

The Ideological Slant of a Certain Sociology in France

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Indeed, those who use poverty as an explanation are largely among the ranks of those who vehemently deny that crime can be deterred.

—James Q. Wilson, *Thinking About Crime*

The temptation to establish a link between delinquency and social injustice must be challenged: the delinquent is not an activist challenging an unjust social order.

—Sébastien Roché, *La société incivile, qu'est-ce que l'insécurité?*

ABSTRACT

The failure in France of the so-called socio-historical currents in the area of criminology, i.e., refusing to explain punishable and criminal acts other than by the violence of social-historical conditions (and the experience of poverty mechanically resulting from this)—a failure that has been characterized for decades in France by the successive failures of the various “urban policies” (not to mention educational policies)—is compensated for today in the work of certain “sociologists” by a sharp desire to monopolize the new institutional posts created precisely to protect the social sciences from their grievously erroneous schemas of interpretation.

In this case, however, these “sociologists” *operate* by making *ad hominem* attacks in “scientific” articles against those who occupy these same posts and who are precisely the ones who seem to escape from the rut of the social sciences regarding the analysis of crimes and misdemeanors. The harmful effect of these *ad hominem* attacks has peaked because of their continued dominant position in universities and in research. This hegemony over the institutionalization of the social sciences thus remains the primary obstacle to a *real*, multidisciplinary knowledge of the social facts concerning crimes and misdemeanors, as we shall demonstrate here.

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For some seven years now, AERES, a review of the social sciences,² has awarded an A classification³ (the highest evaluation) to the journal *Politix*, which stamped as “scientific” an article⁴ primarily centered on a frontal *ad hominem*⁵ attack (as we shall show); an article in the form of a denunciatory “manifesto”⁶ (which was once again in a supposedly scientific debate), all serving as the *very body* of this “article” which has as its stake the following: the fact of denying to the *constitutional state* the very right to equip itself with the theoretical⁷ and practical tools for *grasping* crime (in *all* senses of the term) in order to protect the tranquility of the citizen, which is, nevertheless, *its* duty. And it is that it is also its *duty as a state* to create these tools when they do not exist.

2 Agence d'Évaluation de la Recherche et de l'Enseignement Supérieur: <http://www.aeres-evaluation.fr/>

3 See <http://ancmsp.com/Note-sur-le-classement-des-revues>.

4 Laurent Mucchielli, “Vers une criminologie d'État en France?: Institutions, acteurs et doctrines d'une nouvelle science policière,” *Politix* 23, no. 89 (2010): 195-214.

5 An *ad hominem* argument is a syllogism in which the minor premise acts as a major premise and forges the conclusion in this oscillation: A affirms proposal B. It is then a question of positing that A cannot be credible for reasons related to his or her words and acts; for example, it will be indicated at the start of play, before even studying B, that he or she belongs to the right wing, a supporter of Sarkozy and Bush, therefore what A says about B can only be false. QED. This reasoning, which often functions in everyday life when the clothes make the man (from whence comes the strength of the crooks wearing smoking jackets and driving Porsches), functions admirably in totalitarian regimes: A says B, but A is Jewish, therefore B can be only a trick to induce an error, to muddy things. It goes without saying that such a syllogism has no place in a scientific argument, nor, truly, in any kind of argument, at least in a truly free political regime.

6 “To understand the polemical background of these French discussions, which are seemingly only intellectual, it is necessary to try to objectify the network of actors that currently organizes the ‘gathering’ of research on questions of safety and justice under the direct supervision of the state, to highlight the police conception of ‘criminological’ science that animates them, and finally to analyze the work of the institutions placed under their control” (Mucchielli, “Vers une criminologie d'Etat en France,” 198); see also 198n13.

7 Thus, Laurent Mucchielli, in an “article” titled “De la criminologie comme science appliquée et des discours mythiques sur la ‘multidisciplinarité’ et ‘l’exception française’” *Champ pénal / Penal field, nouvelle revue internationale de criminologie* 7 [2010], posted February 6, 2010, <http://champpenal.revues.org/7728>) considers that “... the experts, as well as the few dozen academics (mainly lawyers and psychologists) who direct or participate in instruction (which is called criminological obviously) do not share a common paradigm, nor even a common definition of ‘criminology’;” but nothing is more sophistical than this assertion, since, for example, sociology, psychology, and philosophy are quite far from sharing a common paradigm, for example between Christian Baudelot/Roger Establet and Michel Maffesoli, Pierre Bourdieu and Raymond Boudon, Sébastien Roché and Mucchielli, etc.; yet this does not prevent these disciplines and sciences from existing and even being; even so, one may concede that the competition between true theories and false theories is untenable in the long term; with the result that, for example, “theories” such as those that Mucchielli champions will only disappear into the dustbins of History (or be entrusted to the nibbling critiques of mice, as Marx put it), at least if historical selection is not inevitably prevented from doing its work by perennializing, in a hypertelic way, theories—the function of which is to prevent access to reality, because this action would reveal their inanity and thus would call into question their now hegemonic social position in the fields of the media and *prêt-à-penser* intellectual fashion ...

However, because it is necessary to preserve the dominant idea that a criminology, in particular its multidisciplinary (which he regards as a “myth,” 2010⁸) is, or, rather, *must* be “impossible” (that is, impossible to emancipate from this socio-historical approach that reduces the individual and his motivations to a substrate dominated by political relations of force), one of their representatives, Laurent Mucchielli, decided to enter the arena under the pretense of objectifying certain political practices supposed to be sufficiently warped as to be pilloried. This is connected, as we shall see, with a new McCarthyism¹⁰ (which still has a place in 2017 ...).

The first part will highlight portions of the dossier (still in progress), and the second part will evaluate some of the work issuing from various disciplines in order to support the idea that, contrary to what this “article” would have us believe, a multidisciplinary is possible, not only for a renewed criminology, but also for the future of the social sciences, so thoroughly undermined by ideology and its ever-renewed appetite for power.

PART ONE

Let us synthesize a few salient features of this “article”¹¹ which confirm its *ad hominem* character.

First of all, Mucchielli attacks things. Thus, “the Université Paris II” is made a target for derision because “it is the ‘historic’ academic haven for the establishment of the network of authors we are studying” (205). How does the *ad hominem* aspect operate? By the fact that this university will be indicated as follows: “(usually called ‘Assas’)”; this means that, from the start of the game, the author will exploit the connotation of the name as if it were a denotation, thereby stipulating that *if* this is happening at Assas, then *this* (the establishment of a new approach to criminology, in regard to which Mucchielli also questions the demand for multidisciplinary and institutional autonomy¹²) can *only* be a strategy, not only of the right, but of the extreme right, since this faculty had a reputation, especially during the Seventies, as a bastion of certain elements engaged in various

8 Mucchielli, “De la criminologie comme science appliquée et des discours mythiques sur la ‘multidisciplinarité’ et ‘l’exception française’” (see here note 7).

9 Mucchielli, “L’impossible constitution d’une discipline criminologique en France: Cadres institutionnels, enjeux normatifs et développements de la recherche des années 1880 à nos jours,” *Criminologie* 37, no. 1 (2004). The better part of this article will be given over to Foucauldian reasoning reducing all social control to internment, and thus any deviance to rebellion, without uttering a word concerning the many studies of the psychology of motivation, differential psychology, or the sociology of action in its various Parsonian, Mertonian, Boudonian, or Baechlerian alternatives, which will be presented here in Part Two.

10 See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McCarthyism>.

11 Mucchielli, “Vers une criminologie d’État en France.”

12 See note 12.

movements of the extreme right. Mucchielli then spreads rumor, engaging in *intellectual profiling*: that is to say, “Assas” will be considered, in its entirety, as suspect.

However, this institution (along with Paris 9 Dauphine, for example) is more perceived, at least by the students who are registered there, as being one of the rare institutions whose diplomas have some purchase in a labor market dominated by the *Grandes Écoles*.

Next, having thrown suspicion on the place, Mucchielli continues by attacking the contents taught, starting with the title of the “Department for Research on Contemporary Criminal Threats (MCC)” which groups together a number of *professional* security experts, i.e., those working in the field, on which Mucchielli remarks, such as that assembled by “the Melun police academy” (who are members, let us recall, of the republican state apparatus, and not of some red or green militia ...); thus, according to Mucchielli, the presentation of the MCC would end up as follows: “*How can we detect these criminals, preventing them from doing harm? Such is the essential doctrine, and the only goal, of the MCC (emphasis mine)*” (Mucchielli’s emphasis). At this stage, there are two possibilities: either the *professional* prepares students for active life, or he teaches contents incompatible with a constitutional state, and in this case, he must not only be denounced, but judicially prosecuted before the administrative court or even the Council of State. Did Laurent Mucchielli do so? No one knows. But let us continue. Mucchielli is then astonished that the ANR (National Research Agency) can finance projects of the Université de Technologie de Troyes around the question of “global security.”¹³ Mucchielli’s astonishment is not surprising, since he belongs to a current, presided over by Didier Bigo and Laurent Bonelli,¹⁴ that considers, in Foucauldian fashion, that the states causes, either artificially or via certain conspiracies or complicities, the emergence of a “field of (in)security,” the institutionalization of which would in fact create the “terrorist” object from scratch to satisfy the sordid games of hidden powers. And Mucchielli will continue to be astonished that various projects are pursued in close cooperation with the army and police which, until proof of the opposite, are public structures at the service of the Community.

Then Mucchielli decides to take off the kid gloves, titling the part that follows: “a network of authors promoting a catastrophist vision of the world and a police conception of science, all while doing business.”¹⁵ The attack here is rude in its accusation, attaining the level of the sordid, as we shall see.

This new attack begins as follows: “Let us take as entrance point a recent article entitled ‘A New Vocation for Criminology,’ signed by three authors: Alain Bauer, Xavier Raufer, and Yves Roucaute.” Only, it turns out that while Mucchielli

13 Mucchielli, *ibid.*, 206.

14 Didier Bigo, “La mondialisation de l’(in)sécurité. Réflexions sur le champ des professionnels de la Gestion des Inquiétudes et Analytique de la Transnationalisation des Processus d’(in)-sécurisation,” *Cultures et Conflits*, no. 58 (2005): 53-100.

15 Mucchielli, *ibid.*

does indeed provide its title,¹⁶ he is not concerned with the contents of the article at all (he will summarize it hastily), but confines himself solely, and above all, to discrediting its authors, which falls well within the jurisdiction of an *ad hominem* attack. Thus, he begins with the way in which Alain Bauer presents himself: “no fewer than eight academic affiliations to mask the fact that the author—who, as we have seen, will subsequently create a ‘chair of criminology’ at the CNAM—is the leader of the National Delinquency Observatory, adviser to President Sarkozy as well as owner since 1994 of a private security company (AB Associates) that benefited considerably from the opening of a market by the Security Council among the municipalities in the second half of the 1990s.” Not a word, of course, in the attack above, on the subject, criminology, but an offensive without precedent in a review classified A on the activities of the author whereas from a strictly scientific, but also a deontological standpoint, he is very strictly unscientific to analyze thus by conflation and groundless transitivity of the type. The academic qualifications come “to mask” the fact that Alain Bauer “will subsequently create” a chair, while being the “leader” of a structure, an “adviser to President Sarkozy,” and, as the cherry on top, owner of a “private security company,” but these facts, even if they are correlated in a civil manner, have no relevance, *from the standpoint of the hypothetico-deductive method*, to the contents of the article here critiqued, concerning which one vainly awaits any revelations that would nullify its argumentative validity. But Mucchielli does not even make an effort to do so, at least not at this stage (he will indicate a few things in the beginning and in his conclusion, as we have said).

As for Xavier Raufer, Mucchielli remarks immediately in the body text and then in a note¹⁷ that he was a “former journalist and a former far-right activist of some prominence,” then that he has claimed academic qualifications when he is only a part-time lecturer, and here we have obviously entered the realm of a sordid accusation that reader X can hardly corroborate. Let us merely recall that Mucchielli relies only on political affiliations to point the finger, which is indeed McCarthyism, to say no more. Let us imagine that in an article published in a review with an A classification, someone noted, in the guise of “scientific” contents, the author’s membership of the Communist Party or the NPA [Nouveau Parti Anticapitaliste]; obviously, this would have raised a public outcry, and rightly so, since, *in a constitutional state*, nobody can be subjected to criticism for his political opinions, from the moment they are legal; this is a premeditated attack on constitutional law.

Finally, he turns to Yves Roucaute.¹⁸ Having given him the kiss of Judas (“Yves Roucaute is the only authentic university professor”), the *ad hominem* attack steamrolls on: “A former journalist ... , former member of several right-wing

16 Mucchielli, *ibid.*, 207.

17 Mucchielli, *ibid.*, 207n48.

18 *Ibid.*, 207-8.

ministerial cabinets, defender of the Iraq War in 2003 ... supporter of Nicolas Sarkozy, ... , he was appointed director of the Cahiers de la Sécurité, the journal of the Institut National des Hautes Études de la Sécurité (INHES) This review ... underwent considerable ideological change at the end of 2006, leading to the ousting of many researchers ... and to a return to an intellectual production in which current political orientations predominate and even more high-ranking police officers express themselves.” Thus, once again, we will only learn what Roucaute thinks about criminology’s new vocation by analogy, by anathema, by conflation, in short, through *ad hominem* attacks. This will imply by connotation that Roucaute’s proposition does not have to be read, that in view of his choices, it must (*sollen*) undoubtedly be Sarkozyite or Bushite, and this can be concluded without even taking the trouble to examine it, let us carefully note, since Mucchielli renders definitive judgments that are nonetheless not founded upon any discursive basis other than political denunciation *and* the implicit questioning of the republican character of the participation of police officers in the operation of the journal and the Institute.

Mucchielli thus implies that it is to the researchers of his own faith that the exclusive right to think about matters of security belongs, and not to practitioners, albeit appointed by the institutions of the Republic, by which some of its principals are legally and legitimately appointed.

Mucchielli thus manifests not only an inappropriate degree of suspicion (because it rests on no violation of the law), but even more so the idea, which he expresses in many works and articles of the same “scientific” quality, that questions of security are really the effect of a political apparatus seeking to legitimate the extension of social control in order to preserve the dominant interests.

But let us return to what counts from now on as a scientific article in the France of 2010.

In another assault, thus, Mucchielli this time attacks the INHES by speaking of its being “brought back under political control,” and he blames its director, Pierre Monzani, a prefect, who was appointed while being “questioned concerning ‘complicity in money laundering’ in 2004. As an important member of the previously mentioned ‘Droite Libre’ network, his opinions on delinquency are no less radical, since it is a matter of ‘hooligans’ who are the ‘young immigrants’ of the suburbs ...”¹⁹ Let us recall (in addition to the fact that being subject to questioning is not the same as being charged) that this attack against Pierre Monzani, again playing upon rumor and connotation, certainly comes close to slander, in particular when Mucchielli claims that Monzani lumps young immigrants in with hooligans. In the text from which Mucchielli lengthily quotes, however,²⁰ Monzani never makes this link, but only notes, it seems, that an immigration left to itself, i.e. understanding little about the rules of common life since it involves immigrants

19 Ibid., 208.

20 Ibid., 208n51.

arriving in family groups—at least when it is legal—follows its *own* rules, especially when it is not integrated, which is altogether completely normal if we understand the phenomenon on the psychological and political levels. In other words, any human being or group asserts itself by controlling its space, i.e., by extending it as far as possible (the Hobbesian principle²¹) and by trying to organize it as well as possible (the Machiavellian principle).

Mucchielli, far from engaging in these analyses, operates instead in the manner of Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, advocates of a justice without courts,²² while proceeding by conflation since in what immediately follows,²³ it is only a matter of police science, of control that would extend even to the child,²⁴ whereas it is a *duty of the state* for the public power to study behaviors likely to disturb the trust at the heart of life in common. Without, for all that, needing to root out the criminal personality from among human groups, as this author seems to fear in various “articles,” it would suffice merely to take seriously what is said by researchers in the corresponding fields (as we shall see in the second part), all without necessarily joining in the rigidity with which Mucchielli constantly agitates for the rejection of multidisciplinary and the constitution of criminology as a scientific department in its own right.

Let us return to Alain Bauer, who wants to work in exactly this direction, and whose status Mucchielli criticizes in a contradictory way. Thus, he points the finger at Bauer because he was appointed a chair of criminology at the CNAM without passing through the Caudine Forks of the CNU, whereas Mucchielli clearly states that the uniqueness of the CNAM resides precisely in the fact that the President of the Republic can establish a chair by decree.

What is wrong with that? Is it the fact that it is constituted at the CNAM? Undoubtedly so. In other words, because research would be linked to a professional, practical application, it would be suspect: there is the reality. For Laurent Mucchielli, the police force, although republican and composed of citizens who want to be trained in order to be useful within it, would nevertheless not have the *right* to equip itself with a properly scientific approach, distinct from criminal law, for example, because the multidisciplinary aspect of the discipline had in times past been too much turned, as was said, into a far too reductive approach to criminal behaviors. We are speaking of the police force of the constitutional state, an entity that *must*, as such, obey constitutional constraints—which do not make it

21 “THE RIGHT OF NATURE, which writers commonly call *jus naturale*, is the liberty each man hath, to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own nature; that is to say, of his own life; and consequently, of doing anything, which in his own judgment, and reason, he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto.” *Leviathan* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), 84.

22 Gilles Deleuze, “On Capitalism and Desire,” in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, ed. Gilles Deleuze (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2004), 267. See also Régis Debray, *I.F. suite et fin* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000), 62.

23 Mucchielli, *ibid.*, 208n51.

24 *Ibid.*, 209n57.

just any police force (and if any structure has its hypertelic variations, those must be rectified).

Here are the legal-epistemological trappings of this incriminating “article,” reiterating a *leitmotif* carried over from one article to the next, let us recall: the multidisciplinary approach being impossible, even mythical, because of the mistakes of the past, criminology would be better entrusted to sociology in general, to that of Laurent Mucchielli in particular.

In fact, Mucchielli ignores advances in psychology and contemporary scientific sociology (exemplified in France by the work of Jean Baechler, Raymond Boudon,²⁵ Alban Bouvier,²⁶ and Maurice Reuchlin) which leave the scientific episode of the beginnings of these sciences on the fringes of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries far behind.

For Mucchielli seems to prefer this institutional syllogism, which summarizes his entire historicist anthropology: *if* the criminal is merely a victim (governed by a given S-R system) *then* criminology does not have to be constituted as an autonomous scientific department with its own chairs and teachings. However, there really is a means of making progress in multidisciplinary matters, which is being pursued. It is even possible to give a sketch here of the relational (or psychosocial) aspect, in Joseph Nuttin’s sense.²⁷ We shall begin to present the reality of it

25 Raymond Boudon’s thesis, *Analyse mathématique des faits sociaux* (Paris: Éditions Plon, 1967) is the *alpha and omega* of any serious statistical analysis in the social sciences because Boudon does not seek to twist numbers by establishing unfounded correlations or concurrences (e.g.: “even today, sociological analysis still confines itself to considering mere correlations between variables, inferring from these to interpretations that the statistical instrument employed can neither confirm nor refute with any rigor” (31); moreover, Boudon does not posit as an *a priori* assumption that the actor is *only* the product of historical circumstances, which would invalidate the scientific data provided by differential psychology (Maurice Reuchlin) and the psychology of motivation (Joseph Nuttin) presented here.

26 E.g., Alban Bouvier, “Processus cognitifs et procédures rhétoriques dans la diffusion des représentations. Saillance et dispositio dans la constitution des vulgates,” in *Sociologie et connaissance: Nouvelles approches cognitives*, ed. Anni Borzeix, Alban Bouvier, and Patrick Pharo (Paris: CNRS Editions, 1998), 247-268, which discusses, for example, naturalist theses, a discussion continued in Alban Bouvier and Bernard Conein, *L’épistémologie sociale, une théorie sociale de la connaissance* (Paris: Éditions de l’EHESS, 2007).

27 Joseph Nuttin emphasized this (in *Motivation, Planning, and Action: A Relational Theory of Behavior Dynamics*, trans. Raymond P. Lorion and Jean E. Dumas [Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1984]): “cognition is residual behavior in the same way as behavior itself represents operational cognition and motivation (intentionality) The wide gap between cognition and behavior as proposed by behaviorism does not really exist, as noted above. This more integrated concept of behavior results from the model presented in chapter 2: behavior is not ‘movement plus the cognitive element of meaning,’ but meaning that is incorporated in motor responses” (171). Which implies, if we follow Nuttin attentively, that the relation to norms and values will necessarily appear in given behaviors in the world. Nuttin specifies the nature of the latter: “The functioning of the living organism within the Individual-Environment Unit (I-E) has its dynamism in itself ... In other words, the basic need of the living organism is to function in interaction with the world. Only by doing so does the organism develop and live” (88). Nuttin adds that “need” is not “necessarily” tied to a “concept of homeostatic deficit” because need is “the dynamic and directional (i.e., selective and preferential) aspect of behavior” (14-15). In short, there is an intelligence or capacity

in the conclusion of this first part.

What is explained to us, for example, by the sociology of action and the motivational and differential psychologies that seem so essential for the political analysis of interactions between the individual and the group, and thus of its disorders as well? It seems that it would be less a question of reiterating old debates on fixed innatism or the Lamarckian type of *a priori* overdetermination of the environment and/or the hereditary and/or cultural transmission of traits to specify in what way the singularity can more or less realize its potential according to conditions that reinforce or attenuate its emergence and participation in the world.

If we rely on the work of Joseph Nuttin just presented, it proposes on the one hand that there are innate preferences or dynamic orientations underlining empirical data such as the pleasure of being a cause,²⁸ the desire for recognition centered more on consideration than on denigration, the need for social contact, the use of the term "need" being especially chosen by Nuttin to suggest that its deprivation can have destructive effects.²⁹ Nuttin also observes the irreducibility of the concept of motivation³⁰ to socially encouraged interest or its compensatory correlation, which would apprehend it as an excess or a lack. This is because Nuttin links motivation to the very desire for what he calls "self-development," i.e. the fact not only of adapting or accommodating oneself to the world, but of transforming it, as Marx said, Nuttin specifying nevertheless that to achieve this one must *also* interpret it ...³¹

As for the work of Maurice Reuchlin, we may observe that for him, it is possible to locate conative specificities,³² i.e. preferential tendencies to privilege a rather logical, sensible, symbolic approach to action, therefore a singular potential that will be reinforced or reduced in its actualization by this or that interaction with a given environment. It is the same in the cognitive field, which Reuchlin also makes dependent upon the conative field in the sense that reason is *also* at the service of active tendencies or motivations, renewing the recurring debate on the well-known dialectic of reason and the passions while giving it a scientific grounding.³³

for realization that does not wait to be informed in order to act ... Life is thus a *solution* of action in all the senses of the term solution.

28 Nuttin, *Motivation, Planning, and Action*, 96-97.

29 *Ibid.*, 89-90.

30 Raymond Boudon also integrated this term, motivation (present in the work of Max Weber, in *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, vol. 1, part 1, "The Definition of Sociology and of Social Action," section A: "Methodological Foundations," 8)—while differentiating its causality from that of an overly reductionist RCT (Rational Choice Theory) (in "Mais où sont les théories générales d'antan?" *Revue européenne des sciences sociales* 46, no. 140 (2008): 34). Let us recall that Jean Baechler (in *Le Pouvoir Pur* [Paris: Éditions Calmann-Levy, 1975], and in *Démocraties*, 1985) had more than thirty years ago reintroduced to political sociology the concept of "passion," linked to that of "interest."

31 Nuttin, 13-14.

32 *Les différences individuelles dans le développement conatif de l'enfant* (Paris: Éditions PUF, 1990), 10.

33 Jean Baechler renewed this dialectic in *Démocraties* (Paris: Éditions Calmann-Levy, 1985) and his later work (e.g., *Nature et histoire* [Paris: Éditions PUF, 2000]).

Would, therefore, the specificity of Reuchlin's conation/cognition interactions (which Nuttin folds into a motivational framework of self-development), be subordinated to a social given in the sense of experience instead of being equally in interaction with it? Now, the order of classification and especially its crystallization in action are not deposited or presented *just as they are* without the individual differential singularity intervening to give them not only a social but also a human meaning. In other words, a motivational, intentional meaning in interaction with an ethics: i.e. according to intentions finalized within given frameworks and groups of reference. In this sense, it is not enough to speak of socialization, which implies the manner in which the social bond is constructed, if one does not also analyze *humanization*, i.e. the way in which the motivations to be this and not that is *lived*, in other words, explored, shared, realized in interaction with others in a given situation and at a given social-historical moment. Whoever no longer integrates this process is desocialized, but whoever refuses to live and share common values is inhuman, by ridiculing human rights to begin with, then in expressing this in aggressive acts, misdemeanors, crimes. Let us give a more specific application in connection with what occupies us here.

PART TWO

It is thus good form today, in France, to confine oneself to speaking of a "lack of socialization" (which seems to replace the Durkheimian concept of anomie) to explain various criminal, offending, or uncivil behaviors, which are then exclusively explained by so-called social causes.

However, this correlation (social causes *versus* lack of socialization *versus* criminal, offending, or uncivil behavior and vice versa), strictly speaking, at least in its formal transitivity, has *no* basis of any kind, including a scientific kind, and this not only in sociology, but also in social psychology and scientific psychology.

Why? For a simple reason, which today is well-known and scientifically validated: any act (gesture, attitude, behavior, action), even those called spontaneous, is regulated by decisions of action that are not all reflexes, from whence this living being called the *human*: its freedom is indeed precisely characterized by the capacity to *forge intentions without the influence of the environment* and not only to reproduce them or mechanically express them in the manner of a drive. This certainly also implies studying the role of the frames of reference³⁴ that support the attested intentions and behaviors, the ensemble of which may be correlated or not with this or that reference group³⁵ illuminating the frameworks and allowing for realization. But this study of frameworks and groups cannot replace the analysis of

34 Muzafer Sherif (1934) cited by Raymond Thomas and Daniel Alaphilippe as being at the origin of the concept of "frame of reference" in *Les Attitudes* (Paris: PUF, 1983), 55.

35 Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: Free Press, 2000), chap. 10, "Contributions to the Theory of Reference Group Behavior," 279.

the intentions that they do not necessarily cause, even if they help to shape them (we thus leave behind the mechanistic opposition between the origin and the form of the motivation for action).

Thus, it is not a question of eluding that the being *is* human in the sense that it is not *only* an agent that acts as if it were solely generated by a genetic program; this means that it is *also* a free actor that expresses itself in systems of interaction and interdependence,³⁶ according to *its* preferences as a singular subject, as appears in the analyses of motivational (Nuttin 1984) and differential psychologies (Reuchlin 1990), as we saw above.

The being is thus *human* in the reference marks that it creates to this end, such as norms or conventions linked to moral values or virtues (in the Aristotelian sense of means between an excess and a lack³⁷) that serve to modulate its behavior; norms and values are at the same time transmitted, received, and at the same time validated by its “own” experience (i.e. always dialectically elaborated in the frames and groups of reference at a given moment and in a given social-historical position). The “lack of references” is thus a fairy tale, unless it is the product of cranial trauma or a serious pathological disorder.

The human being, beyond the cultural and social-historical form that formalizes its behavior, thus quite simply cannot carry out an act without integrating it into a given system of ends³⁸ (teleological, eschatological, entelechial. . .),³⁹ which it retranscribes via frames and groups of reference, even if it does not know all their convolutions and consequences.

So rather than speaking only of “socialization” (a vague term, in any event, if it is not defined in connection with sociability, sociality, and sodality⁴⁰), and, especially, circumscribing it only with “social” causes, especially in the matter of crimes and misdemeanors, it is to better speak also about *dehumanization*, at the same time in the formal legal sense of human rights as it has been said (one dehumanizes oneself when one disrespects these rights) and at the same time in the morphological sense of what *specifically constitutes the human* as a living being,

36 Talcott Parsons, *Toward a General Theory of Action* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2005); Raymond Boudon, *La logique du social* (Paris: Éditions Hachette, 1983).

37 *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. C. D. C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., Inc., 2014).

38 Maurice Reuchlin, for example (in *Totalités, éléments, structures en psychologie* [Paris: Éditions PUF, 1995], 246), points to the way in which Jean Piaget’s collaborators continue his research, in particular Bärbel Inhelder, citing the remarks of the latter and those of one of her colleagues (Denys de Caprona): “the subject of psychology interests us as a knowing subject, but one equipped with intentions and values. We are led to assign a significant role to the teleonomic and axiological dimensions of cognitive activity, i.e., to the ends and value judgments produced by the subject itself. It is thus a question of considering the subject in light of the ends that it sets for itself and values that it attributes to them’ (B. Inhelder and D. de Caprona, 1992, 22). The subject under examination ‘must experience a need to succeed; the task set for it ‘must have a meaning for it’ (25).”

39 Lucien Oulabbib, *Méthode d'évaluation du développement humain* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005), 76.

40 I.e., respectively, the capacity to live in a group, to maintain it, to transform it into a *team*, a collective agent, for example in Jean Baechler, *Les morphologies sociales* (Paris: Éditions PUF, 2005), 4.

namely that he can *refine* the unfolding of his conservation of power (self-preservation⁴¹) by empathy and sharing.

What, then, was the decisive contribution, in addition to those described above, among other studies in the social sciences that could also have helped in France, for example, to act effectively in the area of urban violence? The fact of observing that the correlation between poverty—even destitution—and criminality—a correlation sometimes still tied to the concept of an irrepressible discharge⁴² or the behaviorist S-R cycle, is actually unclear, as Sébastien Roché indicates in the epigraph to this article⁴³ (as a matter of common sense, to begin with: the overwhelming majority of the population is not involved in crime, nor suffers from it; moreover, there is also white collar crime, which is thus not linked to the variable “poverty” ...); then the statistics explain something else (for example, that it is better to be a criminal in a poor neighborhood than in a rich one because, instrumentally speaking, it is easier to operate there for various reasons: less police manpower, greater ease of breaking and entering due to lack of effective protection). Lastly, the bond between criminality and the absence of adhesion to the norms and values incarnated institutionally in a multiform way (family, school, public services— police, transportation, firefighting) proves to be a much more heuristic causal analysis, as the work of James Q. Wilson indeed emphasizes. Wilson (who is also an authority on the subject,⁴⁴ as the originator of zero tolerance policies and

41 “Self-preservation and development imply that the individual remains himself, i.e., they imply the existence of both an internal *consistency* and *identity*. This is the very definition of the ‘individual,’ namely someone who is ‘non-divided’ within himself, although he is ‘divided’ (distinct) from others” (Nuttin, 101).

42 Joseph Nuttin, already quoted here, observes, on the contrary, that “[i]n contrast to common belief, a neuron does not necessarily require external stimulation in order to fire. In fact, a neuron is not physiologically inert. Its natural state is to be active rather than passive and it is both reactive and continuously active (Hebb, 1949). Thus a change in the internal or external conditions does not cause the occurrence of a process in an otherwise dormant organism. Rather, stimulation of any kind should be understood as modifying the ongoing activity of an already active organism (Bertalanffy, 1960; 1966, p. 710).” Thus, this modification should not be confused with motivation as such. We will return to this point.

43 Sébastien Roché draws upon the analyses of the American historian Ted Gurr, “who interprets violence in terms of deprivation: it develops when the rise in individuals’ aspirations is no longer accompanied by a comparable improvement in their living conditions. This is what took place in Western societies as of the Thirties, a decade during which Ted Gurr observes a complete reversal of the tendency: i.e., from then on, there is a lasting rise in homicidal violence, criminality, and theft or delinquency which follows a J-curve. Ted Gurr’s thesis is sometimes referred to as the “J-curve hypothesis” for this reason. In France, according to Sébastien Roché, this continuous rise is observed starting from the middle of the 1950s. Consequently, he argues, it is independent of the economic context”: excerpted from http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Violences_urbaines.

44 Raymond Boudon has remarked on Wilson’s work (in *The Art of Self-Persuasion: The Social Explanation of False Beliefs*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 161): “J.Q. Wilson ... an expert in crime prevention policy ... states that sociologists and criminologists are interested only in the causes of crime about which very little can be done. Writers such as Sutherland have found, for example, that family breakdown plays a decisive role in crime. Classic works on adolescent gangs have indeed shown that juvenile crime was often a sign of a wish to assert oneself, a need to be recognized and, in the final analysis, the desire to be integrated rather than the desire to be hostile—when one cannot get

broken-window theory) takes care to distance himself from the idea that increasing the penalties incurred alone will be sufficiently deterrent. He also shows that deterrence cannot substitute for a system of adhesion to norms and values, i.e., to actual *authority*, since he stresses that in 1975, the USA had the strictest laws in the Western world and at the same time the highest crime rate.⁴⁵

In France, Lucienne Bui Trong corroborated this analysis on the degree of adhesion to institutions. Thus, she demonstrated that in certain districts of Pas-de-Calais, Brittany or Poitou-Charentes experiencing a rate of unemployment higher than the Parisian suburbs, the relation to violence nonetheless differed there according to whether the mediating role of institutions was still accepted.⁴⁶

James Q. Wilson analyzes the following postulate: “Men steal because they are poor and deprived.”⁴⁷ Wilson objects that it would be advisable to better analyze criminal behavior in a more rational manner, in the Weberian sense of *motive*:⁴⁸ “Men steal because the net benefits of stealing exceed the net benefits of working.”⁴⁹ As we can see, Wilson’s reasoning can be associated with the *theory of ordinary rationality*⁵⁰ which combines in the act an instrumental reason (calculation) and also a axiological reason, since a moral conviction is necessary to free oneself from all the norms and values that form the morphological and not only the conventional basis of life in common.⁵¹ We are then quite far from Mucchielli’s analysis (below) when he draws on Loïc Wacquant to criticize Wilson:

Loïc Wacquant defines this doxa as a discursive configuration within which the idea is constructed that delinquency and the feeling of insecurity can be suppressed by the concerted and mutually reinforcing action of police, justice, and penitentiary policies. Constructed around the thesis according to which delinquency is explained by the irresponsibility and the immorality of the criminal, this doxa considers “‘insecurity’ [not as] the product of a lack of socialization, but [as] the strategic, pathological or irrational

oneself noticed or recognized in a positive way, the temptation is to deploy one’s nuisance value.” Boudon cites William F. Whyte, *Street Corner Society* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 1955), Philippe Robert, *Les Bandes d’adolescents* (Paris: Éditions ouvrières, 1966), and Albert K. Cohen, *The Culture of the Gang* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1955).

45 James Q. Wilson, *Thinking about Crime*, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1975), xiv.

46 Lucienne Bui Trong, *Les racines de la violence* (Paris: Éditions Audibert, 2003), 37-38.

47 Wilson, *Thinking About Crime*, xiii.

48 Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, volume 1, *Basic Sociological Terms*, chapter 1, *The Definitions of Sociology and of Social Action*, §5, 8-9): it is a question for him of “understanding” (8-9) the “meaning” (10) as a “complex of subjective meaning,” (11). I.e., as “motive” or “ground”: “A motive is a complex of subjective meaning which seems to the actor himself or to the observer an adequate ground for the conduct in question.” (ibid, §7, 11).

49 Wilson, *Thinking About Crime*, xiii.

50 Raymond Boudon, *La rationalité* (Paris: PUF, 2009).

51 Jean Baechler, *Les fins dernières, éléments d’éthique et d’éthologie humaines* (Paris: Éditions Hermann Éditeurs, 2006).

action of threatening individuals or groups whom it is thus no longer a question of ‘resocializing’ but of eliminating from play in order to reduce as much as possible the threat that they represent.”⁵²

We can clearly see that the place of morality or responsibility in the rational construction of individual and social action shall in no case be studied. Wacquant and Mucchielli reason as if these two factors were not a morphological necessity but something oppressive, which is of course false and thus slides into an ideology of Foucauldian resonance against the incarceration proper to the modern age (of which the perception of the madman as sick would be the proof par excellence ...).⁵³

The problem, then, is the following, at least for Wilson: without any doubt, there are multiple causes that can explain offending or criminal outrages, particularly the reasons for the moral depression that symbolizes as much a revolt against affective deficits as the desire at all costs to affirm not only one’s right to exist (a stone also exists, said Kant) but one’s desire to be this one, here and now, and not a human being in general. How to respond to this established fact? Wilson poses the problematic as follows: “No one knows how a government might restore affection, stability, and fair discipline to a family that rejects these characteristics”; it can also be a question of a group: “A deviant peer group—one that encourages crime or hell raising—would regard any effort by society to ‘reform’ it as confirmation of the hostile intent of society and the importance of the group.”⁵⁴ He concludes: “But social problems—that is to say, problems occasioned by human behavior rather than mechanical processes—are almost invariably ‘caused’ by factors that cannot be changed easily or at all.”⁵⁵

Nevertheless, how can action be taken in spite of the difficulties raised by Wilson, which seem insurmountable to him (but which, however, can be legitimately disputed, even ideally, in the name of the *principle of hope*)? By thinking not only as theorists of social facts, but also or primarily according to cases, as an *expert* on life in common; that is to say, by trying, on the one hand, to refine the analysis, the better to anticipate events, and, on the other hand, by repressing those who do not understand that their desocialization *is* a dehumanization in the sense that the duty to exist does not have to be perceived as an imposed constraint when it is intrinsically linked to the construction of self-esteem, which underlies the effort to act.

Thus, when one brushes quickly over the untold wealth of certain works, and when one locates the limits of certain analyses—however much less turned

52 <http://www.repap.fr/docs/3/article7.pdf>

53 For a soft critique of this Foucauldian reductionism, read *De Pinel à Freud* by Marcel Gauchet in Gladys Swain, *Le sujet de la folie, Naissance de la psychiatrie* (Paris: Éditions Calmann-Lévy, 1997) (first edition, 1977); for the strong version of the critique: Lucien-Samir Oulahbib, *La philosophie cannibale* (Paris: Éditions de La Table Ronde, 2006).

54 Wilson, *ibid.*, 54-55.

55 *Ibid.*, 55-56.

towards ideology—one indeed realizes that the currently dominant models in the social sciences are false, even fallacious, as one can see in this “article” by Laurent Mucchielli, quite unworthy, we insist, of a “scientific” journal with an A classification.

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