete periods. To the contrary, the evaluation of legitimacy follows the same path as every other linguistic practice: it is double-perspective, always dynamically changing and socially aggregating and constantly being corrected in terms of a rule-based aptness. Brandom (1994) uses the concept of entitlement as a basic counterpart of such deontic status. In a linguistic practice, someone is entitled to certain claim if the collateral commitments, circumstances and consequences of the assertion are right; that is, if the claim is evaluated as valid. Then, the evaluation of legitimacy departs from the same evaluation of basic entitlements and gets aggregated into the different institutional levels that are relevant for the political arrangements we have today.

If there's a constant evaluation of each possible instance of legitimacy, then the institutional arrangement could be demanded for legitimacy at any moment of breach. Thence, Williams proposes his second mayor concept.

2) the basic legitimation demand is the claim for an acceptable solution to the first political question. Not every instance could be described as a basic legitimation demand nor an acceptable solution: "it has to be something in the mode of justifying explanation or legitimation" (Williams, 2007, p. 5). He presents then one simple condition that could be regarded as a demand of justification:

> A coerces b and claims that b would be wrong to fight back: resents it, forbids it, rallies others to oppose it as wrong, and so on. By doing this, A claims that his actions transcend the conditions of warfare, and this gives rise to a demand for justification of what A does. When a is the state, these claims constitute its claim of authority over b. So, we have a sense in which the BLD [basic legitimation demand] itself requires a legitimation to be given to every subject (Williams, 2007, p. 6)

2') that the constructive linguistic practices that give background to the different political institutions (arrangements, basic structures, etc.) Require justifications for legitimacy is the idea that relevant action–moral in personality, political in evaluation–requires practical justification under modality principles supported by cognitive practices through the practice of giving and asking for reasons.

Almost every political configuration follows the same path: the correspondence between institutional arrangements and particular practices could be correspondent and internally evaluated whether one is concerned about a tyranny as in the case of liberal democracies. The difference lies not in the basic practices of giving and asking for reasons but on what the relevant practitioners (apt and skillful, within their particular determined roles in the practices) take or treat as a reason for something else.

Now, in the case of liberal democracies, the most important aspect of political reasoning is its closeness with juridical principles that minimize error while evaluating the behavior of others. Thus, different political instances or arrangements could be evaluated in the level of refined objectivity that the constitution has achieved. A medieval monarch could act at his will, thus allowing large indetermination for his servants. But in a modern democracy, presidents and prime ministers can be evaluated towards the light of international human rights.

If legitimacy is understood as a manifold of evaluations through different levels, then its justification could take place at more than one level as well. Therefore, the evaluation of another political arrangement in terms of objectivity could be done if there are similar practices between the relevant communities. This is not to say that we are necessarily driven to a liberalist path, but

that there might be a chance for a justification of this particular arrangement to be made; and more important, there could be some changes that liberalism can learn from other political instances (as, for example, in terms of economic growth, or environmental conscience).

The understanding of the possibility of justification towards different levels has been the biggest flaw of the western political thought. Human rights might be evident under some particular background practices, but for other political arrangements, with different corresponding practices, they might not be so sound (specially under the discrepancies between what is told and what has been done in some of those places). Perhaps bigger than that is the mistake to assume that justification only rests in the diffusion of ideas. One of the biggest aims of Williams (2007) in his argumentation is to show that more that moral principles, what is needed is proper coherent action to support political argumentation and the feasibility of a more pluralistic world.

That's why actions make sense and are not simply right or wrong, good or bad. Focusing on the *living rules*, Williams is trying to show that more than theories, the justification of the legitimacy of, say, human rights, need human-rights like action.

3) the category 'make sense' is first expressed as an interpretation category that might aid to evaluate different instances where some authoritative actions made sense. But in respect of one's own culture, community or world view, the category can be used as normative

> Because what (most) MS [make sense] to us is a structure of authority which we think we should accept. We do not have to say that these previous societies were wrong about all these things, though we may indeed think, in the light of our *entzaubert* [cognitively distanced] state, that some of what MS to them does not MS to us because we take it to be false, in a sense that represents a cognitive advance—a claim which carries its own responsibilities, in the form of a theory of error, something which pm [political moralism] in its current forms has spectacularly tended to lack (Williams, 2007, p. 11).

For Williams (2007), to make sense is a practical thing of everyday life: "much of the time, in ordinary life, we do not discuss whether our concepts MS, though, of particular ones, we may.

Mostly, the fact that we use these concepts is what shows us that they MS" (p. 11). Thence, political argumentation should follow Goethe's advice through Faust: in the beginning was the deed (cf. Williams, 2007, p. 14).

3') this category is stunningly close to the notions developed with Wittgenstein (1969) of the fluidity of our conceptions and Sellars (1954) of the world picture or view. It follows the reversed constructing path that Rawls proposed. Where Rawls was concerned about institutions that cohered with his background, Williams is looking at the basic actions that constitute the background itself to go on and justify political arrangements.

What the category is about is how any political subject could be said to take a political stance. The pragmatic core of which is the practical rule-following behavior that lives in the justification of our political practices. Thus, what Williams is trying to show is that we make explicit in our political argumentation what is already implicit in our political action.

I think there's a flaw, nonetheless, in Williams argument. And it is his conception of moral thought of Kant. There, he argues that Kant's mistake was to give too much relevance to ethical guiding for the relevant political instances. But that is the classical reading mistake many assume while thinking of Kant. As was presented above, ci could be understood (I would like to say *must* under the argumentation that has been developed so far) as a practical way of living. In the light of the present category, Kant's ci is nothing but a complexly and rationally refined version of how to guide proper actions that make sense under a universal (in terms of global) political constitution. Kant is not concerning how anyone must act in order to be virtuous, he is concerned on how we should choose our actions that accord to a universal political configuration; thus, aiming for the desired objectivity and universality that liberal western tradition has. And while doing so, as Pogge (2004a) wanted to show, he presented one of the best liberal conceptions that could aid to achieve the pluralistic society Williams was looking for.

§29. The discussion of legitimacy and authority started because of the insight that not only justice determine the background for the domain of political action, with which some preferred institutional arrangements could be construct or cohered with, thus aiming for reflexive

equilibrium between practices and environmental instances more beneficial for the desired outcomes. Having broached the other two, now its justice's turn.

It should be no surprise that the conception addressed here goes along Rawls' conception of justice as fairness, as it was one of the most important milestones for political philosophy of the past century. The publishing of *a theory of justice* (Rawls, 1999) put the concept in the focus of almost every political discussion almost until the end of the century. One might even say that the works in global justice that are so relevant nowadays were deeply influenced by Rawls' domestic conception. The outcome of such importance is a theory that has been heavily criticized and reformulated both by Rawls himself and others. Then, the pressure of another formulation might lead to either unnecessary repeating of what Rawls have already addressed, or to, nowadays, familiar critiques. The latter borne in mind, a Rawlsian (that is, a merely Rawls-related) conception of justice is to be presented here.

But before playing with Rawls conception, a duly summary of some of the relevant ideas of Rawls about justice as fairness. The most straightforward definition is supported by the idea "of society as a fair system of social cooperation over time from one generation to the next" (Rawls, 2001b, p. 5; cf. 1999, p. 4). Thence, justice as fairness is to be understood as the operative instantiation of impartial institutions that assure the accessibility of any relevant individual to objective primary social goods[57]. An operative instance of fairness involves the fulfilling of a coherence triangle[58] between the original position and two principles of justice, the basic structure and the considered convictions.

The original position is defined as a mind experiment where parties could select with a minimum of relevant information (as allowed by a veil of ignorance), the relevant principles for selecting a particular institutional arrangement to assure objective primary social goods. Two principles, the second of which has two 'parts', and such that they must have lexicographic ordering are said to satisfy the original position' requirements.

[57] What those goods are, is something that I would not address. (For that cf. Rawls, 1980, p. 526; 1999, §15; 1996, V, §§3-4.)
[58] I take the idea of a coherence triangle from a presentation that Pogge gave at the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, in Medellin, Colombia, in March 2018.

Such mind experiment must cohere with a basic structure; that is, "the way in which the major social institutions distribute fundamental rights and duties and determine the division of advantages from social cooperation" (Rawls, 1999, p. 6), where the major institutions are "the political constitution and the principal economic and social arrangements" (Rawls, 1999, p. 6). It is very important to note that the basic structure is the primary subject of justice (hence the assimilation of Rawls' system as institutional).

At the same time, both aspects must cohere with the considered convictions of a society. The idea is that every society involves in practices that constitute comprehensive views of the world. A well-ordered society, specially a democratic and pluralistic society, needs an overlapping of such comprehensive views in order to achieve objective and substantial conceptions of justice (cf. Rawls, 1980, p. 570; 2001a, pp. 140-141). From such family of justice conceptions emerge an institutionally applicable, freestanding, and background-correspondent political[59] conception of justice (cf. Rawls, 1996, I, §2).

As far as it goes, Rawls' theory couldn't be comprised in the last paragraphs. But those are some of the most important arguments of the deeply revised and transformed political view of Rawls. And, instead of endorsing it at large, I would like to stick to some aspects that are akin to the proposal I have been developing while pointing out some modifications to it (that, could be said, do not represent Rawls' thought anymore).

I think the best of Rawls' proposal could be presented in terms of his idea of public reason. Constituting democracy's possible description, the concept understands consensual practices where not one, but many possible instances of justice could be taken into account to undergo the creation of plural political arrangements. Rawls favors his own view because he believes in its pertinence and convenience more than its apodictic truth. He then proceeds to define three key aspects of such conceptions of justice which are evaluated and transmitted through the use of

[59] The idea that the conception of justice should be political and not exclusively moral is an idea that was developed after *A Theory of Justice*. It could be found both in Rawls (1996), as in Rawls (2001b).

public reason (cf. Rawls, 2001a, p. 141)[60]; which are deeply connected to his purely orient-recipient approach and his institutional perspective.

This insistence on both the recipient approach and the institutional perspective leads–in a critique that might be familiar to that of Sen (2009)–to some discrepancies in the theory. Doesn't the overlapping consensus collide with the idea of the veil of ignorance? How can correspondence be assured between action and institutions? When are we to use the original position when growing into a society? Justice as impartiality is still a sound way to define a relevant aspect of political action, but the whole system that Rawls presents doesn't go well with the idea of a constructivist pragmatic approach. Closely regard, this should seem deeply concerning because Rawls himself finds his theory as constructed towards 'freestandingness' and plurality from the practices of a political culture of reasonability.

Public reason and justice as fairness could be saved by appealing to their justificatory background:

> Besides the introduction of the idea of a political conception of justice itself, we need the idea of an overlapping consensus of comprehensive, or partially comprehensive, religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines in order to formulate a more realistic conception of a well-ordered society, given the fact of pluralism of such doctrines in a liberal democracy. We also need the ideas of a public basis of justification and of public reason, as well as certain general facts of commonsense political sociology, some of which are accounted for by what I call the burdens of judgment (Rawls, 2001b, p. Xvii).

Justice as fairness stands on a practice of justification that takes place among the many justificatory practices of different comprehensive doctrines. And it should be nuanced by some further additional practices as it is shown by Rawls insistence on 'commonsense political sociology'.

[60] There are two major presentations of Rawls' idea of public reason. The first, appeared in *Political Liberalism*, was 'revisited' for the publishing of the *Law of Peoples*. I take into consideration the revisited version because it was written in a context of global necessities and deals with the discussion of domestic closeness.

These, I believe, are the cognitive and practical descriptions of authority and legitimacy that are articulated through cognitive and modal practices.

For justice, modality serves as the hinge where reasonability should move; to be reasonable is to understand possible cases that arise from the state of affairs that constitute the present case. And its justificatory practices, in a linguistic stance of giving and asking for reasons, are bounded by communitarian world views. This Sellarsian understanding of justice as fairness allows a conception that is always moving; hopefully towards more pluralistic conceptions, but not necessarily. This hope was explained at the beginning of this chapter in Kantian terms. I should hope for better institutions understanding how far my actions go in order to achieve it. This reflexive stance constitutes the possibility of the reflexive equilibrium and institutional constructivism that Rawls envisioned for his arrangement.

A reflexive stance of the sort could no longer maintain the original position nor the two principles. Instead, the operative conception of ci that has been developed here with Pogge and Ludwig could be said to take their place as the lexicographic ordering tool. The outcome is a communitarian practice that is both acknowledging the communitarian aspect of itself as a particular maxim but aiming at a fundamental universality where the other is treated as capable of acting in the same way, thus aiming for universal coherence. This universality, while regarded on the multiple levels it might have in the social aggregation spectrum, defines the political conception of the double-perspective system the practice of giving and asking for reasons has. Where a reason for justice is considered as the correct or apt treatment of another as subject of duties and rights of communally defined primary goods (which might be dynamically objective).

From the pragmatic standpoint, the question that has being answered is not ‘what is justice?’ but ‘what should be evaluated as just?’ the answer being an evaluation performed regarding ci of someone’s access to primary goods that the institutions she is supporting by her practices is in the duty to facilitate. This has a counterpart in the double-perspective for the claims of justice can be evaluated as incorrect for another player, a relevant authority or a legitim law; and even a fellow citizen or another member or her same community. Thus, the dynamic game of

justice is the evaluation-action cycle of a justificatory practice of giving and asking for reasons of justice.

From the three justification relations, justice might be the more complex because it relies heavily on rationality. Therefore, the distribution of and accessibility to primary goods are always it stake. One example that helps of this is justice claims regarding human rights and personal rights. As Nagel (1995) has pointed out, human rights are often seen as self-evident (at least in some parts of the world). But personal rights evolve and change within environmental and social advances (as for example, water necessities in times of climate change and transgender rights respectively).

§30. To understand that the basic political practices just pertain to a discussion of justice is to narrow down the whole political domain of action. This leads the theory to discrepancies when there is not so much an issue of justice but of legitimacy (as in some violent cities, some illegal groups might perform just actions that are illegal) and the same could be said in the case of authority. So, the background Rawls rightly understands as a prerequisite of proper political institutions has to be broaden to more than practices of justice.

I have proposed that three relevant justificatory practices could determine the domain of political action: justice, authority and legitimacy. Together, they represent a comprehensive (but not exhaustive) practical background that, has no other use than to help to understand better the construction of political institutions and the assurance of the individual and communal basic formal principles–which, once aggregated into social institutions are not formal anymore but political. That is, the evaluation that is performed within justification has to do not so much with an internal analysis but an external one: the evaluation of the other's behavior. Such evaluation articulates a cognitive predictive causal evaluation of the probabilities of non-voluntary outcomes with the commitment to rational categorical maxims that constitute the realm of the possible. As it was presented at the beginning of this chapter, this Kantian conception of politics is constructivist in the sense that is through the instantiations themselves, that a civil constitution can take place.

Within the limits established by the counterfactual range of normative modal constraints, these practices of justification come out as responsibility ascribing. That is, they are relevant in a

political theory of action in the sense that they coordinate three different aspects of responsibility that is basic in the arrangements of apt political institutions. Thus, the moral aspect of a personal behavior in a normative sense, has an instance in such arrangement as a political responsibility. This is the derivate responsibility that was addressed in the previous chapter: only persons could be bearers of responsibility, and only for the actions they are accountable for (as determined by the modal range). But political representation derives responsibility as to justify the failings or successes of an institution in the bringing about of a communally desired state of affairs. Henceforth, the analytic pertinence of the three coordinates to undergo the relevant political actions by determining political responsibility.

Before summarizing, I would like to say a few more words about the implications of justificatory practices.

A) first, of the three, authority is the closest to 'pure action'. This is so because the best way to justify or validate certain authority is to obey its commands. It is not necessary that the authority should be a person. One could be said to obey the constitution only by behaving under its commands. As we saw with Weber, the conception of authority is closely related to that of power. That is why most of the political literature has focused on actions regarding power relations: someone commands and someone obeys, as simple as that. But that narrow description misses the biggest picture: the legitimacy and justice of other actions and the institutions they support. Nonetheless I think the discussion about power could be easily assimilated within this framework by substituting power for authority (as described above). For this, the conception of power as a special thing, a force, an invisible hand, or any other fantastic thing should be dropped. Talking about authority just makes explicit what we do implicit in our practices of rule obeying behavior to lessen the uncertainties of a world that exceeds our will's capacities. That's all to it.

After authority, in the action-based spectrum, comes legitimacy. The validation, that should make sense, for something to be legitimate mixes both practical as well as doxastic (verbal) commitments. Related with the idea of our capacity for absolute spontaneity, the legitimacy of practices and institutions stands in the middle between action where Williams' 'first political question' can be met and the modal analysis of it being adequate for the relevant bringing about

of desired state of affairs. Modality plays here a major role in terms of the reasonability (in Rawlsian terms) of the instantiations of a political arrangement.

Lastly, closest to the rational and the verbal commitments lies the claims for justice. Justifying justice seems odd enough. The evaluations that are set about in the claims of justice are the modal rational evaluation of the distribution of primary social goods that should be objectively enjoyed by the most. The outcome of its being so close to rationality (as opposed to pure action) is that pure justice claims always involve a sort of second-order evaluation. As seen with Barcan, this second order pertains to the evaluation of principles, thus the moral character of justice in a pro[61]. Thus, almost every discussion of pure justice deals with how things should be. That is not to say that reality is left altogether. On the contrary, actual states of affair are the motive of the second-order evaluation and the nuances that can be made of the desired state of affairs don't make it less second-ordered, just more feasible[62].

B) Descartes (2012) and, later on, Wittgenstein (1969)–on a more practical fashion–pointed out that one cannot doubt without standing on something certain. Likewise, one cannot discuss about a justification of something's authority, legitimacy or justice without standing or relying on, at least one of the other. Thus, in the easiest example, the second-order evaluation of justice, whether the authority or the legitimacy stand untouched. In Rawls' (1999) case nor the legitimacy or the authority of the democratic arrangements is questioned (partly because Rawls thinks that such analysis is highly context dependent and should be covenant by the relevant parties in society).

Another, more complicated case is that of minimums. The three relevant justifications might be evaluated regarding some minimum aspects that must be maintain as opposed to others that should be modified towards the bringing about of other relevant desired state of affairs. An example of which can be the debates concerning constitutional reformations, and even establishing a new constitution, where legitimacy, authority and justice are modified in the base of some minimum accord.

[61] Note as well, that the latter insistence of Rawls (1991) in a political conception of justice that is based on political institutions represents the derivative attribution of responsibility we addressed here as complementing the moral individual perspective.
[62] One of the best examples is the realistic proposals of Pogge (cf. 2004b) in the subject of global justice.

One last type of evaluation deals with the multi-level aggregation of current societies. There, the evaluation could be in the form of an interpretation: one arrangement evaluates the relevance of the other regarding its own parameters, or through an analogy of the other's practical parameters based on its own. These conditions can be met both for horizontal analysis, as in the case of countries analyzing other countries; or between different stances, as a multi-state organization evaluating a particular ethnic group.

C) one last point I would like to address is the electoral events within the framework that has been presented. Such events are highly relevant in deliberative political arrangements as democracy. So, any pertinent theory of political action must take into consideration how electoral processes must fit into it. In the framework that has been developed, electoral events seem quite 'natural'. The only particularity is that during such events, the justification of the presented states of affairs is prospective and not factual. This allows the construction of a rather simple net of expectations and preferences that are going to be taken into consideration during the period of government. Thus, the parameters for the evaluation of governance and governability are very clear for all relevant actors.

The evaluations of those prospective state of affairs that are presented in the political campaigns are based on the same determinants as in the actual cases: every promise could be based on whether justice, authority, legitimacy or a combination. Nonetheless, the linguistic act of promise[63] deals more with intentionality and rationality, thus allowing for suiter evaluations of just situations than the other two.

§31. From what has been said, what counts as a political action? Any action that justifies certain form of authority, legitimate institution and/or just distribution can be called a political action; if not, it would only represent mere action. The use of both conjunction and disjunction in the previous definition aims at presenting the three justificatory practices as interrelated; supporting

[63] A lot can be said about the act of promising. Highly relevant, and deeply related to the framework that has been here presented; it needs a lot of space which here I lack, to be properly addressed. I encourage the reader to see the description of promise that Searle (1969) does and to find there some clues.

the Goethean insight that, at the beginning, there are only deeds. Thus, this description, if it is worth something, must aid to achieve better forms of political constitutions; better ways of living together.

To make explicit that we validate authority through practical commitments while following rules; that we justify legitimate institutions by giving and asking for reasons of their making sense to us; and that we evaluate justice by giving and asking for reasons for the prioritization of the distribution of primary objective social goods within particular institutional frameworks, is to understand that every political practice stands on a linguistic practice that is possible in virtue of some basic cognitive practices that aggregate socially into complex forms; where responsibility for the bringing about of desired state of affairs is at stake.

Towards a theory of political action, these three components might constitute the basic elements into which better scenarios can be evaluated, prioritized and persuaded. An analytic project that could only be senseful if it has at its core a pragmatic foundation. At best, what's presented here is more a toolbox than a theory; if a proper theory could be constituted is still to be analyzed. But perhaps what is presented here should remain as a toolbox, laid there for any specific analysis of a political instance that could use some coordinates to understand the dynamics of political agents.

5. Concluding remarks

Looking behind, to where the discussion has led, it seems rather an odd–maybe unnecessary– detour the extent of the first two chapters. But as if often happens, researches start from odd questions full of certainties. The odd question that arouse this work was 'how can a theory of political action be elaborated?'. And the certainties that accompanied this question were the indispensability of cognition to understand political action, and a pragmatic idea of rationality that relates to cognitive processes. I hope those certainties were well-presented in the second and third chapters. But how certain they are, is a matter of the pertinence of the outcome theory. As I see it, none of what was said in the fourth chapter could be properly told without the 'detour'. The novelty of the told tale required strong definitions, so that there would be no major misunderstandings in the concepts into which the determinants for the theory of political action were to be based. At the end, what has been done is a walk along forking paths, a nice metaphor for the analytical philosopher's work that Santamaria (2016) suggests. The only guide along the way being the clarity of the path taken (pp. 147-148).

Additional to this structural commentary, some conceptual ones. The classical connection between political theory and philosophy regarding the way the world is apprehended is through epistemology. Both classical and contemporary approaches have developed, or at least referred an epistemological approach (sometimes fully systematic, and others just some insights). Although previously considered as part of philosophy, contemporary works on how the cognitive processes intervene in social action come from psychology and neuroscience. The few works of philosophical interest have the major issue of holding on to the problematic notion of mind.

Why, then, not pursue a description within epistemology? The pragmatist framework that supports this investigation understands epistemology as the communitarian conception of reality. This conception is implicit in the practical and doxastic (verbal) commitments that skillful speakers use while giving and asking for reasons. This set of commitments could be as narrow and comprehensive as that of a tribe that has never known the world outside its isle[64]. If one asks for

[64] This is the case of a community that lives in a small island close to India called Sentinelese. They are an uncontacted tribe which is highly aggressive towards foreigners.

the basic elements that could be regarded as common between the members of such tribe and us (western educated persons), maybe only physiology could be appealed as an answer. Therefore, understanding that cognitive processes exceed the bounds of the skull, basic cognitive practices are the best 'common denominator' for a universal account of basic human apprehension. Note that I don't say universal understanding, nor knowledge. For this are epistemological concepts and are thus susceptible to communitarian contextualities.

Additional to it, there are some important disciplinary implications of the cognitive approach for the political science: a) a theory of political parties that understands the formation of expectations and preferences as the evaluation of future state of affairs could elaborate better ways to present the representation problems and solutions political parties has in an age of globalization. The crisis of representation is, in part, influenced by the speed of change of the expectations of the agents, therefore, better modes of representation could be proposed along the lines of a cognitive-rational theory of political action. B) political marketing could use the same tools to structure better strategies during electoral periods. This tendency is not novel, for the cognitive sciences are now commonly used during electoral processes under the misleading name (to say the least) of neurolinguistics programming. C) indirectly, big data and machine learning are advancing thanks to the collaborative work between cognitive scientists and informational engineers. A proper systematized theory of political action could help those new technologies to recognize faster structural flaws in markets and political arrangements. This goes alongside the creation of new social welfare indicators that stand on distributions of primary goods (in the case of justice), participation (as for legitimation) and basic liberties and personal rights (in the case of authority).

The first two are the most commonly regarded and have been articulated through a discipline that has been known as discourse analysis. Authors as van Dijk (2002), use cognitive proposals to *understand belief forming* towards the *description* of political action. I see this as a huge mistake because the outcome of such a proposal could only be a disguised form of behaviorism. Belief forming involves more than basic cognitive practices and not accounting for them in a socially complex web of linguistic practices misses all the relevant aspects of rule-based

behavior[65]. Furthermore, texts as Lau, Smith & Fiske (1991) use this behaviorist approach to systematize policy interpretation to persuade the electorate. I think it possible to use the analytic tools presented here in the same systematized researches. Thus, the systems become evaluative and not just descriptive as van Dijk's; ultimately, enhancing the interpretive capacity of the theory.

Another relevant aspect that I would like to highlight is the multi-level construction. This was presented as the possibility of incompatibilities throughout the aggregation process that might be evidenced by discrepancies of commitments. Although seems unnecessarily complex I find this to be one of the most important insights for this analytic toolbox. Normative theories tend to describe the best-case scenarios into which they might be applicable (or towards one should move from where one stands in reality). But some institutional or operative presuppositions in normative descriptions tend to assume institutional coherence even within national level. This assumption misdirects the pertinent conclusions that problems such as national (and even municipal) inequality, organized crime (both national and international), and low statehood have on the relevant political actions of the agents involved in such areas. Furthermore, it can make the relevant stances of higher levels of aggregation blind to the real structural causes of the problems. Thus, although it was presented very ambiguously, the idea of the incompatibility within levels should aim at the constant evaluation of the institutional articulation throughout all the political arrangement. Ideas such as subsidiarity of political institutions and governance of a political administration could be reinforced by such understanding of political action.

There is, then, a recurrent idea in this work from the Kantian thought. Morality is inseparable from political action. The difference is the move from a deontological approach–that is closer to formal frameworks–to a pragmatist framework, where ethical, rule-based behavior is aimed at solving actual problems (as we have seen with the discussion of incompatibilities in sets of principles with Barcan). As Kant's own, this work presents a particular form of contractualism: a rather pragmatist form of constructive consensualism. Nonetheless different from Habermasian

[65] Van Dijk actually uses Searle's (1969) theory of speech acts. Nonetheless, the result is a rather eclectic selection of diverse parts of Searle's own theory and some phenomenological proposals of cognition. Serves as an instance of such impertinence the following quote: "The study of political cognition largely deals with the mental representations people share as political actors" (van Dijk, 2002, p. 203). The impertinence of the 'mental' and the idea that there could be something called 'political cognition' vitiates the argument from the beginning.

proposals: there's no need to formulate universality as a principle, nor is there any appealing to transcendental aspects. The space of reason is determined here solely by the explicit capacities deployed by language practices. And morality follows the same path as the reasonable evaluation of other's.

Finally, the manifold of ways into which this analytic toolbox could be developed was left as breadcrumbs throughout the work. I think the more pressing are the global justice implications and the governance constructing for the political administrations. They both seem realistic as they understand the specificities and conflicts that intervene in each process and, foremost, see practices as the starting point to make relevant changes.

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